



CONCEPT NOTE

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE SERVICES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL FOR THE CARIBBEAN

PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, 29–31 MAY, 2013

Better understanding and management of climate variability will help us cope with climate change. Decreasing the vulnerability of different sectors such as biodiversity, forestry, and agriculture to natural climate variability through a more informed choice of policies, practices and technologies will, in many cases, reduce the long-term vulnerability of these systems to climate change.

INTRODUCTION

The Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) was established in 2009, through a high-level declaration at World Climate Conference-3 organized by World Meteorological Organization (WMO), other United Nations (UN) agencies, Governments and partners to guide the development of climate services around the world. The vision of the GFCS is to enable society to better manage the risks and opportunities arising from climate variability and change, especially for those who are most vulnerable to such risks. This will be achieved through the development and incorporation of science-based climate information and prediction into planning, policy and practice. The full value of the GFCS will be realized incrementally through the delivery and use of a multitude of climate services at regional, national and local levels.

Following the ground-work laid by a High Level Taskforce on GFCS and the Sixteenth Session of the World Meteorological Congress, an Extraordinary Session of the World Meteorological Congress, held for the first time in the history of WMO in October 2012, adopted the draft Implementation Plan of the GFCS and called for an immediate move to action with a particular focus on capacity development and user involvement during the initial period of implementation to support the establishment of climate services in countries and territories in which improvements in the provision of climate services are urgently required.

The GFCS will build upon the following five components or pillars required to address the entire value chain for the production, management, delivery and application of climate information and services in support of decision-making, addressing initially

four priority areas (agriculture and food security; water; health; and disaster risk reduction):

- **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 and deliver 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, including metadata, required to meet the needs of end users are collected, managed, disseminated and its utility assessed;
- **Research, Modelling and Prediction:** to foster research towards continually improving the scientific quality of climate information and services, providing an evidence base for the impacts of climate change and variability and for the value of using climate information;
- **Coordination and Capacity Development:** to address the mechanisms for coordination and networks needed across information providers and affected communities and capacity development, such as needed to interpret, translate and use climate information to support decision making; identified in the other pillars and, for enabling GFCS-related activities.

To effectively implement all of the pillars of the GFCS from the global to the national levels, consultations involving key stakeholders are needed to optimize the benefit of existing practices, expertise and infrastructure. It is with this background that WMO, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology & Hydrology (CIMH) and partners are organizing the Regional Workshop on Climate Services at the National Level for the Caribbean from 29-31 May 2013 in Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

- To review the current status of generating climate information in the region and assess specific needs for climate services in the initial four priority areas of the Global Framework for Climate Services - GFCS (agriculture and food security; water; health; and disaster risk reduction) at the national and local levels and the required global and regional inputs;
- To review and characterize the current status of interfacing mechanisms and interactions between climate services providers and users, identify major areas for improvement and recommend effective mechanisms and practices;
- To articulate the capacity building needs for the countries and territories in the region, in terms of mandates, infrastructure as well as human resources, in all the components of the GFCS;
- To discuss and recommend improved arrangements for national observation networks, enhanced research and analysis of national and local climate issues including climate variability and change and the associated impacts, improved access and utility of climate data and predictions, and sustained operational mechanisms that improve facilitation of the development and flow of climate information;
- To provide the RA IV Management Group with information that will inform their preparations for finalization of the work programme for the GFCS for the Region for the period 2013-2017; and
- To identify, propose and prioritize, ways to promote community understanding and awareness of climate variability and change, and associated risks and opportunities for improved climate

risk management and adaptation, and climate products and services required thereof.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE WORKSHOP

This workshop aims to bring together experts from the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and the key decision-makers, and practitioners from the initial four priority areas of the GFCS. It will facilitate the identification of appropriate mechanisms and networks to improve and sustain the flow of climate information for different users. Specifically, it should result in:

- (i) Strengthened institutional relationships and partnerships of the NMHS with the users in health, water resource management, Disaster Risk Reduction, Agriculture, tourism and planning sectors
- (ii) enhanced understanding of the needs for climate services in different user sectors;
- (iii) improved knowledge of the existing interface mechanisms and recommendations for improvements where needed;
- (iv) clear understanding of capacity development needs to implement the GFCS at regional and national levels;
- (v) strategic guidance on institutional arrangements, partnerships and processes required to operationalize the GFCS at the national level;
- (vi) guidance to Regional Association IV that will chart the way forward for the Region with respect to the GFCS.

WMO – The World Meteorological Organization (WMO), founded in 1950, is a specialized agency of the United Nations for weather, climate, and water. WMO contributes to understanding the impacts of climate variability/change across socio-economic sectors. It also promotes capacity building in the application of meteorological and climatological data and products in assessing the impacts of climate variability/change.

CIMH – The Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) established in 1967 is an Organ of the Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO). The CIMH assists in improving and developing the Meteorological and Hydrological Services as well as providing the awareness of the associated benefits for the economic well-being of the CIMH member states. This is achieved primarily through training, research, investigations, and the provision of related specialized services and advice. Sixteen states in the Caribbean form the membership CMO. The CIMH functions as (i) a WMO Regional Training Centre (RTC); (ii) a Regional Instrument Centre for Meteorology and Hydrology; (iii) a Centre of Excellence for Training in Satellite Meteorology and (iv) a Regional Climate Data Centre. In the near future, the CIMH expects to commence the formal process to become WMO Regional Climate Centre (RCC) for the Caribbean. The CIMH maintains collaborations with many regional and international organizations.

NOAA – The mission of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is Science, Service, and Stewardship i.e., to

understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts; to share that knowledge and information with others; and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.

This workshop will be supported by AEMET, FAO and UNESCO.

For more information on this workshop please contact:

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