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Submitted by:
Secretary-General

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**Management Action Plan in relation to UN Joint Inspection Unit
report JIU/REP/2021/1.
Review of management and administration in the World
Meteorological Organization (WMO)**

**Formal and informal recommendations: response,
prioritization and timelines for action.**

June 2021

Introduction and context:

The WMO Secretary-General expresses his appreciation for the important work that has been carried out by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) review of the WMO Management and Administration. The Joint Inspection Unit review was carried during the implementation of a comprehensive reform of the Organization which encompassed significant changes to constituent bodies, alignment of the WMO Secretariat to these new bodies as well as legislative and procedural improvements to the functioning of WMO. This 21st century transformation of the organization is both innovative and complex and so, requires time to witness the tangible benefits of working under a new system. In addition, the new system itself will be refined through working practice and consequently, as recognized by WMO Members, it is too early to gauge the overall impacts and outcomes. This governance reform was approved by the Eighteenth World Meteorological Congress in June 2019. It is intended to promote an Earth System Approach and significantly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the decision making and implementation of the overall strategic plan objectives. The 18th World Meteorological Congress requested a reallocation of the resources by reaching savings in administrative activities and allocating more resources for serving the Members in regions and in technical duties. The overall rationale for these changes was driven by the need to achieve real efficiency gains and enhance support to regional activities, capacity building and technical skills. The creation of innovative central platform for administrative support is a key mechanism for achieving administrative efficiencies and was implemented in a very short period of time. Monitoring and refinements will be done continuously to ensure an optimal service delivery to WMO Members. All these changes took place during the COVID-19 pandemic which imposed certain constraints. At the same time the circumstances provided opportunities to operate under a new normal – for example to conducting our constituent body and other subsidiary body meetings using advanced videoconference technologies. This enabled wider participation of the WMO Members from all regions. We acknowledge the work of the JIU and the survey of Members and other stakeholders. Overall, the recommendations are very valuable for refining and defining the way forward. They also align with the overall strategic approach of our Members and the WMO management. Response to the formal recommendations WMO accepts the four formal recommendations of the JIU review:

Formal Recommendations of the JIU and WMO management responses:

Recommendation 1: By the end of 2022, the Executive Council should commission an independent evaluation of the constituent bodies reform to review the process used to implement the reform and its substantive results, including the alignment of the restructured secretariat, as well as good practices and lessons learned. The Executive Council task force on the evaluation of the constituent body reform has made recommendations.

The timetable and phases of an evaluation plan has been prepared by the Secretariat and will be discussed and decided by Executive Council at EC-73 in June 2021.

Recommendation 2: By no later than the end of 2021, the Secretary-General should commission a joint review team, comprised of management and staff who are familiar with each area of work, to conduct a structural and process review, facilitated by an independent expert, to further refine and adjust the overall secretariat restructuring in order to achieve the objectives of such restructuring.

The Secretary-General accepts this recommendation and will plan and initiate by the end 2021 an internal review of the current structures and processes. This will be carried out in close consultation with WMO Executive Management, WMO Board of Directors and staff. To ensure optimal functioning, external advice may also be required in this review. The Secretary-General will then make necessary and appropriate adjustments in early 2022 to ensure optimal operation of the Secretariat in line with the outcomes.

Recommendation 3: By the end of 2021, the Secretary-General should prepare a comprehensive accountability and internal control framework and submit it to the Executive Council for approval.

The Secretary-General accepts this recommendation and will direct appropriate Secretariat staff to design a proposal for enhancing the Internal Accountability and Control Framework by end 2021. This proposal will then be submitted to the Audit and Oversight Committee for consideration and advice and then submitted by the Secretariat to EC-74 in the spring of 2022 for consideration.

Recommendation 4 By no later than the end of 2021, the Secretary-General should prepare a comprehensive human resources strategy and submit it to the Executive Council for approval. Progress on the strategy should be reported at least annually thereafter as a regular item on the Executive Council's agenda.

The Secretary-General welcomes and accepts this recommendation and attaches great importance on the management of our human resources and the welfare of the staff. He will direct the Governance Services department in consultation with the Board of Directors and the staff to ensure a strategic approach to planning and managing human resources. A formal WMO human resources strategy will be prepared by end of 2021 and submitted to the Executive Council for consideration at its EC-74 session in the spring of 2022.

Management action plan, responses and prioritization for the 27 informal recommendations:

The informal recommendations are within the overall mandate and purview of the Secretary-General decision how and when to implement based on a prioritization and in relation to complementary actions to be covered in the formal recommendations. Based on an initial internal analysis of the 27 informal recommendations by the Secretary-General and his management team, an outline of responses priorities and timelines is elaborated below:

1. Communication of the reform to members

Communications to members on the overall reform and progress is a critically important task. The Secretary-general will direct its Strategic Communications Office to develop enhanced online products e-publications and scorecards (including key statistics and graphical information) to demonstrate to members, key stakeholders and the public, achievements of the overall Governance reform and improvements in the alignment of the Secretariat in support of members.

Prioritization and timeline:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: continuous in 2021 including special targeting to key governance meetings such as Ext Congress and Executive Council.

2. Wider participation of members

The wider participation of members via videoconferencing has already shown improvements during technical and governance meetings. A strategy has been discussed to work on the balanced and appropriate inclusion of experts and delegates to all constituent and subsidiary bodies of the organizations. This will be discussed further in the upcoming EC-73 meeting regarding the best way forward and will be assessed in the overall evaluation of the governance reform during 2022.

Prioritization and timeline:

Accepted. Priority: **HIGH**, Timeline: will be discussed at EC 73 and in the context of the evaluation of formal recommendation 1 and evaluation plan for Governance reform.

3. Adjustments lessons learned and good practise

Certain lessons and best practise are already being realized in the functioning of technical commissions and other constituent body meetings currently via videoconference. Regarding adjustments, this is a continuous and ongoing process and will take some time to have an accurate and informed overview especially when some bodies start to meet in person during 2022-23. Therefore, as the results of the JIU member survey indicate it may be too early to comment and gain an accurate picture of the benefits and efficiencies. The results of an evaluation of the governance reform and function of the bodies to be carried out in the context of formal recommendation 1 in 2022 will elaborate on this point further, EC 73 will discuss the evaluation plan for the reform at its June 2021 session.

Prioritization and timeline:

Accepted. Priority **MEDIUM**, Timeline: continuous and during 2022 evaluation of the Governance reform the modalities to be decided by EC 73. This is linked to formal recommendation 1 and formal recommendation 2.

4. Agenda item on restructuring at EC meetings

There are already standing items on restructuring at Executive Council meetings and in the context of the Secretary-generals reporting.

Prioritization and timeline:

Accepted. WMO Secretary-General confirms that this is already implemented and will continue to be a standing item on the EC Agendas. **IMPLEMENTED.**

5. Enhanced consultation with Staff

The Secretary-General places high importance on the consultation with the staff through formal and informal channels and has carried out town hall meetings. The Secretary-General has sent several messages to staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. The SG has met the whole WMO Geneva staff in late 2021 at six departmental meetings and others at videoconferences and has organized several townhall meetings to exchange views with the staff and to inform them of actual WMO issues. The Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) has regular meetings between HR and the Staff Association to discuss issues of importance. The Secretary-General and his senior representatives have met with the President and the members of the staff association to listen to their concerns. Management will continue to enhance the interaction and consultation with staff on a continuous basis and where appropriate on specific HR, health, working conditions, COVID-19 impacts and reform related issues.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: continuous and as specifically required dependent upon issue.

6. Cost benefits switch of Tribunal and Justice System

The negotiation for joining a comprehensive independent system of internal justice The UN administrative of Justice system and associated bodies form a package including UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT), UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT), support from the Office of Staff Legal assistance (OSLA) and the UN Ombudsperson. Joining this system was necessary to ensure the best support, protection of rights and legal assistance to all staff. This change has been officially approved by the President of the Organization and effective January 2020. Service Note 2020/06. This change is line with most of the UN System Organizations as recommended by a recent review of internal justice systems by the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB).

Prioritization and timelines:

Not Accepted. The Secretary-General considers this is approved and already **IMPLEMENTED** and no further action to be taken.

7. Real Time audits by Internal Oversight Office (IOO)

Real time audits for a small organization would be challenging or not currently feasible due to capacity constraints of the Internal Oversight Office (IOO). An enhancement in information flow using dashboards and information technology may be achieved in the future related to the implemented of a new Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) will provide benefits to real time or near real time information that would be basis for internal auditing.

Prioritization and timelines:

Partially Accepted. Priority: **MEDIUM** Timeline: 2022-23 dependent upon enhancements in ERP and information technology for information fusion and flow in support of the Internal Oversight Office activities.

8. Operational manuals flow charts for enhancements in regulatory framework and internal control

The Secretary-General considers enhanced documentation and definition of processes and approvals is very important for the functioning of the internal control system. This recommendation will therefore be dealt with by the organization in the context of developing a more comprehensive accountability and control framework. The chapters of the various standing instructions and staff regulations in critical areas are being updated and service notes issued and aligned on those requiring updating.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: by end 2021 in the context of formal recommendation 3 developing a comprehensive accountability and control framework and presented to the Audit and Oversight committee and Executive Council in its spring sessions of 2022.

9. Legal Office decoupling from Governance Services Department

Due to the small size of the organization and the efficient functioning of legal advice and the capacity of the legal Office the Secretary-General does not consider that movement of the reporting line for this office efficient or necessary. It is in the mandate and purview of the Secretary-General to decide on the functioning and staffing and structure of the Secretariat.

Prioritization and timelines:

Not accepted. Staffing and structure of the Secretariat is the mandate of the Secretary General and the current system is working well without any significant conflict of interest. Refinements in overall Governance Services working modalities (between Legal, HR and Finance) enhancing and ensuring accountability will be addressed in relation to actions in JIU formal recommendations 2 and 3.

10. Reporting line of the Risk Officer

It is in the mandate and purview of the Secretary-General to decide on the functioning, staffing and structure of the Secretariat. Service note 2020/03 defines the Monitoring Evaluation Risk and Performance Unit MERP (including Strategic Risk management elements) as an entity within the cabinet Office reporting to the Director of Cabinet managing the second line of Defence. Chapter 14 of the standing instructions Service note 2020/29 defined the Risk management framework for the organization and has been presented to the WMO Audit and Oversight committee on two recent occasions.

Prioritization and timelines:

Not Accepted. Staffing and structure of the Secretariat is within the mandate of the Secretary-General and the risk management functions are working well with the appropriate positioning in the Cabinet Office as the second line of defence with the lowest conflict of interest with technical activities and the closest proximity to advice to Executive Management on strategic issues. No further action is required.

11.Reporting line of the Controller

It is in the mandate and purview of the Secretary-General to decide on the functioning, staffing and structure of the Secretariat. The recent Service note 2020/30 defines the reporting line and duties of the Controller supervised by D/CSG Director of the Cabinet Office D/CSG manages the second line of defence.

Prioritization and timelines:

Not accepted: The Secretary-General considered that this is appropriate positioning in the Cabinet Office forming the second line of defence with the lowest conflict of interest with technical activities and the closest proximity to advice to Executive Management on strategic issues. A comprehensive accountability and control framework will be developed in relation to formal recommendation 3 during 2021. No action on reporting line is required.

12.Central repository management overrides

The Secretary-General considers it important to ensure a record and repository of management overrides (exceptions) that should be maintained by appropriate entity in the WMO for Audit purposes.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: This will be addressed as one of the important actions in the context of formal recommendations 2 structural and processes review and 3 developing a comprehensive Accountability and Control framework by the end of 2021. Action on this item will be addressed as soon as possible as to the appropriate entity in WMO to maintain the repository of these overrides.

13.IOO Recusal in carrying out administrative reviews of appeals

The Secretary-General place importance on the independence of the Internal Oversight Office (IOO) and the appropriateness of the tasks carried out to ensure no conflict of interest.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted, Priority **HIGH**, **IMPLEMENTED** Steps have already been taken by the Secretary-General for administrative reviews to be carried out by an appropriate UN sister agency through an agreement. This recommendation can be considered implemented.

14.Evaluation Officer positioning reporting line

It is in the mandate and purview of the Secretary-General to decide on the functioning and staffing and structure of the Secretariat. Service note 2020/03 defines the positioning of the Monitoring Evaluation Risk and Performance Unit MERP in the Cabinet Office. The duties of the said officer in fact the 'Head of the MERP Unit' and a small percentage of time on evaluation coordination (not the evaluations themselves). The majority of the post is related to leading the work on management dashboards, rolling reviews of strategic objectives which is integral to the Cabinet Office functions. The conduct of evaluations will necessarily to be outsourced to independent qualified evaluators and it is not feasible due to the small size of the organization and small frequency of evaluations carried out to have a dedicated Evaluation Office.

Prioritization and timelines:

Not accepted. Staffing and structure of the Secretariat is within the mandate of the Secretary-General and the risk management functions are working well with the appropriate positioning in the Cabinet Office Service Note 2020/03 as the second line of defence with the lowest conflict of interest with technical activities and the closest proximity to advice to Executive Management on strategic issues. No further action is required.

15.Format of Audit and Oversight Committee review/revise

The optimal format of the Audit and Oversight Committee will be discussed with the AOC Chair and members and can be subject to possible adjustments as required in the context of the evaluation of the broader governance reform in formal Recommendation 1.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted, Priority **MEDIUM**, Timeline: The formal and optimal functioning will be evaluated in consultation with the Chair and Members of the Audit Committee and the Executive Council in the context of formal Recommendation 1 actions during 2022. This is a decision that the EC will need to make.

16.Audit and Oversight Committee performance evaluation by independent expert

An independent evaluation of the Audit and Oversight Committee may be discussed if required by the Executive Council and could be subject to possible adjustments as required in the context of the evaluation of the broader governance reform in formal Recommendation 1.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **MEDIUM**, Timeline: The Audit and Oversight Committee will be potentially evaluated in consultation with the Executive Council in the context of formal Recommendation 1 actions during 2022. This is a decision that the EC will need to make.

17.Previous JIU Critical recommendations to be institutionalized

The Secretary-General places great importance on adopting best practices and integrating and institutionalizing recommendations by the JIU and other oversight bodies in the best functioning of the organization to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness. Previous or existing broader JIU recommendations will be examined to see how these can be further institutionalized and adopted in the context of the current informal recommendation and in the context of adjustments that may be made during the structural/process review in formal recommendation 2 and formal recommendation 3.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **MEDIUM**, Timeline: To be reflected in the context of actions on formal recommendation 2 and 3 in 2021 and 2022.

18.ASG and DSG Senior Management Compacts

Senior Management Compacts have been introduced and signed with the Secretary General for all directors of the Board of Directors in 2020 and 2021. These compacts outline key responsibilities and accountabilities for departments. Compacts with Deputy Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General will be developed and signed to ensure overall coherence with all of the WMO Senior Management Team and define specifically responsibilities and authorities.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: To be developed ASAP in 2021 before Extraordinary Congress.

19. Senior management compacts and instruments, delegation of authorities and coherence

The Secretary-General places great importance on ensuring the coherence and clarity of all instruments to ensure responsibilities accountability and definition of delegation of authority. These instruments will be enhanced, refined and reviewed in the context of actions relating to formal JIU recommendation 3 developing a comprehensive accountability and control framework.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: To be implemented as an action in the context of JIU formal recommendation 3 Developing a comprehensive accountability and control framework by end of 2021.

20. Conduct an Organizational review logical group units

This informal recommendation will be dealt with by the Secretary-General as an action in the internal review and refinement of the secretariat structures in the context of JIU formal recommendation 2.

Prioritization and Timelines:

Accepted. **HIGH**, Timeline: To be examined and implemented by the Secretary as an action in the context of formal JIU Recommendation 2 structural and process review of the secretariat restructuring by the end of 2021.

21. Policies and procedures IT and Chief Information Officer

The Secretary-General places great importance and high priority on the enhancing internal IT capabilities and cyber security related provisions. The Internal WMO IT Committee ISSAC is currently developing an enhanced IT strategy including the provision of appropriate roles and responsibilities in the secretariat covering information and IT security.

Prioritization and Timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: To be examined and proposals to be developed and implemented as soon as possible during 2021.

22. Senior Director Administration and Finance

It is in the mandate and purview of the Secretary-General to decide on the functioning, staffing and structure of the Secretariat. A Senior Director of Governance Services D2 was appointed in January 2020 following a competitive process provides overall management oversight on functions such as (HR, Finance, procurement, administration, security and language services). There are also specifically qualified P5 level Chiefs of Finance (with IPSAS experience) P5 Chiefs of HR in the Governance Services department together with a x 2 D1 level directors directly managing these administrative entities including legal services. Service notes 2020/03 and 2020/09 have been issued in regard to the structure of the GS Department.

Not Accepted. A senior level Director D2 is already in place together with 2 D1 level and 2 qualified P5 level Chiefs. The Secretary-General considers no further action is required on this recommendation.

23. Knowledge mgt and staff training strategy

The Secretary-General considers that training and knowledge management is a very important activity maintaining high quality professional approaches. A management training course has been initiated recently for all senior management and specific trainings have been carried out for all staff in managing conflict resolution and sexual harassment. Further training for managers and staff is envisaged in 2021-2022 period.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **MEDIUM** Timeline: Continuous and throughout 2021 and 2022 on various topics.

24. Financial Resource Management Strategy

The Financial health and excellent stewardship of the organization is top priority for the Secretary-General. An enhanced budgeting process has been realized over the last two years and the organization has achieved an unqualified audit opinion from the external auditors. Further planning and enhancements will be achieved through the actions related to JIU formal recommendations 2 and 3. A budget proposal for 2022-2023 is being presented to FINAC and EC 73 including the status of assessed contributions and management of the financial resources.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: A resource management strategy will be developed in consultation with FINAC and EC during the period June-Dec 2021 and in relation both planning and implementation elements.

25. Review of ERP and cost-benefit upgrade of system

The Secretary-General is already currently taking steps for a requirements analysis for next generation ERP (enterprise resource planning) cloud-based system for WMO beyond the lifetime of the current Oracle system. The Secretary-General and his team have engaged with a key UN partner for a cooperation on a system. Key considerations will be the integration of financial and programmatic/management information and optimization of business processes for enhanced efficiency.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: Planning phase in autumn 2021 including engagement of a consultant for requirements in advance of tender and negotiations through late 2021 and early 2022.

26. Business Continuity strategy and responsible staff member

A business continuity strategy covering critical business operations during the COVID-19 Pandemic has been prepared by the Risk and Quality Management Officer in the Cabinet Office. A general and adaptable Business Continuity Plan (BCP) for different scenarios is being developed with roles and responsibilities identified.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**. Timeline: An initial business continuity plan has been developed for COVID-19. An updated and adaptable BCP is being developed and will be approved in the coming weeks of 2021.

27. Staff Survey jointly designed by management and staff.

The Secretary-General considers with a high priority the views of the staff of the organization and is committed to conducting a survey at the appropriate time. In this regard the timing of a survey would be optimal following a reasonable period of stabilization of the current new

working arrangements. Conduct of a survey in early 2022 would benefit from a period of active working and convey valuable information on the new structures and efficiency of the organization. A jointly planned set of critical questions between staff association and the management could be agreed.

Prioritization and timelines:

Accepted. Priority **HIGH**, Timeline: Preparation of the survey in Autumn 2021, conducting the survey in early 2022 and reporting back to Executive Council 74 on the results.

Overview table of proposed management actions on the 27 Informal JIU recommendations:

Inform Rec No.	JIU Informal Rec	Priority/timeline
Const Body reform Chp II		
1	Communication of the reform to members	Accepted High continuous
2	Wider participation of members	Accepted High 2021-22
3	Adjustments lessons learned and good practise	Accepted Medium 2022
Restructuring Chap III		
4	Agenda item on restructuring at EC meetings	Implemented
5	Enhanced consultation with Staff	Accepted High Continuous
6	Cost benefits switch of Tribunal and Justice System	Implemented
7	Real Time audits by IOO	Partially Accepted
Oversight and account Chp IV		
8	Operational manuals flow charts reg framework	Accepted High Short term 2021
9	Legal Office decouple from GS Conflict of interest	Not Accepted
10	Reporting line Risk Officer	Not Accepted
11	Reporting line Controller	Not Accepted
12	Central repository Mgt Overrides	Accepted High Short term 2021
13	IOO Recusal admin reviews	Implemented
14	Evaluation Officer positioning reporting line	Not Accepted
15	Format of Audit and Oversight Committee review/revise	Accepted Medium 2022
16	AOC performance evaluation independent expert	Accepted Medium 2022
17	Previous JIU Critical recommendations institutionalized	Accepted Medium 2022
18	ASG DSG Compacts to be introduced	Accepted High 2021
19	Senior management compacts and instruments coherence DOA	Accepted High 2021
Management Chap V		
20	Organizational review logical group units	Accepted High 2021
21	Policies and procedures IT and Chief Info Officer	Accepted High 2021
22	Senior Director Administration and Finance	Not Accepted
23	Knowledge mgt and staff training strategy inst knowledge	Accepted Medium continuous
24	Financial resource Mgt strategy	Accepted High 2021-22
25	Review of ERP and Cost benefit upgrade of system	Accepted High 2021-22
26	Business Continuity strategy and responsible staff member	Accepted High 2021
27	Staff Survey jointly designed by mgt and staff	Accepted High 2021-22

Timeline of proposed key WMO management actions of JIU Formal and informal recommendations (IRs)

