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Prepared by WMO
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OTHER PROGRAMMES
JOINT WMO/IOC TECHNICAL COMMISSION FOR OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE METEOROLOGY (JCOMM)

(Submitted by WMO)

Summary and purpose of document

This document provides an update of the status of the Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM), including its interactions with satellite operators and CBS concerning oceanographic satellites.

ACTION PROPOSED

CGMS to note the information given and advised on CGMS/JCOMM interactions as appropriate.

1. The Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) JCOMM is an intergovernmental body of experts and the major advisory body to the two parent Organizations on all technical aspects of operational marine meteorology and oceanography, and that the Members/Member States should apply and implement the plans, proposals, regulations and guidance which were provided by the Commission. JCOMM has operated as a WMO Technical Commission, as defined in the WMO General Regulations, and as a major IOC subsidiary body, as defined in the IOC Statutes, encompassing the activities of the former WMO Commission for Marine Meteorology (CMM) and the Joint IOC/WMO Committee for the Integrated Global Ocean Services System (IGOSS).

2. The second session of the Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) was held in Halifax, Canada, from the 19-27 September 2005. This session was to review the achievements and lessons learnt from the past and to approve a work plan to advance JCOMM during the next intersessional period.

3. The Commission recalled that, at its first session, (Akureyri, Iceland June 2001) it had agreed that the co-presidents and a Management Committee would provide the primary guidance, coordination and management of the work of JCOMM. This work was, in turn, structured in four broad Programme Areas (PAs) – Services, Observations, Data Management and Capacity Building. Within each Programme Area, the work was coordinated and integrated by a Coordination Group, the chairperson of which also acted as Programme Area Coordinator. More specific tasks within the different programme areas were then undertaken by relatively small expert teams, task teams and rapporteurs, as well as by the pre-existing bodies and panels.

4. During the Second Session in Halifax, the Commission decided to adopt a new structure addressing the capacity building needs of the Commission, with Capacity Building Rapporteurs appointed to each of the three Programme Areas (Observations, Services, and Data Management), forming a cross-cutting integrative team.

5. The Commission also recognized the evolving importance of remote sensing, and in particular satellite space-based data in the realization of the goals and work programme of the Commission. It decided to specify that each of the Programme Area Coordination Groups have an appointed expert in satellite data, with two in the Observations Programme Area, bringing a meteorological and oceanographic perspective respectively. These four experts would form a cross-cutting and integrative team on Satellite Data Requirements. It noted that one of these experts would meet with the Management Committee and would be responsible for organizing satellite/remote sensing requirements within the Commission, through coordination of the work and inputs of the other experts, as well as through liaison with other external bodies.

6. The Commission recognized the need to improve coordination amongst and integration of the different Programme Areas in issues beyond capacity building and satellite data requirements, and requested that this be a priority issue for the Management Committee during the coming intersessional period.

7. The Commission noted with interest that the Fourteenth World Meteorological Congress (Cg-XIV) had established a new major cross cutting Programme, the WMO Space Programme (Resolution 5 (Cg-XIV)), in response to the expansion in the availability of satellite data, products and services and in recognition of the increase in responsibilities for WMO in this area.

8. The Commission noted with interest and appreciation the report of the JCOMM Satellite Rapporteur, Professor Hiroshi Kawamura, recognizing that over the past two decades, satellite remote sensing had become a mature technology for measurements of many ocean variables. The role of ocean satellites in an ocean observing system for climate had been clearly stated at OceanObs99. Subsequently, the IGOS Partnership had published its “Ocean Theme” document, to plan the transition from research to operational environmental prediction of the oceans, critically linked to the availability of operational ocean satellites.

9. The Commission recognized that potentially, many users of satellite-derived information were located in coastal areas, and that the role of the GOOS Regional Alliances was crucial in facilitating the access and application of ocean satellite data by such users. Applications in coastal areas in particular required satellite products with high spatial resolution and rapid delivery times, which posed additional requirements on the satellite operators.

10. The Commission noted and supported the significant role played by the rapporteur during the intersessional period with regard to the Coordination Group for Meteorological Satellites (CGMS). In particular, the rapporteur had ensured that a new permanent action of the CGMS was to consider the IOC satellite data requirements, including those of the GRAs as noted above.

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