
**GCOS STEERING COMMITTEE
TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION**

GCOS SC-27, 28–31 October 2019
Paris, France

GCOS Work Plan 2019–2022

(Submitted by the GCOS Secretariat)

Summary and Purpose of Document:

The document gives the context for the key elements of the work plan for the coming years 2019 to 2022, and is asking for a decision on the proposed time line and milestones.

Action Proposed:

Adopt the draft Decision 7.4.

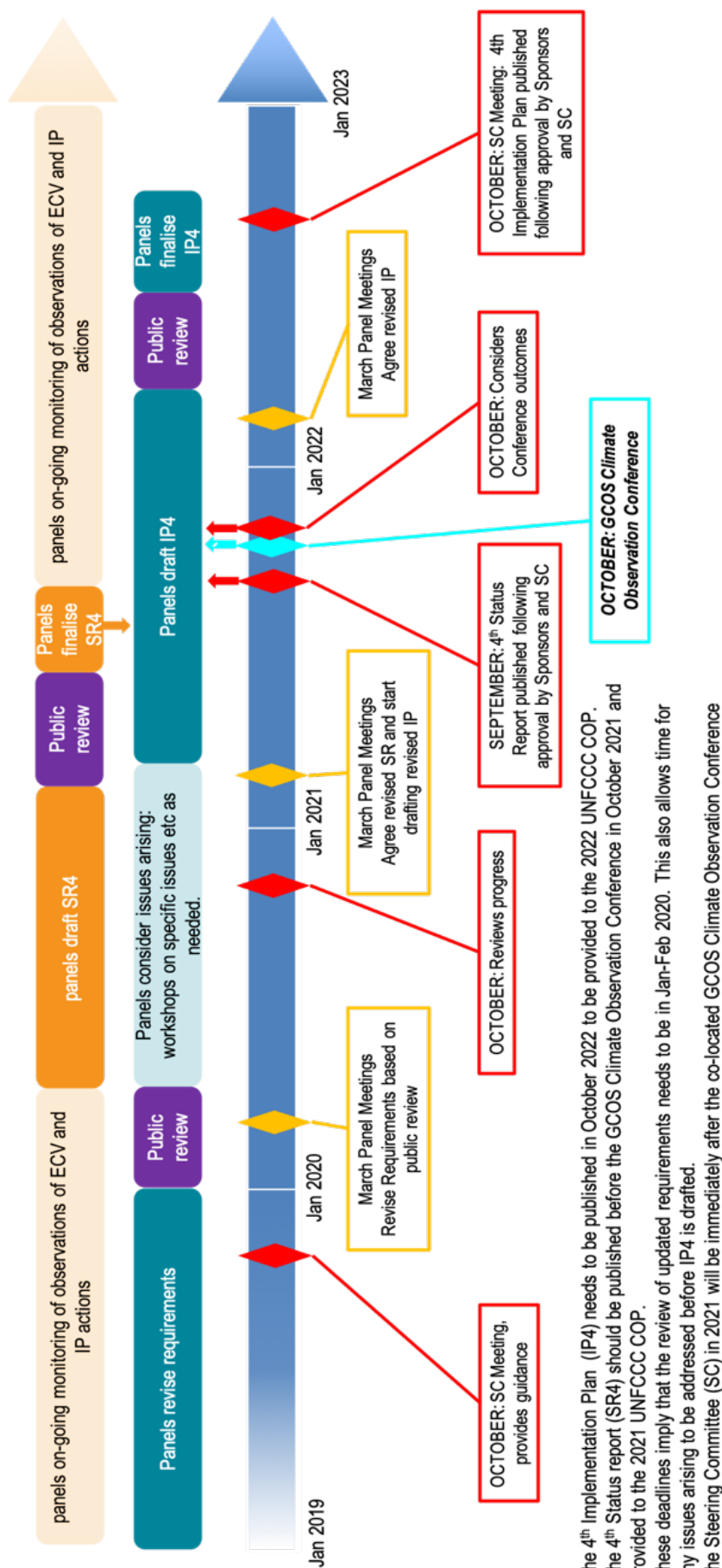
DRAFT DECISIONS

Draft Decision 7.4 (SC-27)

1. The Steering Committee reinforces its endorsement of the timeline and its details and requests the GCOS Secretariat to coordinate with the panel chairpersons the timing of related activities.
2. The Steering Committee requests the director to ensure that the timeline will find approval by WMO's 72nd Executive Council in 2020 and at the appropriate governance level of ISC and UN Environment.
3. The Steering Committee requests the Secretariat to provide the budget and resources necessary to act on these milestones.

Background

1. This work plan has been developed to address the activities from 2019 to 2022 required for GCOS' 4th assessment cycle, which will address updating the 2015 status report and the 2016 implementation plan.
 2. The work plan is aligned to the publication of IPCC's sixth assessment report (AR6) and to the 2022 UNFCCC COP which will provide the input to the UNFCCC Global Stocktake in 2023.
 3. In developing this work plan, a number of considerations were addressed:
 - The need for transparency and community involvement in the process;
 - Allowing enough time for any issues to be resolved on individual ECVs;
 - Ensuring that the status report and implementation plan are updated consecutively not simultaneously;
 - Deadlines of October 2021 for the 4th Status Report (SR4) and October 2022 for the 4th Implementation Plan (IP4).
 4. An important concept of the GCOS programme are the Essential Climate Variables (ECV). Each ECV may comprise of one or more parameter, called ECV Products, and for each of these GCOS provides requirements in terms of definitions, resolution and uncertainty. In 2018, the GCOS panels have already been tasked with considering the ECV requirements, assessing if they are still fit-for-purpose and proposing refinements in consultation with their respective communities. An on-going task of the GCOS panels is to review how well ECVs are monitored and to review the status of actions in the most recent implementation plan. To do this, the panels have appointed ECV Stewards and IP action rapporteurs.
 5. This timeline has been already introduced to the Steering Committee at its 26th session in Helsinki in 2018, and to all panels at their joint session in March 2019. It was approved at the 30th IOC Assembly in July 2019. As GCOS was not reporting to WMO Congress and following Executive Council in 2019, the next opportunity will be the 72nd session of WMO Executive Council in 2020. A detailed timeline is shown in Figure 1 with more detail on some activities in Table 1.
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- The 4th Implementation Plan (IP4) needs to be published in October 2022 to be provided to the 2022 UNFCCC COP.
- The 4th Status report (SR4) should be published before the GCOS Climate Observation Conference in October 2021 and provided to the 2021 UNFCCC COP.
- These deadlines imply that the review of updated requirements needs to be in Jan-Feb 2020. This also allows time for any issues arising to be addressed before IP4 is drafted.
- The Steering Committee (SC) in 2021 will be immediately after the co-located GCOS Climate Observation Conference

Figure 1. GCOS work plan, 2019-2022 addressing the update of the Status Report (SR) and Implementation Plan (IP)

		4 th Status Report (SR4)	4 th Implementation Plan (IP4)	
2019	Now-Dec	Continue monitoring IP actions and ECV observations – the on-going tasks of the panels. The information collected here should allow easy compilation into the Status Report.	Review and revise ECV requirements. Include at least threshold and goal values led by ECV Stewards who should include views of the respective communities. The Secretariat will monitor progress.	
2020	Jan - Feb		Public Review of initial proposed ECV requirements. While this should be open to all, all the relevant communities specifically invited.	
	Mar	Draft revised Status Report. This will be based on contributions from the ECV Stewards and IP Action Rapporteurs, compiled and coordinated by the GCOS Secretariat.	Panel Meetings. Consider responses to ECV requirements, identify areas for further work	
	Apr-Dec		Activities focused on ECVs where additional consideration is needed. Some of these areas can be anticipated (GHG for example) but others will be identified through the public review. There may workshops or Task Teams on specific areas	
2021	Jan - Feb	The GCOS Panels and Secretariat will finalise SR4 by addressing all the comments and the final document should be approved by the GCOS Sponsors	Draft revised IP4, this will be led by the GCOS Panels and incorporated the revised ECV requirements that have been developed since 2019. Contributions and inputs will come from the SR4, Climate Observation Conference, and interested scientific communities.	
	Mar-Apr			Public Review of SR4 draft. While this should be open to all, all the relevant communities specifically invited.
	May-Aug			The GCOS Panels and Secretariat will finalise SR4 by addressing all the comments and the final document should be approved by the GCOS Sponsors
	Sep			Publish SR4 in time for the UNFCCC COP 8-19 November 2021
	Oct-Dec			
2022	Jan-Mar	The GCOS Panels and Secretariat will finalise IP4 by addressing all the comments and the final document should be approved by the GCOS Sponsors	Public Review of IP4 draft. While this should be open to all, all the relevant communities specifically invited.	
	Mar-Apr			
	May-Sep			The GCOS Panels and Secretariat will finalise IP4 by addressing all the comments and the final document should be approved by the GCOS Sponsors
	Oct			Publish revised IP4 in time for the UNFCCC COP 7-18 November 2022
KEY:		Document drafting	Public Reviews	

Table 1. Proposed GCOS Timeline for revising the SR and IP