**‘What it means to be a JCOMM OCG Observing Network’**

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The JCOMM Observations Coordination Group coordinates across the major, sustained, global oceanographic and marine meteorological observing networks. The requirements for ocean observations are expanding and new technologies, variables, platforms and networks are being developed, deployed and measured. Observing networks need sufficient maturity and scale to engage with OCG and the coordination towards supporting GOOS and GCOS. This draft document outlines the key attributes that define a ‘global’ JCOMM OCG Network and the benefits that networks gain from engaging with JCOMM OCG.

Networks may not fulfill all attributes, however these can act as a roadmap to help guide development towards achieving the elements that OCG has understood make networks of global scale effective, productive, engaged and responsive members of the GOOS.

**1. Network attributes:**

* Global in scale (greater than regional and, as far as possible, intention to be global)
* Sustained over multiple years, beyond the time-span of single research projects
* Coordinates a community of best practice and governance, e.g. a means of developing multi-year strategy, implementation standards and development plans
* Data are free, open and available in a timely manner, e.g. a data management infrastructure that delivers interoperable/inter-comparable data in real-time, or with minimal delay, through internationally recognised data centres or services
* Contributes to meeting requirements for one or more Essential Ocean Variables or Essential Climate Variables
* Defined observation mission/s and implementation targets, such that a role in the GOOS is defined and progress towards targets can be supported
* Agreed to develop, update and follow best practices to ensure consistent delivery of observational data (from deployment to delayed mode quality control). These best practices should be documented, utilised by members and consist with other OCG networks
* At least development stage ‘Pilot’ in technological readiness level in all aspects of the Framework for Ocean Observing and WIGOS Observing System Network Design Principles, with a roadmap towards maturing

**2. Benefits for networks:**

JCOMM OCG coordination supports cross-network observing planning towards global integrated requirements, builds on synergies, supports technology and best practice transfer, provides visibility to the global network, a common voice and supports network development towards common objectives. Benefits include:

* Visibility as part of the integral global observing system e.g. JCOMM Report Card
* Support for sustainability through demonstrated global role
* Technical support and coordination for network monitoring, reporting and deployment coordination through JCOMMOPS (as appropriate and funded by networks)
* Support in areas of coordination, including standards and best practices, new technology adoption, deployment opportunities, open data availability, network development, etc.
* Opportunity to provide feedback into GOOS/GCOS development and representation at the global level with IOC, WMO, GOOS, GCOS for issues of relevance, e.g. EEZ
* Support for Capacity building activities?? (via IOC??)
* Integration into WIGOS??

**3. Commitment:**

* Participation in JCOMM OCG annual meetings, quarterly calls and actively supporting the implementation of the agreed OCG Work Plan
* Provision of network metadata information to JCOMMOPS and of routine updates on the status and evolution of the network, e.g. for the JCOMM Ocean Observing Report Card
* Support the monitoring of the overall system status, progress, data flow, and development through JCOMMOPS (depending on financial contributions)
* Coordinate with and support the activities of other networks[[1]](#footnote-1)

**4. Process to become a JCOMM OCG partner network**

1. Candidate networks are brought to the attention of JCOMM Observations Coordination Group or IOC/UNESCO GOOS Program through the global working groups e.g. GOOS Panels and GRAs, WMO or GCOS, or may approach directly JCOMM and/or GOOS
2. A "review" by JCOMM OCG is undertaken to assess that the network meets sufficient criteria. Networks who do not meet all criteria, but have plans to address deficiencies can be provisionally designated an ‘emerging’ OCG network and recommendations for network improvements will be given by the OCG
3. Formal acceptance of emerging networks is reviewed/approved by JCOMM MAN
4. Progress of emerging networks is reviewed annually until such time the network is fully accepted and/or the OCG determines the network is not making progress and removed from consideration.

1. JCOMM OCG provides the opportunity and mechanism through regular meetings, however many other opportunities exist between networks [↑](#footnote-ref-1)