

Annex: Questionnaire (in English only)

With regard to the role of the public service in the promotion and protection of and respect for human rights, impartiality, accountability, transparency and the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity:

Please provide information on:

Preamble:

WMO wishes to refer to a broad definition of “public service”, as is reflected for instance in Wikipedia (on 23 July 2012): A **public service** is a [service](#) which is provided by [government](#) to its [citizens](#), either directly (through the [public sector](#)) or by financing private provision of services. The term is associated with a social consensus that certain services should be available to all, regardless of [income](#). Even where public services are neither publicly provided nor publicly financed, for social and political reasons they are usually subject to [regulation](#) going beyond that applying to most [economic sectors](#).

N-B: Answers clarify whether content is WMO specific, e.g. as directly related to WMO mandate, or not WMO specific as based on more general observations.

- 1) Good practices and your views regarding the organization, training and education of the public service (not WMO specific);

There are two aspects to this question.

The first involves practices to be implemented by organizations and staff involved in a public service, and more specifically in relation to the promotion and protection of, and respect for, human rights. In this regard, it is desirable that those practices be well documented and that the staff be sensitized and appropriately trained, with enough time allocated to this training in the organization of their work. As much as desirable and practicable, organizations rendering public services should operate under a quality management system. They should also be a signatory of charters related to human rights and comply with mandatory reporting on their promotion, protection and respect of human rights.

The second aspect involves sensitization to human rights and their promotion, protection and respect through and by public services. As human rights are recognized as being universal, everybody on the planet should be aware of them. They should know how their implementation is dealt with from the community to the global level, and more specifically through public services. As education is one of the most fundamental human rights, it should be accessible as a public service. Human rights should be a part of any curriculum, taking into account the age and intellectual development of the students.

- 2) Activities developed to assist and support public service at the national, regional and international levels, in particular where human rights aspects were taken into consideration and improved the public service (WMO specific);

Governments have an obligation to protect the lives of their citizens. This includes, among other things, providing protection against natural hazards of hydro-meteorological origin. As climate change is increasingly affecting societies and economies, it also includes the provision of the necessary information for communities to adapt to its impacts. As already experienced by islands confronted by climate-induced sea-level rise, such information could be combined with directives with respect to migration of populations exposed to an unacceptable level of exposure to deteriorating living conditions.

WMO, in close cooperation with its Members and partners, especially within the UN system, has developed guidance material to implement such protection – usually referred to as an application domain of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policy. In particular, this guidance emphasizes the importance of the institutional setting for ensuring the success of any DRR policy. It turns out that implementing DRR policy within a strong institutional framework – a framework that promotes, protects and respects the right of people to live in secure conditions – is not only effective and efficient in saving lives, but is also a good financial investment. In most cases such a framework can also stimulate constructive dialogue and collaboration between institutions that would tend to work independently on their own particular discipline and compete for public resources.

As a multidisciplinary and cross-cutting theme, DRR can provide insights into how to deal in principle with human rights implementation in other fields, which also tend to be more or less multidisciplinary and cross cutting.

WMO is also currently leading an international initiative on the design and implementation of a Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). The GFCS is a global partnership of governments and organizations that produce and use climate information and services. It seeks to enable researchers and the producers and users of information to join forces to improve the quality and quantity of climate services worldwide, particularly in developing countries. The aim is to support efforts to prepare for new climate conditions and to adapt to their impact on water supplies, health risks, extreme events, and food productivity. These are all domains in which public policies have to factor in the implications of human rights.

- 3) Which categories of services you consider as public services and the rationale for providing human rights relevant services directly or indirectly through delegation to non-State actors or in mixed systems, in particular where human rights considerations were taken into account (WMO specific);

WMO is involved mainly and directly in the implementation of the following human rights:

- Right to life (cf. above),
- Right for access to water.

Each WMO Member decides on what should be a public service and whether such services should be provided by State institutions or by mixed systems. In this regard, the World Meteorological Congress, an intergovernmental body and the supreme body of WMO, adopts Resolutions. These are considered as international treaties that governments should

implement. If they are unable to do so, they should inform the WMO Secretariat of their partial implementation as much as possible. In most WMO Members, the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) are public, State-funded institutions. They have a mandate, established through an appropriate legal instrument – e.g. a law or a decree – to provide warnings related to the occurrence of weather, climate and water-related conditions that may be severe and have a high impact. They also manage databases that can be used to assess past changes and trends. The correlated information is to be considered as a public good. If a Member decides to entrust an organization that is not purely State-owned with providing the kinds of services that are generally entrusted to NMHSs, WMO sensitizes the government about the fact that the obligations and commitments of Members reflected in WMO resolutions are still to be respected. This includes, in particular, participation in WMO programmes and, more specifically, the provision and exchange of data and products related to weather, climate and water, as they are essential to the capacity of every WMO Member to produce good forecasts, including with respect to severe impacts of weather and climate.

Another dimension has also to be taken into account when defining how the above services can be rendered in an optimal manner at the national level, namely the international, or more precisely, the transboundary nature of protection against natural hazards and of access to water. On the one hand the more data and information that are exchanged between neighbouring countries facing the same natural hazard and living in the same river basin (more than 260 river basins, home to over 40 percent of the world's population, are shared by two or more countries), the better the quality of climate services for all of them. On the other hand, the lack of concerted actions might be detrimental to at least one of them – e.g. actions taken by one country with a positive impact for its own territory may generate negative consequences abroad, causing tension. Accordingly, it is essential that such issues are dealt with within a multilateral setting. As actions should be guided by public policies and rendered through public services, governments should have a central role in creating, maintaining and, when appropriate, enriching multilateral arrangements to allow the transboundary exchange of knowledge and products. This will make the whole system more complete and cost-effective by enhancing synergies.

- 4) Any recent privatization in sectors where there is an obligation to ensure access to human rights relevant services, and concomitant regulatory or other measures which helped to ensure human rights compliant service delivery (WMO specific);

Cf. above 3

- 5) Good practices in the area of liberalization of trade in services which ensured improved delivery of human rights relevant services (WMO specific);

As far as DRR is concerned, WMO encourages its Members to designate a single entity as the authoritative voice for warnings. In particular public warnings on natural hazards are considered a public good and should not be marketed and sold: whatever setting is used to produce them, governments have the obligation to ensure the human, technical and financial

means for issuing such warnings and delivering them to the public on time. There are very few examples of such warnings being issued by non-State agencies, but in such cases it is mandatory that the roles, responsibilities and public duties of these agencies be clearly established in written documents of the appropriate nature in each national legal system; this ensures that all citizens and organization can have a reference document against which to evaluate whether the warning service has been rendered adequately. Moreover, the institutional setting should create the conditions of a permanent dialogue between the various stakeholders, whatever their legal status, to allow feedback and continuous improvement.

- 6) Good practices of public service reform in a post-conflict context or after major transitions which ensured improved delivery of human rights relevant services (not WMO specific);

It is essential that the national legal framework be revived and improved by capitalizing on lessons learnt, as human rights can only be implemented within a strong institutional setting. In periods when countries are faced with extreme difficulties and challenges and confronted with so many priorities, decisions on critical investments have to be well informed. In this way actions for long-term benefits will not be sacrificed to short-term and immediate necessities. In this respect, international cooperation and assistance could lead to a more objective assessment of the situation. The identification and implementation of support need for achieving national priorities, especially as they relate to enforcing human rights which may have been generally violated or disrupted during conflicts or major transition periods, is a government obligation.

- 7) The conditions for access to public service positions, any restrictions which apply and the processes for appointment, promotion, suspension and dismissal or removal from office as well as the judicial or other review mechanism which apply to these processes (not WMO specific);

Transparency and appropriate control and enforcement mechanisms for access to public service positions should be in place.

- 8) How the requirement for equal access to public service positions is met, and whether affirmative measures have been introduced and, if so, to what extent;

No MWO comments

- 9) Any other issues relevant to the scope of this study.

No further WMO comments