



MINISTERIE VAN OPENBARE WERKEN
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Concept Note
For a
National Consultation on Climate Services &
National Climate Outlook Forum for Suriname
Paramaribo

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Suriname is part of the Continent South America and is at the North Eastern Coast of it. The coastal area is low lying and thus prone to sea level rises. Most of the economic activities are at the coast and the majority of the population is concentrated at the coast. Furthermore, the main agricultural area is also located at the coastal zone. All these contributes that the country is susceptible to the irreversible impact of climate change.

The country has a Wet Tropical Climate with bimodal two wet seasons and two dry seasons and the main dominator for the rainfall is the Tropical Convergence Zone. Therefore, the ITCZ determines as well the start of the seasons. There is much variability identified in the start of the second rainy season, which causes various disturbances within the agricultural sector.

Agriculture, with the focus on rice production, is one of the livelihoods in Suriname. Variability of the climate causes much uncertainty among the agriculture sector. In general, variations in climate influence most human activities, either directly or indirectly. This is not beneficial for the economic growth for the country. Therefore, understanding and making effective use of available climate information is critical in order to ensure efficiency and sustainability.

The National Meteorological Service of Suriname provides weather and climate information to the public of various timescale such as daily, monthly, seasonal and annual. The Service makes efforts to engage the key economic sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, water resources, disaster risk reduction and health to get familiar with climate products in order to anticipate, prepare and respond to climate and weather extreme events. The knowledge regarding this will support the several sectors to manage, prevent and reduce economic setbacks and disaster that might affect the society. Furthermore, it can also contribute and play a crucial role in national development planning, for managing development opportunities and risks and for mitigation and adaptation strategies.

The Meteorological Services Suriname, a governmental agency within the Ministry of Public Works is well aware that for an efficient use of climate services the climate data should be tailored into products that meet the user needs. Furthermore, information about risk as well as opportunities should be included in the tailored product, if it is to be integrated into decision and policy making of climate sensitive sectors.

The Global Framework for Climate services (GFCS) has been established by the World Meteorological Service (WMO), in order to empower society to manage in a better way risks and opportunities arising from climate variability and change. The fundamental aim is to increase and improve the interactions between the climate service providers and the several sectors that make use of these services. Besides, the sectors will be able to cope better with natural variations in climate as well as human induced climate change.

The National Stakeholder Consultation (NSC)

The NSC is an opportunity to bring together representatives from key organisation international as regional such as the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), Caribbean Institute of Meteorology (CIMH), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the IICA, the Meteorological Service Suriname, top-level representatives of key climate sensitive Government Ministries such as Agriculture and Husbandry, Public Works, Water Resources and Environment, Disaster Risk management Agencies, Energy, academia, the private sector and Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO).

The main goal of the stakeholder meeting is to bridge the gap between the climate information from the scientists and the Meteorological Service, as a service provider and the practical needs of the users.

The following objectives should be executed:

- 1) To map the stakeholders for the National Stakeholders Consultation
- 2) To facilitate dialogue among climate service providers in Suriname, user organizations, the climate related research community, and decision makers in policy and planning in key sectors where decisions and practices need to be informed by climate services.
- 3) To review the current climate services available and facilitate dialogue on developing a system for generation and delivery of climate information and services that will enable effective uptake and integration in climate sensitive sectors in Suriname, in ways that engage national needs and demands.
- 4) To discuss the use of climate information in decision making in general and ways to mainstream climate services in the four priority sectors of the GFCS, these include Agriculture and Food Security, Disaster Risk Reduction, Health and Water, and other critical sectors of Suriname economy and society.
- 5) To discuss the sustainable implementation of a national framework for climate services in Suriname by focusing on the need for capacity building in climate research, climate observation and monitoring, operational climate information generation, and end-user interaction and engagement.

Expected Outcomes

The Meteorological Service of Suriname expects the NSC will:

- 1) Facilitate the identification and development of an appropriate system for generation and delivery of climate information in a sustainable manner that will enable effective uptake and integration of climate services in climate sensitive sectors in Suriname.
- 2) Enable institutional realignment and strategic support from key leaders, and decision and policy makers that are required to facilitate uptake of climate information and services in the management of climate variability and change in the various sectors.

- 3) Identify the required national capacity building development needs for the pillars of the GFCS at the national level in Suriname in terms of climate research, climate observation and monitoring, operational climate information generation, and end-user interaction and engagement.
- 4) Identify the capacity development needs in the priority areas of health, urban development, agriculture and food security, water resource management, disaster risk reduction and energy to facilitate uptake and use of climate services for better decision making, and eventually to develop an action plan to address the aforementioned identified needs and priorities

The National Climate Outlook Forum (NCOF)

The proposed National Climate Outlook Forum (NCOF) is a step towards a regular, systematic and coordinated process of climate risk management to be led by NMS to be based on state-of-the-art climate information and tools.

The NCOF will serve as a key national platform for promoting a regular dialogue and inter-agency coordination in responding to natural hazards, climate variability, extremes, and change. Such a system encompasses a continuous cycle of forecast generation, dissemination, application, and evaluation of application results.

The NCOF is also expected to help providers to package climate information to the needs of stakeholders and communicate uncertainties in climate predictions. The dialogue process would ultimately enable a shift to a risk management approach that makes use of probability forecasts building resilience of climate sensitive sectors.

Objectives

NCOF will serve as an institutional mechanism to

1. Ensure that climate information and products, including their uncertainties and limitations, are understood by and communicated to users.
2. Discuss user views to make this climate information accessible, user-friendly and applicable.
3. Provide a platform for understanding risks and opportunities of past, current and future climate information; and for inter-agency coordination of policies, sectoral plans and programs linked to potential impacts of hydro-meteorological hazards.
4. Evolve a culture of working together through joint climate information interpretation sessions for managing risks in various climate-sensitive sectors, like agriculture, irrigation, disaster risk reduction and health.
5. Strengthen and enhance the interface for inter-agency coordination of policies, sectoral plans, and an ongoing process of understanding and responding to risks posed or opportunities brought about by past, current, and future climate.

The NCOF will carry out the following activities:

1. Convene regular forums at least once before the onset of the rainy season to ensure the receipt, interpretation, communication, and application of climate information for managing risks. In consultation with the NCOF stakeholders, the Forum may be convened during an appropriate month of the year to give enough lead-time for preparedness and contingency

measures. A post-season rainy season verification gathering may also be held with provisions for forecast delivery and application for a next season (dry season).

2. The NCOF agenda will be structured as follows:

- National climate monitoring status and future plans;
- Review of the seasonal forecast performance for the previous season;
- Report of the actions taken by user agencies;
- Delivery of the seasonal climate outlook, and discussion of potential impacts and preparedness measures to be undertaken; and
- Identification of areas for improvement and actions to address gaps in preparation for the coming season. Special topics and current issues of interest will also be discussed.

3. Support the integration of weather and climate information applications into broader national development platform.

4. Support and encourage sub-national meetings and activities that would strengthen further application of climate services from national down to the local level.

5. Serve as a mechanism for soliciting the feedback from users on the early warning Providing accurate and timely meteorological, hydrological & climate-based products and services in order to contribute to the safety and well-being of the people of Suriname and the sustainable development of the country information and services provided by NMS.

Expected Output/outcomes

1. Seasonal outlook observing World Meteorological Organization (WMO) standards
2. Better packaging and communication of information to users.
3. Improved understanding of the information communicated by NMS.

The NCOF will result in a process guiding the improvement of climate information products as applied to particular sectors such as food security, health and disaster risk management. It will also offer suggestions on how to improve inter-agency coordination and collaboration towards managing climate risks

The NCOF is expected to have representatives from various governmental and nongovernmental agencies, academic institutions, and international donors/partner organizations.

The Meteorological Service of Suriname is committed and driven to strengthening the national climate services program in the country, in terms of the development of clear, accurate, precise, user-targeted climate information and climate predictions.

The National Stakeholder Consultation is expected to be conducted over a period of two days, from Sept 8-9, 2015 followed by the National Climate Outlook Forum on Sept 11, 2015, with Sept 10, 2015 reserved for evaluating the results of the National Stakeholder Consultation.

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