

# World Climate Conference - 3

## Climate prediction and information for decision-making



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Geneva International Conference Centre



**Climate variability and change influence the well-being of society through interactions with life-supporting systems.** Humankind has always observed nature to monitor and predict climate conditions, thereby taking advantage of favourable conditions and managing associated risks.

The demand for climate prediction and information services will be even higher in the context of climate change and the increasing vulnerability of populations, particularly in regions where climate variability is high and which are prone to climate-related disasters. The sustainability of economic development and living conditions will depend on our ability to manage the risks associated with extreme climate events, which are

likely to be of greater frequency, intensity and extent.

Advances in the sciences of meteorology and hydrology provide us with better tools to better manage climate-related risks. This has been demonstrated by the outcomes of seasonal climate outlook forums. Climate prediction and information services provide societies, governments and socio-economic sectors with the tools to identify areas and periods of potential risks, take preventive measure and plan disaster response actions.

Climate information provides important input to the design, development and sustainability of a wide range of activities in many socio-economic sectors, including

agriculture, urban planning, energy and water resource management, transport, tourism and the operation of infrastructure. Together with predictions, climate information helps us manage the risks associated with climate variability—and this enhances our potential to adapt to climate change.

The advances in seasonal climate prediction have not always benefited society to the full. This is largely because of the absence of an integrated approach to the delivery of climate prediction and information services and the lack of appropriate supporting institutional mechanisms. National, regional and global institutions, including meteorological services, have continued to improve their products and services without taking

# Better climate information for a better future

[http://www.wmo.int/pages/world\\_climate\\_conference/index\\_en.html](http://www.wmo.int/pages/world_climate_conference/index_en.html)

fully into consideration the needs of different users. Similarly, users have continued with their efforts to improve services for climate-dependent sectors without involving meteorological services and making use of available climate information.

A joint approach that considers these shared needs is required. Climate predictions and information should be integrated into policies to operate and manage climate-dependent sectors, including those addressing disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate variability and change as reflected in the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Bali Action Plan and the Nairobi Work Programme in support of the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

The First and Second World Climate Conferences (1979 and 1990) played a crucial role in alerting the world community to the need for a better understanding of climate systems, climate change and mitigation of its harmful effects, as well as an assessment mechanism and a framework for policy dialogue. This resulted in the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, respectively.

WCC-3 will build on the achievements of the First and Second World Climate Conferences. It will focus on how humankind can benefit from the

advances in climate prediction and information services to manage climate-related risks as a way of developing resilience through adaptation. It will urge all countries worldwide to pool their resources and energies.

Recent natural disasters which inflicted devastating loss of life and property, and incurred food insecurity, demonstrate the urgency of jointly addressing climate-related risks for the benefit of society. WCC-3 is expected to propose global actions that will enhance the provision of climate prediction and information

services and their integration into the decision-making process.

In this way, the world will be made safer, the use of natural resources optimized, food production enhanced and support to disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change increased.

WCC-3 will further the dialogue between countries at the 15th session of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (30 November-11 December 2009), by which they will agree on mechanisms to help meet the global goals of sustainable development.



Luke Partridge

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