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**Summary of the Discussions of the 2010 Meeting of the Presidents of Technical
Commissions on the RBM and WMO Strategic Plan**

(Submitted by the Secretariat)

Summary and Purpose of Document

The document presents the summary of the discussions of PTC-2010 on the

- Technical commissions contribution to WMO Strategic Plan and Operating Plan
- Review and discussion of the Terms of Reference of the technical commissions
- Improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the technical commissions

for the consideration of the Working Group in their discussions.

DISCUSSION

1. Issues discussed were: (a) Technical commissions (TCs) contribution to WMO Strategic Plan (SP) and Operating Plan (OP) (b) Review and discussion of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the technical commissions (c) Improvements of the efficiency and effectiveness of the technical commissions.

2. Discussion on technical commissions' contribution to WMO Strategic Plan and Operating Plan (PTC-2010/Doc.3.1)

2.1 The presidents of technical commissions (PTC) recalled the decisions of the Fifteenth World Meteorological Congress (Cg-XV) that approved a new framework for the Results-based Management (RBM) of the Organization and requested the technical commissions to adhere to the direction and priorities set forth in the Strategic Plan and to organize their programme structures and activities so as to pursue the top-level objectives and to achieve the expected results.

2.2 The PTC welcomed the decision of the EC-LXI requesting each technical commission to prepare a note on lessons learned, experiences gained and prospective challenges in the course of the implementation of the current WMO Strategic Plan (SP), which would be used in the preparation of the next Plan. The presidents of technical commissions agreed to develop their Operating Plan (OP) for 2012–2015 based on the experiences gained through the development of the Operating Plan for the fifteenth financial period. They noted that EC-LX and EC-LXI had endorsed the guiding principles and schedule for delivering the draft WMO SP and OP for the period 2012-2015.

2.3 The PTC noted the progress in the development of the WMO SP and OP, and appreciated the involvement of the Regional Associations (RAs) and Technical Commissions (TCs) in the process. The PTC noted further that the structure of WMO SP and OP for the period 2012-2015 has been based on the recommendations of PTC and EC Working Group on Strategic and Operational Planning (EC WG/SOP) endorsed by the EC-LXI.

2.4 The PTC encouraged the Secretariat to continue to seek inputs from RAs and TCs that would further improve the WMO SP and OP for the period 2012-2015, and facilitate efficient implementation.

2.5 The PTC made the following specific recommendations related to their contribution to WMO Strategic Plan and Operating Plan:

PTC Actions

1. The Strategic Planning (SP) document should be short and concise;
2. The SP should provide the direction and focus for the activities of the Members and the Technical Commissions (TCs);
3. WMO should advocate for one stable WMO SP and relevant groups should establish operating plans for implementation;
4. The presidents of technical commissions and regional associations will develop their operating plans based on the draft WMO Strategic Plan (SP) 2012-2015; and
5. The operating plans of TCs and RAs may include activities that do not need financial support from the Secretariat but contribute to the achievement of expected results.

Secretariat Actions

1. The relationships and specific roles of TCs and RAs should be made clearer in the SP;
2. The contributions from partners to the achievement of ERs should be highlighted in the Ops;
and
3. The Secretariat should provide presidents of TCs and RAs with a template to guide the development of their specific operating plans.

Due to the short timeline, it was agreed that the presidents should receive whatever papers are needed for their input as soon as possible and that these papers do not need to be in a finalized form at this point in time.

3. Review and discussion of the Terms of Reference of the technical commissions

3.1 A discussion document (PTC-2010/Doc.3.2) was provided for discussion of the approach taken to reviewing and approving the Terms of Reference (ToR) of WMO's technical commissions. The paper reflected one approach, realizing that there are many others, inviting the presidents to reflect on key issues.

3.2. The group recognized the need for long-term stability of the SP and the ToRs and therefore that the ToRs need to be broader than ERs. The group also noted the requirement to adopt the RBM as requested by Cg. In general it was thought that ToRs should be developed at a higher level than ERs and it was agreed that the numbers of ERs (ER1, ER2 etc) should not be mentioned in ToRs, but rather referred to in the operational plans.

3.3. It was decided to recommend that the following text should be placed in the WMO Basic Documents, Regulation 179, Annex III, General terms of reference:

Within its terms of responsibility as defined hereunder and within the provisions of these Regulations, each technical commission shall ...

(New paragraph 7, renumber existing paragraph 7 as paragraph 8)

Structure its work to address societal outcomes, in line with the Results Based Management process by creating an operating plan focusing on the areas identified within its specific terms of reference and addressing appropriate (or applicable) strategic thrusts and expected results;

3.4. It was agreed that there is a need to update in some manner the questions addressed by the Convention and that climate change and variability, disaster risk reduction and capacity building are important items to be added.

3.5. New ToR's from all through the MG's will be provided by mid February to the Secretariat.

4. Improvements on the efficiency and effectiveness of the technical commissions

4.1 A discussion document (PTC-2010/Doc.3.3) was provided to the PTC with a review of the discussion of the role of the WMO's technical commissions that occurred at the 2009 PTC meeting and inviting the presidents to reflect on key issues.

4.2 The PTC made the following remarks and recommendations:

- It was recognized that TCs are essential to WMO in terms of providing scientific and technical advice, and implementing the RBM in WMO as well;
 - It was further emphasized that, during the past few years, significant efforts have been made by the TCs, e.g. in the area of
 - Shortening the duration of sessions of TCs;
 - Minimizing the requirement of interpretation/translation;
 - Reduction in the volume of documents;
 - Exploring the E-forum to discuss issues prior to the session; and,
 - Enhancing the coordination and cooperation among TCs and with RAs.
- In view of the complexity of the reform process, it was also recognized, that at this moment, the initiative of the "Super Tech" is not supported, but may be reconsidered if and when more information and analysis is provided. Joint sessions of some TCs (2-3 TCs) on a trial basis could be considered and coordinated in the near future.
- PTC-2010 expressed its concern that as TCs should be guided by Congress or EC under Convention and General Regulation, the timely updating of those relevant rules are needed;
- It is further confirmed by presidents of TCs that commissions have already started adjusting their structure and mode of operation to meet the requirement of RBM. PTCs are willing to actively be involved in the discussion of WMO structures. The PTC supported the initiative of reviewing the TC memberships, and requested the Secretariat to study the possible benefits and legal aspects, including possible measures to further encourage Members to participate in TC activities.
- PTC was briefed on the progress made by the Secretariat on the use of electronic voting and felt that it would be a good experience if a commission would consider trying it in their session.
- It was decided that the intercommission collaborations would be reviewed in a matrix format.
- The presidents appreciated the study that was presented on the TC quorums.

5. The representatives of PTC were requested to brief EC WG/SOP third session (29--31 March) on matters mentioned above. Dr Salinger and Mr Branski were agreed to represent the PTC.
