

## **OUTCOME OF THE WMO EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS ON THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR CLIMATE SERVICES (GFCS)**

*Submitted by the WMO Secretariat*

The extraordinary session of Congress approved a resolution to establish an Intergovernmental Board on Climate Services to ensure coordination at the regional and global levels and to engage the entire UN system and other stakeholders to deliver needs-based climate services all over the world. It will seek to ensure that the programmes of partners and the activities of GFCS are aligned, and that a broad range of expertise is mobilized in order to serve the users' interests. The Board will operate under the authority of the World Meteorological Congress.

Congress also approved a resolution on the implementation of the Global Framework for Climate Services. Eight fast track projects described in the implementation plan will serve to showcase the benefits of climate services for the improvement of livelihoods. The implementation structure includes five components across which activities will be coordinated and integrated:

- User Interface Platforms (forums for the engagement of climate providers and users);
- Climate Services Information System;
- Observations and Monitoring;
- Research, Modelling and Prediction;
- Capacity building.

A third resolution dealing with budgetary issues was also approved, stating the immediate importance for voluntary contributions by Member States to secure quick wins for the Framework. A strong desire was expressed for the sustainability of resources – a deliberation which will certainly continue at the 17<sup>th</sup> Session of the World Meteorological Congress in 2015.

## **Outcome of the WMO Extraordinary Congress on GFCS**

### **1. Resolution adopted by the Extraordinary Congress**

The World Meteorological Congress Extraordinary Session 2012 (Cg-Ext. (2012), Geneva, 29–31 October 2012) adopted the draft resolution 1 (Cg-ext(2012)- Implementation Plan of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS).

The Resolution includes the following decisions:

- (1) To adopt the draft Implementation Plan of the Global Framework for Climate Services (Annex to this resolution) for the subsequent consideration by the Intergovernmental Board on Climate Services;
- (2) To entrust the Intergovernmental Board on Climate Services with the responsibility to oversee implementation of priority activities as set out in Chapter 4 of the draft Implementation Plan, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, including other United Nations bodies;
- (3) To entrust the Intergovernmental Board on Climate Services to regularly review the draft Implementation Plan of the GFCS, and to inform any changes to the subsequent session of Congress.;

Furthermore, the Resolution calls on:

- (1) United Nations system entities, as well as all relevant regional and international organizations and entities, whether governmental or non-governmental, to give strong support to the implementation of the GFCS through participation in its working mechanisms and contribution of expertise and resources to its programmes, projects and activities;
- (2) The FAO, WHO, ISDR and UNESCO and UN-Water and their partners to give guidance for implementation of climate services in the initial priority areas in the plan in accordance with guidelines or modalities that may be developed by the GFCS Intergovernmental Board with respect to such activities;

### **2. Key challenges and overarching goals of GFCS**

In the GFCS Implementation Plan, five key challenges have been identified through widespread consultation both at and subsequent to the World Climate Conference-3 in 2009. These challenges are as follows:

Access to climate services needs to be established and/or improved in all countries;  
The capacity to deal with climate-related risks is lacking in many countries;  
The availability and quality of climate data are inadequate in many parts of the globe;  
Users and providers need to interact better;  
The quality of climate services needs improvement to match user requirements better.

A Global Framework for Climate Services will strengthen and coordinate existing initiatives and will develop new infrastructure where needed in order to meet these challenges.

The GFCS has five overarching goals:

1. Reducing the vulnerability of society to climate-related hazards through better provision of climate information;
2. Advancing the key global development goals through better provision of climate information;
3. Mainstreaming the use of climate information in decision-making;
4. Strengthening the engagement of providers and users of climate services;
5. Maximizing the utility of existing climate service infrastructure.

### **3. GFCS components**

The Framework will be built upon the following five components, or pillars:

*User Interface Platform:* a structured means for users, climate researchers and climate information providers to interact at all levels;

*Climate Services Information System:* the mechanism through which information about climate (past, present and future) will be routinely collected, stored and processed to generate products and services that inform often complex decision-making across a wide range of climate-sensitive activities and enterprises;

*Observations and Monitoring:* to ensure that climate observations and other data necessary to meet the needs of end users are collected, managed and disseminated and are supported by relevant metadata;

*Research, Modelling and Prediction:* to foster research towards continually improving the scientific quality of climate information, providing an evidence base for the impacts of climate change and variability and for the cost-effectiveness of using climate information;

*Capacity Development:* to address the particular capacity development requirements identified in the other pillars and, more broadly, the basic requirements for enabling any Framework-related activities to occur.

#### **4. The GFCS and the Architecture for Climate Monitoring from Space**

At its sixteenth session in May 2011, the World Meteorological Congress had considered the underpinning role that observations would play in the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), and the importance of integration of ground-based and space-based observations in the successful implementation of the WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS).

It had adopted Resolution 19 (Cg-XVI) on the development of an architecture for climate monitoring from space, which is expected to be the space-based observation foundation of the GFCS.

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