



Canadian
Meteorological and
Oceanographic Society

La Société Canadienne
de Météorologie et
d'Océanographie

STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2020

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Introduction

The Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society (CMOS) is the national society of individuals and organizations dedicated to advancing atmospheric and oceanic sciences and related environmental disciplines in Canada. The Society addresses a broad range of national and international meteorological and oceanographic concerns such as weather and weather extremes, climate change, ocean acidification and air quality and their effects on all aspects of life in Canada including transportation, forestry, agriculture and fisheries, oil and gas exploration, tourism, etc. Membership is open to all who have an interest in these activities and the Society currently comprises around 700 members from government, academia and the private sector.

The world is changing rapidly in many ways that implicate CMOS. Rapid advancements in science and technology (e.g. the growth of Big Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence) are changing the way we observe, analyze and predict the physical world; technology is also fundamentally changing the way people communicate (e.g. through the internet and social media) rendering traditional communication methods, and print media in particular, obsolete; and the policies and priorities of governments world-wide are going through a period of extraordinary advancement, evolution and upheaval. These, and indeed, the changing climate itself and its recent very real impacts on the world around us, are of primary interest to the Society.

CMOS has accomplished much in its 50-year history, largely due to the passion and hard work of its members. CMOS itself is also changing: changing in the composition of its membership; changing in the way it communicates with its members and Canadian society; and changing in the way its revenue is raised and spent. However, these changes may not be coming fast enough. There is an increasingly obvious trend of slowly declining revenues that, if not addressed, will threaten the very existence of CMOS within the next ten years or so.

If CMOS is to remain relevant and at the forefront of atmospheric and oceanic issues in Canada, it must consider more deliberately the consequences of the changing world and the effects on its activities. This three-year strategic plan provides the road map for how CMOS will meet these challenges and implement required changes. The strategic plan is not an action plan or a work plan. Rather, it is a forward-looking blue print that identifies areas of focus for improvement that can be used to provide our organization a strategic direction. Specific activities and action plans, with targeted completion dates will flow from this plan.

Definitions

Vision – A description of what an organization aspires to become;

Mission – an organization’s unchanging purpose; it’s who, what, why and how;

Core Values – the guiding principles that govern organizational behaviour

Goal areas – elements relating to its mission on which CMOS must concentrate attention during the course of the strategic plan to move closer to its vision.

Strategic objectives – the aims toward which effort and action are directed and coordinated (the “what”);

Strategies – the approaches for reaching the strategic objectives (the “how”); and

Action plans – activities or projects in line with each strategy, budgeted annually.

Vision

CMOS must develop a Vision of what it wishes to achieve. To date, the only articulation of the raison d'être of the Society can be found on its website: ***The Society exists for the advancement of meteorology and oceanography in Canada.*** This statement is more of a Mission Statement than a Vision Statement. What we want to achieve through this advancement of the science needs to be considered to articulate an aspirational Vision.

Mission

As stated in the introduction, CMOS is the national society of individuals and organizations dedicated to advancing atmospheric and oceanic sciences and related environmental disciplines in Canada. The Society's Mission is to promote meteorology and oceanography in Canada, and it is a major non-governmental charitable organization serving the interests of meteorologists, climatologists, oceanographers, limnologists, hydrologists and cryospheric scientists in Canada.

Core Values

These are yet to be identified. CMOS must develop operating principles for organizational behaviour to underpin the activities of CMOS' staff and volunteers in fulfilling its mission. These are its core values. CMOS' vision, and the strategic objectives and strategies for moving toward it, must align with its core values. Typical core values for not-for-profit scientific organizations include the following:

- openness and transparency
- Sound science
- Respect and integrity

CMOS should also articulate core values related to its structure, its business model and its place in Canadian society.

Strategic Plan Process

A Strategic Plan needs to start with an analysis of the contextual environment. A traditional "SWOT" analysis (Strengths and Weaknesses of the organization and the Opportunities and Threats facing it) was conducted for this first CMOS Strategic Plan (included here as Annex 1). Consideration of this analysis led to formulation of medium term Strategic Objectives in specific Goal Areas toward which effort and action need to be directed and coordinated during the course of the strategic plan for CMOS to remain relevant in achieving its Mission and move closer to its Vision.

For a plan to remain "strategic" it requires regular updates based on analyses of evolving science, technology and socio-economic considerations. In these updates, it is expected that the Vision, Mission and Core Values would remain relatively constant over time. It is the Goal areas and Strategic Objectives that are most likely to be in need of update, though they should not be changed just for change's sake – if they remain relevant based on analyses, they too can remain the same!

The three-year rotation of the CMOS Executive through regional Chapters provides an ideal framework to define a process to ensure the Strategic Plan benefits from diverse input and remains a living and relevant road-map for the organization. The sitting Executive will propose an update and organize an AGM discussion on the Plan at Congress in the final year of its mandate in order to pass on an updated Strategic Plan to the succeeding Executive.

Of course, as noted in previous sections, the Society need to articulate the statements of its Vision and Core Values as well. CMOS has always been a coalition of the willing that has achieved much over the years, without spending too much time on this kind of self-examination but it is important nonetheless in the context of this Strategic Plan. The Goal Areas and Strategic Objectives have been formulated on an implicit understanding of CMOS' goals and aspirations. However, it is not out of the question that deliberations in defining a Vision and Core Values may take the organization in a different direction. If this comes to pass, the process to ensure this Strategic Plan remains relevant will be essential.

Goal Areas

Three goal areas have been identified that will guide CMOS' work to increase its effectiveness for the duration of the plan:

1. Members
2. Outreach
3. Education

Strategic Objectives

The following Strategic Objectives have been identified in each of the Goal areas in order to maintain or increase the relevance of CMOS and address its effectiveness in raising the support and funds necessary to achieve its Vision

Members

Promote membership with CMOS by:

- 1) Demonstrating that the Society remains relevant and progressive in meteorological and oceanographic sciences and provides clear benefits to its members.
- 2) Honouring outstanding service to Canada in the field of meteorology and oceanography and acknowledge exemplary service to the Society.

Outreach

Foster more active outreach and communications activities to increase the visibility of the CMOS "brand" and promote meteorological and oceanographic science by ensuring:

- 1) Electronic communications are engaging, interactive, dynamic, and appropriately targeted and integrated.
- 2) An up-to-date list is maintained of subject matter experts that are responsive to external requests (e.g. media and others)
- 3) A particular focus on communicating and increasing the understanding of climate change to Canadians

Education

Foster meteorological and oceanographic engagement among Canadians by supporting improvement and strengthening of meteorological and oceanographic education at all levels through:

- 1) Continued promotion of student involvement in the society, society centres, annual congresses and publications.
- 2) Increased promotion of Project Maury and Project Atmosphere to K-12 science teachers.