

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF CONSORTIUM OF WMO EDUCATION AND TRAINING COLLABORATING PARTNERS (CONNECT)

The Terms of Reference presented below were agreed by the CONNECT Plenary during the first meeting of the Consortium (CONNECT-1, 17–19 April 2023).

General mandate

The overall objective of CONNECT is to strengthen coordination and sustainability of education and training efforts by providers on Earth Systems, including weather, climate, water, and related environmental disciplines, being a formal mechanism to achieve the goals of the WMO Global Campus initiative.

CONNECT is not intended to have legislative authority but rather be a sounding self-governing entity formed by education and training stakeholders from WMO designated Regional Training Centres, WMO Global Campus collaborating institutions, universities, training networks and learned societies, training centres and institutions of WMO global and regional partners and Programmes, with the view of having a structured platform for discussion and sharing of ideas that can contribute to improving capacity development.

Composition

CONNECT shall be an open membership community composed of experienced members from education and training stakeholders worldwide who recognize, endorse, and/or have an active interest in WMO capacity development, education and training goals and strategy on Earth System Sciences, including meteorology, hydrology, and related environmental disciplines.

This will include, but not be limited to, representatives of institutions supporting the WMO Global Campus initiative, such as:

- (a) WMO designated Regional Training Centres (Group A);
- (b) WMO Global Campus collaborating institutions, universities, training networks and learned societies (Group B);
- (c) The relevant training centres and institutions of WMO global and regional key partners and Programmes (Group C).

Representatives of WMO Technical Commissions, Research Board, and Regional Associations will be invited to participate in CONNECT discussions and meetings, assisting in addressing the evolving education and training needs in close coordination with WMO technical Programmes and activities.

Members of CONNECT will be invited by the WMO Secretary-General to collaborate on a voluntary basis, in the discussions of education and training matters, which could then be brought to the attention of EC–CDP.

Structure and working procedures

The structure of CONECT comprises CONECT Plenary and CONECT Management Group.

CONECT Plenary

- a) CONECT Plenary is the full body of representatives of participating entities of the consortium. It is composed of representatives from all the CONECT members plus the invited representatives of WMO Technical Commissions, Research Board, WMO Regional Associations, and Capacity Development Panel. Each CONECT member should designate a Principal delegate as their primary designated representative, at the senior official level. Each member shall also designate a focal point as the WMO Secretariat liaison person for working-level communications;
- b) CONECT Plenary shall provide the strategic development direction of CONECT in close alignment with the WMO Strategic Plan and Long-Term Goals and adopt the CONECT strategic plan and annual activities;
- c) CONECT Plenary meets annually. Meetings shall be held on a rotational basis by WMO regions;
- d) CONECT Plenary shall elect, at their first plenary meeting, three co-chairs (one chair and two vice-chairs) and additional 15 members from Principals among the above three groups (five from each composition group, A, B, and C) to form the CONECT Management Group (MG). The vice-chairs will occupy the chair position by rotation. The chair, assisted by the members of the MG and the Secretariat staff, has the responsibility to ensure the coordination of CONECT activities;
- e) The first plenary session shall decide the Terms of Reference of CONECT (ToR), subject to the approval by the Secretary-General, and terms of the co-chairs and MG members;
- f) Each plenary meeting shall review proposals for new CONECT members, which should be pre-reviewed and proposed by the MG;
- g) New nominations can be proposed by plenary and by WMO Permanent Representatives (PRs), based on criteria: a) representatives from institutions working with education and training in meteorology, hydrology, and climate;
- h) A report shall be provided after each CONECT Plenary meeting, reporting on main achievements, key discussion consensus, decisions, and recommendations of the Consortium. The report should communicate any recommendations to WMO that might have resulted from their collaborative work;
- i) Any decision of CONECT which is intended to convey information, an opinion, or which concerns only the internal activities of the consortium such as its future work plan, the establishment and terms of reference of subsidiary bodies, shall be recorded as a decision of CONECT;
- j) Any considerations that include proposals for actions by WMO Constituent bodies shall be recorded only as a recommendation. The recommendations shall be submitted to WMO EC–CDP for review and consideration;
- k) CONECT members shall coordinate their work and communications using the online communication platform that will be established by the Secretariat.

CONNECT Management Group (MG)

- a) CONNECT Plenary co-chairs act as the co-chairs of the CONNECT MG;
- b) The period of work of elected members of CONNECT MG is 4 years;
- c) CONNECT MG shall meet twice every year to maintain effective communication and sharing of progress on activities being coordinated;
- d) Proposals for new CONNECT members should be first reviewed by the MG, with the support, consolidation, and confirmation of the Secretariat. Confirmed proposals shall be submitted for plenary considerations;
- e) Proposals for new CONNECT subsidiary bodies (including their ToR and composition) should be reviewed by the MG before submitting to the plenary for consideration and decision;
- f) CONNECT MG shall make the best efforts for ensuring regional and gender balance, and inclusiveness in all its structures and work plans.

Key responsibilities of all participating entities

- a) Share their annual education and training plans, with the aim of aiding coordination and collaboration between training providers to meet the education and training needs of WMO Members in line with the WMO Strategic Plan;
- b) Participate in the discussion of training priorities with the aim of enhancing collaboration for the provision of well-balanced subject coverage and geographical distribution of education and training.

Contributions expected from members of the Consortium of WMO Education and Training Collaborating Partners

- a) Provide required input to meetings of the CONNECT;
- b) Actively engage in the discussion and development of guidelines on educational practices to be recommended to collaborating partners as means to achieving the goals of the WMO Global Campus;
- c) Actively contribute to activities and working groups that may be set by the MG of CONNECT;
- d) Advocate for the adoption of shared practices recommended by the WMO Global Campus;
- e) Based on identified priority areas from WMO Strategic Plan, review and assess WMO training requirements; plan, deliver, and evaluate training events and activities in subject areas relevant to meteorology, hydrology, and related environmental disciplines;
- f) Share relevant information related to the organization and implementation of the training events and activities for information;
- g) Share post-event evaluation reports and evaluations of the impacts of training provided;
- h) Share information on the implementation of new training approaches and their impacts on the development of staff and the organization;
- i) Share information on the means of identifying education and training needs and filling the gap between education and operational activities to increase the level of effectiveness of learning;

- j) To keep under review where the relevant Universities and National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) with its training institutions can work more together and issue relevant advisories from time to time.

WMO Secretariat support

- a) Provide advice and suggestions on education and training priority areas after due consultation with scientific and technical departments and according to outcomes of survey of Members' priorities and the implementation plans;
- b) Coordinate meetings of CONECT, with the aim of garnering updates, reviewing approaches, and developing strategies on delivery of education and training activities;
- c) Publicize through Website and its Community Platform the themes and foci of training events and activities that have a high probability of being held in the coming year(s) based on communication from stakeholders (Members, RTCs and partners);
- d) Provide reports on the planning and implementation of training events and activities;
- e) Assist in fostering cooperation and establishing partnerships between education and training providers.