



World Meteorological Organization
Organisation météorologique mondiale

Secrétariat

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Weather • Climate • Water
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Our ref.: CLPA/CCA/UNFCCC-COP19

GENEVA, 10 December 2013

Subject: Outcomes of the UNFCCC COP 19 (Warsaw, Poland, 11-22 November 2013) and of WMO's activities

Action required: Representatives from NMHSs are requested to follow-up on relevant outcomes of COP 19 and support WMO's actions

Dear Sir/Madam,

As you are aware, following my letters dated 21 August and 6 November 2013, the 19th session of the Conference of Parties to the Climate Change Convention (COP 19) was held in conjunction with the 9th Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 9) in Warsaw, Poland, from 11 to 22 November 2013. The Conference also included the following sessions:

- The thirty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body of Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 39);
- The thirty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 39); and
- The Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP).

The High Level Segment of COP 19 and CMP 9 opened in the afternoon of 19 November and continued until 22 November 2013.

WMO contributed to four side events jointly organized by the UN-wide system on topics such as agriculture, population resilience and health, which were relevant to priority areas of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS).

At the opening plenary of SBSTA 39, the WMO Deputy Secretary-General made a statement on the outcome of the first session of the Intergovernmental Board on Climate Services (IBCS-1), established to provide the oversight and management of the implementation of the GFCS. On the same subject, WMO had also submitted a document to UNFCCC which provided more detailed information on the outcome of the IBCS-1. For additional information, please refer to the following link: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/smsn/igo/139.pdf>

To: Permanent Representatives (or Directors of Meteorological or Hydrometeorological Services) of Members of WMO (PR-6733)

cc: Hydrological Advisers to Permanent Representatives

Furthermore, WMO submitted a set of Key Messages of the WMO Community to COP 19 which was communicated in my letter dated 6 November 2013. The document was made available in all UN languages. It further highlights important issues and areas of work that NMHSs are involved in, in the relevant COP process. For further information, please visit the following links:

<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/smsn/igo/141.pdf>

http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/smsn/igo/wmo_key_messages_un_languages.pdf

The WMO's co-sponsored programme, the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), submitted a document to SBSTA 39 on its current activities in support of the GFCS and the UNFCCC and addressing the need for observation requirements for climate change adaptation. See <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/smsn/igo/138.pdf>

It is my pleasure to inform you that the following decisions welcomed WMO's ongoing initiatives and contribution to the work of the Convention:

Research and systematic observation

- (a) Under Research and systematic observation, SBSTA 39 noted the information provided by WMO on the developments regarding the implementation of the GFCS and the outcome of the IBCS-1. The SBSTA invited WMO to provide, at SBSTA 41, information on the outcome of the second session of the IBCS, to be held in November 2014;
- (b) The SBSTA also noted with appreciation the information provided by GCOS on its recent and planned activities and the role of GCOS, its sponsors and partners in strengthening observation networks and the provision of high-quality climate information and data, including in the implementation of the GFCS;
- (c) The SBSTA welcomed the contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The SBSTA noted that the IPCC will have released the contributions of Working Groups II and III to the AR5 by SBSTA 40 and the AR5 Synthesis Report by SBSTA 41;
- (d) The SBSTA emphasized the importance of systematic observation for the UNFCCC process at large, including for advancing climate modelling at all scales and for decision-making on adaptation. It noted that there are still gaps in critical observational data, inter alia for the oceans, and in the networks in some parts of the world, especially in developing countries. The SBSTA affirmed the importance of historical data records, the need to enhance data rescue and digitization efforts and climate monitoring. It therefore urged Parties and relevant organizations to enhance capacity, collaboration and coordination in this area;
- (e) The SBSTA also noted that a workshop on systematic observation, organized in close collaboration with GCOS and its sponsors, could help to identify ways to strengthen systematic observation and to enhance related capacity in developing countries, in particular in support of adaptation planning. Full text of those decisions can be found at:
http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/6911.php?pref=600007673#beg

Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation

Concerning the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, COP 19 took note of the development of linkages with other relevant work streams, including the national adaptation plan process, research and systematic observation and bodies under the Convention. It further noted the development of knowledge products to improve the understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation in response to needs identified by Parties. COP 19 supported the effective dissemination of knowledge products at the regional, national and subnational levels through, inter alia, knowledge networks and national focal points, particularly in developing countries. In this context, the Regional Climate Centers (RCCs) and Regional Climate Outlook Forum (RCOF) are best positioned to meet this requirement. Furthermore, COP 19 requested the SBSTA to consider, inter alia, the following issues:

- (a) Ecosystems;
- (b) Human settlements;
- (c) Water resources;
- (d) Health.

As you are aware, the two latter issues are among the priority areas of the implementation of GFCS.

Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage

Pursuant to decision 3/CP.18, which captured the role and contribution of the GFCS, COP 19 established the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts under the Cancun Adaptation Framework. The decision takes into account existing institutional arrangements among which our community benefits from examples such as the RCCs and technical commissions, as part of the WMO constituent bodies. COP 19 further established an Executive Committee of the Warsaw international mechanism to report annually to the Conference of Parties through the SBSTA and SBI. The decision of COP 19 involves the expert groups under the Convention, and expertise and knowledge of relevant organizations and expert bodies outside the Convention, at all levels to bring necessary skills in approaches addressing loss and damage associated with the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events. WMO will contribute to the Warsaw international mechanism through implementation of the GFCS, particularly in developing and least developed countries, as well as the small island developing states.

On other fronts, WMO's presence was also felt at the conference through the launches of its reports on atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases in 2012 and on the climate trends and events experienced so far in 2013. These reports received a great deal of press coverage and were widely cited during the conference as providing clear evidence of the need for action on climate change. The Greenhouse Gas Bulletin and WMO's Provisional Statement on the State of Global Climate in 2013 can be accessed through the following links: http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/arep/gaw/ghg/documents/GHG_Bulletin_No.9_en.pdf and http://www.wmo.int/pages/mediacentre/press_releases/documents/ProvisionalStatementStatusClimate2013

This year, under the United Nations Delivering as One, a high-level event titled 'The UN system as a catalyst for climate action: Promoting sustainable low-carbon development' was hosted by the UN Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon, as Chair of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). The event fostered a dialogue among the Parties to the Convention, civil society, private sector and UN system leaders to demonstrate the UN system's collective capacity to support countries in implementing low-carbon sustainable development. As one of the panelists in the event, the WMO Secretary-General highlighted the leading role of WMO

in providing unbiased scientific information to address climate change and the expected benefits of the implementation of the GFCS for adaptation.

As in the previous COP sessions the WMO exhibition booth, in cooperation with the Polish Institute of Meteorology and Water Management (IMGW), provided information to visitors and delegates on the role of WMO and NMHSs, especially in adaptation activities. In addition to WMO Programmes, other co-sponsored programmes such as the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) and the GCOS contributed electronic publications for distribution in the booth. Furthermore, WMO dedicated a webpage for its preparations and participation in COP 19. It provided background information and daily news from Warsaw during the working days of this Conference. See http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/wcp/COP/cop19/index_en.php

It was my pleasure to note that during COP 19 around 30 Directors of Hydrometeorological Services and Permanent Representatives attended this Conference, among which there were two WMO vice-presidents and the president of the Regional Association for Asia (RA II). Furthermore, around 120 delegates from 56 NMHSs accompanied their national delegations at COP 19. There were also meteorological and climate experts in the composition of delegations from intergovernmental organizations and research centres such as the African Centre of Meteorological Application and Development (ACMAD), African Climate Policy Center (ACPC), AGRHYMET, East African Community, International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI), League of Arab States, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science and the UK Met Office Hadley Centre.

Other outcomes of COP 19/CMP 9

Beyond those WMO specific issues mentioned above, I may note that at COP 19/CMP 9 governments took steps on a track towards a universal climate agreement in 2015, including significant new decisions that will cut emissions from deforestation and on loss and damage. COP 19 set a pathway for governments to work on a draft text of a new universal climate agreement so it appears on the table at the next UN climate change conference in Peru. This is an essential step to reach a final agreement in Paris in 2015.

Finance for adaptation

The Warsaw meeting also resulted in concrete announcements of forthcoming contributions of public climate finance to support developing national actions. Meanwhile, the Green Climate Fund Board is to commence its initial resource mobilization process as soon as possible and developed countries were asked for ambitious, timely contributions by COP 20 in December next year, to enable an effective operationalization. Around eight developed countries, pledged over 100 million dollars to add to the Adaptation Fund, which has now started to fund national projects.

The UN climate summit

In Warsaw the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reiterated his invitation to all governments and leaders from finance, business, local government and civil society, to a climate summit in New York on 23 September 2014. This will be complementary to the COP process.

Cutting emissions from deforestation

The COP 19 agreements included a significant set of decisions on ways to help developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and the degradation of forests, which account for around one fifth of all human-generated emissions. The set of agreements were called the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, which is backed by 280 million dollars of financing pledged by a number of developed countries.

Election of officers of bodies under the Convention

Referring to a decision of COP 19, on 'Election of officers of bodies under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol', I am particularly pleased to note that Mr Emmanuel Dumisani Dlamini, Permanent Representative of Swaziland with WMO, was elected chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) for the next period.

Furthermore, the election of two delegates from NMHSs of Tajikistan and Lesotho, namely Mr Ilhomjon Rajabov, Vice-Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and Ms Mabafokeng F. Mahahabisa, SBI Rapporteur, respectively, bring additional strength and value to the engagement of delegates from NMHSs in the UNFCCC process. I believe that this opportunity will further strengthen the role and contribution of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) in the context of SBSTA, SBI and COP sessions.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Polish Institute of Meteorology and Water Management (IMGW) for the support extended to the WMO delegation during this Conference and to all those delegates from NMHSs who attended COP 19. I look forward to our continued cooperation in future events.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M. Jarraud', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

(M. Jarraud)
Secretary-General