

**9<sup>th</sup> Inter-sessional Meeting of the  
Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS)  
Steering Committee**

**DRAFT**

**MEETING REPORT**

18 September 2025  
Online meeting

## Summary of Proceedings and Decisions

1. The 9th Inter-sessional Meeting of the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Steering Committee was held online on 18 September 2025. The meeting's main objectives included reviewing the outline for the 2030 strategy and discussing a proposal for the future financing of the Risk Informed Early Action Partnership (REAP).

### Summary and Decisions

#### **1. CREWS Strategy 2030**

2. The Committee reviewed the annotated outline for the CREWS Strategy 2030, which followed an extensive process of co-creation and aligns with the external review findings. The strategy is intended to be a tool for communication, while emphasizing CREWS's role as a "catalytic" mechanism that sets-up core early warning and climate services in LDCs and SIDS, de-risks investment for larger financiers and pushes innovation.
3. Key feedback and consensus points included:
  - The need to broaden the focus beyond National Hydromet Services to encompass the whole early warning system chain.
  - Strengthening the articulation of financial sustainability by ensuring early warning system is embedded in institutional frameworks and national budgets.
  - Ensuring the strategy demonstrates alignment with the Early Warning for All initiative and other complementary initiatives.
  - Noted the crucial role of EWS in averting and minimizing loss and damage.
4. The Steering Committee requested the Secretariat to revise the Strategy 2030, taking into consideration the comments made during the meeting, for submission within three weeks for review and feedback. The consensus was to focus on a high-level, clear document for launch at COP30.

#### **2. Financing of the Risk Informed Early Action Partnership (REAP)**

5. The UK proposed that REAP should become a funded programme within the CREWS pipeline. This proposal is strategically valued for enhancing CREWS's work on linking early warning with early action and supporting people-centered values.
6. Key points addressed included:
  - **Financing:** The UK confirmed its intention to make an additional, new contribution to CREWS specifically to support the IFRC-managed REAP programme, ensuring that the proposal does not create additional demand on the current CREWS pipeline. Norway also intends to propose an extra contribution, informally earmarked for REAP.
  - **Accreditation:** The programme is subject to the completion of the IFRC accreditation process, which is currently in Stage 3 (due diligence).

7. The Steering Committee acknowledged the strategic value of funding REAP through CREWS and approved a revision of the CREWS pipeline to include a REAP funding proposal from IFRC, contingent upon the completion of IFRC's accreditation.

### 3. Governance and Operational Updates

8. **Governance and Outreach:** The CREWS Governance Document was modified to allow the participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) as non-voting members of the Steering Committee. Updates were also provided on the review of Operational Procedures for Fragile and Conflict-Affected Contexts (FCVs). The Chair reported positive engagement with partners, who committed to supporting the Chair's priorities: the 2030 strategy, updates to the governance structure, and resource mobilization.
9. **Accelerated Support Window (ASW):** The ASW has a backlog of requests, having reached the limit of ring-fenced resources. The Secretariat will recommend measures to manage the backlog, including:
- Reducing the maximum amount per action from \$250,000 to \$150,000.
  - Ring-fencing an additional \$3 million for the current backlog.
  - Strengthening criteria to focus on innovative tools and people-centered/early action activities.
10. **Resource Mobilization:** The Chair reported ongoing targeted outreach. Norway and Monaco were thanked for their additional or increased contributions, and Luxembourg is looking at providing an additional \$2 million in 2025.
11. **Preparations for the 22<sup>nd</sup> CREWS Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee decided that the 22nd meeting of the CREWS Steering Committee will take place in Malawi during the week of February 9th to 13th.

#### Agenda Item 1 – Opening

12. The Chair opened the meeting and extended a warm welcome to colleagues from Canada, Germany, Finland, Switzerland, Monaco, Norway, and the UK. France had expressed regrets but shared their comments on the various agenda items in writing.
13. The main objectives of the meeting were to: (i) review and discuss the outline for the next 2030 strategy and (ii) discuss a proposal from the UK regarding the potential CREWS financing of REAP.
14. Updates provided by the Chair included:
- **CREWS Governance Document:** The document has been modified to allow participation of LDCs and SIDS. The feedback from Monaco and the UK was acknowledged. A final version will be circulated. The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UNOHRLLS) was consulted and welcomed the intention to officially invite the Chair of the LDC group to the UNFCCC and the Chair of AOSIS to join the Steering Committee as non-voting members, with the objective of having them join the 22nd meeting in February 2026.
  - **Operational Procedures for FCV Contexts:** It is considered an important tool and hopeful that the operational procedures could facilitate conversations regarding IFRC positioning itself as a

pioneer in implementing the new guidance due to their experience in those contexts.

- **External Review:** It was previously agreed that the review should inform the strategy. The Chair expressed confidence that the current strategy outline acknowledges and builds on the findings, while also allowing the Steering Committee to choose which areas to focus on in the future. The review was scheduled to proceed to the validation workshop with the CREWS Partners on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2025.
- **Project Oversight:** Thanks were given to Members for oversight of projects, specifically on the approval of Phase 2 of the Southeast Asia programme in Cambodia and Lao PDR and the recent agreement for no-cost extensions.
- **Engagement and Outreach:** The Chair reported on bilateral engagement with the Belgium climate envoy, who is also the co-chair of the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF). Conversations were productive, encouraging close collaboration and recognizing synergies between CREWS and SOFF. The Chair also held conversations with the International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent (IFRC), International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). Meetings were held with WMO management (Secretary General, Assistant Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General), who expressed positive messages on CREWS's work and provided a commitment to support the Chair's three immediate priorities: the 2030 strategy, updates to the governance structure, and resource mobilization. Productive engagement also occurred with the Spanish and Chinese missions.
- **Other Agenda Items Mentioned:** The meeting was also set to include updates on the Accelerated Support Window, current outreach and resource mobilization, upcoming events (including COP30), and a decision regarding the 22nd meeting of the Steering Committee.

## Agenda Item 2 – CREWS Strategy 2030

15. The Chair emphasized the draft Strategy as a key piece of work, thanking the Secretariat and the Canada team for their continuous efforts. The most important element of the Strategy was deemed to be ownership. The collective goal is to create a Strategy that the Members are proud of, can promote, and can use to make the case for CREWS's work.
16. CREWS consultant, Ms. Kara Siahaan, provided an overview of the Strategy process. It has been a "journey of co-creation and collaboration," involving consultations and engagement with about 200 people. The process aligns with the external review and the CREWS theory of change that was validated and approved by the Steering Committee in 2024.
17. The annotated outline refocuses attention on strategic priorities. The Strategy is intended to be a tool for communicating priorities, while the theory of change serves planning, monitoring, and evaluation functions. Emerging topics like FCV contexts, international standards for core services, and the integration of early warning, climate, and hydrology are more prominently raised in the annotated outline.
18. The draft Strategy outline was shared with the Implementing Partners in parallel. Most comments received focused on fine-tuning solutions and activities, with no comments on the strategic priorities themselves. Target-level suggestions were also noted such as: including actors beyond

the National Hydromet Services; better demonstrating alignment of CREWS with relevant policies, Early Warning for All initiative and complementary programmes and linking the narrative of lessons learned from the external review with the strategy.

19. The Chair also encouraged brainstorming on the CREWS value proposition, suggesting CREWS acts as a "catalytic" mechanism or "blueprint" that charts a path and de-risks investment for larger financiers, rather than serving as a large financial institution like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) or multilateral development bank.
20. Representative from Switzerland acknowledged the clarity, ambitious yet concrete targets, integration of cross-cutting issues (gender, FCV, indigenous knowledge), innovation focus (AI), and the catalytic role of CREWS. He suggested improvements included incorporating previous results and learnings from the evaluation/review; embedding early warning within the integrated disaster risk management cycle (avoiding isolation); reducing the focus on Hydromet services to cover the whole early warning chain; strengthening the articulation of financial sustainability (maintenance/operation funds, skills); and ensuring sustainability is linked to embedding early warning in the institutional framework and national budgets, rather than relying excessively on the private sector, to prevent services from becoming paid and leaving the vulnerable behind. Switzerland also requested for more details on implementation means, partners, governance, and budget allocation.
21. Representative from the UK sought clarity on the origin (learning), relevance to context, and the unequivocal value-add (people-centered, full value chain, taking evidence/practice/capability/values to scale). Suggested strategies should articulate choices (doing more of one thing, less of another). UK expressed concern that the goal statement over-focused on loss and damage. It was also felt that the Strategy was too WMO-focused, arguing the approach needs to reflect the five multidisciplinary implementing partners working in concert. Baselines for targets were also requested. Priority 2 was seen as trying to do too many things. The core value should be leveraging finance behind national strategies.
22. Representative from Norway supported Priority 2's focus on innovative financing but emphasized the need to anchor investments in National Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to ensure national ownership. Norway also stressed the importance of complementarity and synergies with other programs (SOFF, GCF) and called for documenting and reporting achieved measurable aggregate results (e.g., lives saved). Also, echoed the need for baselines to measure the lift required for targets. Norway also questioned the realism of the \$1 billion leveraged target.
23. Germany supported the three priorities. Germany suggested that early warning plays a crucial role in averting and minimizing loss and damage. Germany supported leveraging finance (GCF-SAP) and highlighted the potential role of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) and the Santiago Network.
24. The Chair noted the challenge of balancing a crisp, short, impactful story with covering all necessary details.
25. The Secretariat emphasized the importance of agreeing on the "chapeau"—the top layers (goals, priorities, targets)—to drive further work. It also confirmed that most comments, including those on being too Hydromet-focused and incorporating the wider context, could be easily addressed.

The Secretariat assured the Committee that targets were based on baselines and that CREWS already leveraged over \$900 million USD.

26. The consensus was to focus on a high-level, clear document for launch at COP30 and discuss an accompanying operational plan at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee meeting.

**Decision 2.1: The Steering Committee requested the Secretariat to revise the Strategy 2030, taking into consideration the comments made at the meeting, for submission to the Steering Committee within 3 weeks after the meeting for review and feedback.**

### Agenda Item 3 – Financing of REAP

27. The UK introduced the proposal for REAP to become a funded programme within the CREWS pipeline. REAP's strategy runs out to 2030, and the UK has been its sole donor.

28. The proposal requires the Steering Committee to agree *in principle* for REAP to be considered for the future pipeline. The programme would be developed by the REAP Secretariat and submitted by the IFRC (pending IFRC's accreditation to CREWS).

#### 29. Key Considerations:

- **Financing:** The UK is seeking to avoid additional demand on the current CREWS pipeline, which already exceeds current resources. The UK intends to make an additional, new contribution to CREWS, specifically including an amount in support of the IFRC-managed REAP program. IFRC, during discussions with the Chair, also firmly stated that any REAP funding should be additional to avoid liability for CREWS.
- **Governance:** REAP has its own governing board. IFRC would serve as the accountable agency to the CREWS Steering Committee, which is standard for financial intermediary funds.
- **Strategic Value:** Bringing REAP closer to CREWS is seen as strategically valuable for supporting people-centered values, convening, documenting lessons learned, and enhancing CREWS's overall impact.

30. The Secretariat updated that IFRC is in Stage 3 (due diligence) of the accreditation process. IFRC is due to submit the completed Stage 3 application form as soon as possible for review of the Accreditation Panel members. Upon receiving and reviewing the form and related documents, the panel will submit a report to the Steering Committee for approval, allowing them to proceed to Stage 4 (discussion with the trustee on the financial procedures agreement).

31. The Chair noted IFRC has prioritized moving this process quickly. The Trustee clarified that the Steering Committee grants accreditation, and the trustee provides no objection.

32. Finland is supportive, calling the proposal a win-win solution that strengthens CREWS's role as a support mechanism to Early Warnings for All. Finland, as a REAP governing board member, offered to help ensure it adds value to the CREWS portfolio while maintaining REAP's essence as a convener.

33. Norway supported the proposal, recognizing the complementarity and value of REAP, especially its role as the Secretariat for the Friends of Early Warning. Norway's contribution agreement with CREWS expires at the end of the year, and it intends to propose an extra contribution, informally earmarked for REAP, in addition to their continued support for CREWS, following a similar model to the UK to simplify administration.
34. Switzerland acknowledged the great work and complementarity of REAP. Switzerland supports the pragmatic, less bureaucratic solution but noted that it is not able to provide additional funding specifically for REAP, though they plan to maintain their current contribution level.
35. Germany expressed initial concern regarding financial liability, which was alleviated by the guarantee of additionality. It questioned whether full integration into CREWS (instead of a separate programme) would be more efficient. The Chair noted this is a pertinent question that should be raised during the IFRC proposal development, though IFRC already recognizes potential for streamlining activities.
36. France provided written comments noting that it supports the idea, depending on future contributions, and recognizes REAP's added value to the EWS ecosystem. France stressed the need for alignment on geographical focus and ensuring the CREWS Steering Committee is represented on REAP's board (suggesting the CREWS Chair).
37. The UK confirmed REAP's current running cost is just over a million pounds a year. He argued against full integration/merger, deeming it pragmatic for REAP to remain a funded programme that maximizes complementarities, but agreed that clarity on how efficiencies are realized would be crucial in the proposal. He also reinforced the point that the decision does not preempt pipeline prioritization.

**Decision 3.1: The Steering Committee acknowledged the strategic value of a future proposal for funding the REAP Secretariat through CREWS and approved a revision of the CREWS pipeline to include a REAP funding proposal from IFRC. Once approved, IFRC is invited to engage with the CREWS Secretariat to develop a proposal, subject to completion of the IFRC accreditation process, while ensuring the proposal is fully aligned with CREWS's objectives and principles.**

#### **Agenda Item 4 – Any Other Business and Wrap Up**

38. The Secretariat provided a status update on the Accelerated Support Window (ASW). It was noted that the ASW is an appreciated mechanism and currently has a backlog of requests, having reached the limit of ring-fenced resources (\$2 million initially, followed by an additional \$2 million).
39. The Secretariat will circulate a written analysis next week with four potential recommendations:
- **Strengthen criteria:** Focus on innovative tools (e.g., smart weather apps in Tonga, cell broadcasting in the Caribbean, AI application in Malawi) and people-centered/early action activities.
  - **Reduce maximum amount:** Recommend a reduction from \$250,000 to \$150,000 per action (with exceptions possible), noting that most requests currently involve two or more actions.
  - **Incentivize timely reporting:** Access to new proposals would be contingent upon submitting all pending reports.



- **Ringfence additional resources:** Allocate an additional \$3 million for the current backlog.

40. The Chair reported that targeted outreach is ongoing, noting that many members are having conversations regarding the sustainability of their CREWS contributions (including Canada). The Chair offered to provide external incentives and support, including at a ministerial level, to help members make the case for future contributions.

41. Appreciation for Norway and Monaco was reinforced for their additional/increased contributions. It was also noted that Luxembourg is looking at providing an additional \$2 million in 2025.

42. Upcoming Events Key events highlighted were:

- UNGA (New York, next week): Special session on Early Warning for All and heat.
- G20 Ministerial Event: Organized as part of the South African presidency.
- GCF43 Board Meeting (Songdo, 27-30 October): Important in the context of the roll-out and soft pipelining of countries for financial support under the GCF/SAP – CREWS Scaling Up Framework on Early Warning. The Secretariat expects approval of the second Scale Up Framework proposal (for the Caribbean: Belize, Antigua and Tobago). Due to GCF regionalization, funding constraints, and procedural changes, CREWS Steering Committee support is requested to reinforce that the Scaling Up Framework is an important and effective mechanism.
- COP30: for COP30, events being prepared include a CREWS event organized with France on lessons learned and future outlook. Canada is considering a ministerial-level event at its pavilion to support the launch of the 2030 strategy. The Secretariat has also applied for a CREWS event at the Finnish Pavilion.

43. The Secretariat had circulated documents detailing the program, activities, and projected costs for the 22nd Steering Committee meeting.

**Decision 4.1: The Steering Committee decided that the 22nd meeting of the CREWS Steering Committee will take place the week of February 9th to 13th in Malawi. The Secretariat confirmed that hybrid participation would be possible**

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END OF MEETING



## Annex 1 – List of Participants

MEMBERS	NAMES	STATUS
Canada (Chair)	Francis Pigeon, ECCC	Confirmed in person
	Linh Trinh, ECCC	Confirmed online
Finland	Outi Hirvonen Myatt, MFA	Confirmed online
Germany	Tjark-Adrian Herzog, BMZ	Confirmed online
Monaco	Carl Dudek, CCNUCC	Confirmed online
Norway	Lars Andreas Lunde	Confirmed online
Switzerland	Sergio Perez	Confirmed online
UK	Gerard Howe, FCDO	Confirmed online
	Reel Ahmed, FCDO	Confirmed online
TRUSTEE	NAMES	STATUS
	Larissa Vovk	Confirmed online
	Chalida Chararnsuk	Confirmed online
	Dmytro Dolinin	Confirmed online
	Aishwarya Sanjay Geete	Confirmed online
SECRETARIAT	NAMES	STATUS
	John Harding	Confirmed in person
	Maria Lourdes Macasil	Confirmed in person
	Catherine Thompson	Confirmed in person
	Mathias Mulumba	Confirmed in person
	Kara Siahaan	Confirmed in person
	Yi Wang	Confirmed in person
	Rothsopong Hap	Confirmed in person
	Rhodialine Tetteh-Narh	Confirmed in person

## **Annex 2 –Agenda**

**14.30 –14.20   Item 1 – Opening**

- Welcome by the Chair and objectives of the Inter-Sessional Meeting
- Adoption of the Agenda

**14.20 – 15.20   Item 2 – CREWS Strategy 2030**

- Presentation of the draft CREWS Strategy 2030 outline
- Discussion on scope, priorities, solutions, targets and next steps

**15.20 – 16.00   Item 3 – Financing of REAP**

**16.00 – 16.30   Item 4 – Any Other Business and Wrap Up**