World Meteorological Organization
Organisation météorologique mondiale

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Our ref.: CLPA/CCA/UNFCCC-COP21/2nd GENEVA, 16 September 2015

Annex: 1

Subject: COP 21 and CMP 11 of the UNFCCC, Paris, France, 30 November–11 December 2015

Actions required: To inform as to your participation at COP 21 and to consider the summary of "Key Messages of the WMO Community"

Dear Sir/Madam,

Following my previous circular letter dated 31 July 2015, as you are aware, the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention (COP 21) will be held in conjunction with the 11th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 11) in Paris, France, from 30 November to 11 December 2015. This will also include the following sessions:

- The forty-third session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 43); and
- The forty-third session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 43).

In particular, COP 21 is expected to adopt a universal agreement on mitigation, to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2°C or 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, as well as measures for adapting to unavoidable climate changes. The agreement is expected to address the financial means, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building necessary to achieve these ends. Consequently COP 21 is expected to be one of the most important such meetings to date.

I encourage you to actively participate in COP 21 and CMP 11 as a member of your national delegation and to support the consideration and recognition of concepts and approaches reflecting the scientific and technical contribution of the WMO community. In case you or your staff members are planning to attend, I would appreciate receiving information concerning attendance not later than **15 October 2015**. In the event that you are planning to participate in the eleventh part of the second session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) which will take place in Bonn, Germany, from 19-23 October 2015, I would appreciate knowing that as well.

To: Permanent Representatives (or Directors of Meteorological or Hydrometeorological Services) of Members of WMO (PR-6869)

cc: Hydrological Advisers to Permanent Representatives

In support of the above, I am pleased to send you attached a supplementary summary of "Key Messages of the WMO Community for COP 21". Additional background material will be sent out in October 2015. I hope these messages will be useful for inclusion in your country's national statements and for other preparations for the COP.

Yours faithfully,

(J. Lengoasa)
for the Secretary-General

CLPA/CCA/UNFCCC-COP21/2nd, ANNEX

Key messages from the WMO community to COP 21

The world is looking to the international community to deliver a new, ambitious and universally binding agreement at COP 21 in Paris. It is of prime importance that Members take into account their National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) responsibilities and capabilities as they participate actively in the negotiations to ensure that the climate agreement and other outcomes strengthen the role of NMHSs and their ability to provide services to their communities.

Negotiations have already made important references to subjects that are highly relevant to the WMO community. These include:

- *The use of the best available scientific knowledge for climate action;*
- *Strengthening and improving climate-related research and systematic observation; and*
- *Assessment of knowledge gaps in adaptation.*

It would thus be important that the final text adopted in Paris preserved such language that highlights the role of scientific information derived from research and systematic observations to support decision-making.

WMO and its Members' NMHS contributions to areas of particular relevance to the Convention are briefly outlined below in the form of a short statement and supportive information.

Mitigation

> ***The monitoring of mitigation actions will benefit from enhanced observation of atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, which must be sustained and even strengthened, at the same time climate services that support the energy sector can play a vital role in reaching a climate-neutral economy.***

The WMO Global Atmosphere Watch Programme (GAW) is unique in providing reliable long-term, high-quality observations of global atmospheric composition changes in support of international policymaking, as documented in the annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin. Per a decision of the Seventeenth World Meteorological Congress, GAW has embarked on the development of an Integrated Global Greenhouse Gas Information System. This is conceived as an independent, observation-based information system for determining trends and distributions of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and whether they are consistent with efforts to reduce emissions. Its aim is to improve the granularity of observations and analyses in order to support planning of mitigation efforts.

The World Meteorological Congress recently agreed to the proposal of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) to include energy as the fifth GFCS priority area. This decision recognizes the role of climate services in the promotion of renewable energy sources and energy saving, as well as in the protection of energy infrastructure and delivery systems from weather and climate extremes. As energy is a revenue-generating sector, the provision of energy-related climate services presents a considerable opportunity for NMHSs to support policy implementation

on a sustainable basis. This decision is in line with other United Nations targets and the prioritization of low-emission power generation as a key strategic result of the projects funded via the Green Climate Fund (see below).

Observing systems operated by WMO Members provide the data needed to monitor climate change and the efficacy of policies and measures to combat it. Therefore efforts need to be made to ensure that the observations crucial to our understanding of atmospheric and terrestrial systems – including the hydrosphere, biosphere, and cryosphere – are moved from a largely research driven funding base to one capable of sustaining a secure, long term monitoring network.

Adaptation

Climate services, such as those developed under the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), provide essential information for adaptation at the national and local levels and should receive commensurate support.

NMHSs can help to meet the demand for climate services to address climate change and adaptation, particularly at the local level, by combining climate-change projections with local climate data and knowledge. These products can then be used to devise adaptation strategies including preparing for, and adjusting to, changing patterns of extreme events. NMHSs are critical actors in national development planning within almost all sectors. Key services include providing information and scientific advice on climate variability, trends and change, including at the policy level. NMHSs are encouraged to provide technical advice in preparing and implementing National Adaptation Plans, which are expected to guide the allocation of significant climate finance in the future.

The Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) helps governments build the capacities needed to better anticipate the impacts of evolving climate conditions, including possible increases in climate extremes. This includes bridging global, regional, national and local information gaps; incorporating climate information into various socioeconomic sectors; research, modelling and prediction; and developing mitigation and adaptation measures. Implementation of the GFCS at country level, therefore, provides a key mechanism for implementing adaptation.

Loss and Damage

Monitoring and cataloging of extreme events and climate trends is crucial for tracking climate-related loss and damage. Enhanced capabilities to monitor and model future climate conditions will improve attribution of extreme weather events to climate change and facilitate preparedness and adaptation at all time scales.

As signified by the launch of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, risk management has become a central element within UNFCCC. With the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction earlier this year, the climate change and disaster risk reduction agendas have continued to convergence. As most disaster-related loss and damage is associated with climate-related hazards, integrating disaster-risk reduction into climate services has the potential to generate multiple synergies.

The Seventeenth World Meteorological Congress decided to standardize the weather, water, climate, space weather and other related environmental hazard and risk information and develop identifiers for cataloguing weather, water and climate extreme events. These measures will promote interoperability among datasets and facilitate Members' efforts to assess risks and track climate-related loss and damage. NMHSs have a vital role to play in the collection, provision and

quality assurance of these data, including the official designation/validation of extreme events and archiving of event data and trend indices.

Technology transfer/capacity development

Climate action depends on the availability of high-quality scientific information. Climate data, science, information and knowledge are critical contributions to all facets of development under a changing climate. There is an urgent need to build the scientific and operational capability of institutions around the world to underpin the information and service needs of policymakers and vulnerable communities. WMO capacity development activities help to ensure that NMHSs have the required technical infrastructure, legal and institutional framework, staff competencies, as well as financial, political, regional and other resources. Capacity-building mechanisms under the Convention are currently weak, however, and ways and means under the Convention need to be found to promote standing capacities within institutions such as WMO to enable them to provide vigorous and sustained capacity development support in all areas covered by the Convention.

Climate finance

Projects to be financed by the Green Climate Fund in support of climate change actions, for both mitigation and adaptation, should be climate-proof and include provisions for developing new, or strengthening existing, human and technical observing and modelling capabilities in support of climate services delivery enhancement.

The Seventeenth World Meteorological Congress adopted a policy for the free and open international exchange of climate-relevant data, tools and scientifically based methods to ensure greater availability of, access to, and use of enhanced climate services for all countries, while respecting national and international policies. Adoption of this policy will require Members to establish financial mechanisms, including new investments, for sustaining the network of stations and sensors needed for the global climate observing systems. As the contributions covered by the policy are vital to UNFCCC implementation, climate-financing resources may provide a means for supporting the necessary observing systems and data management and exchange.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF), launched in 2014 with current pledges exceeding USD 10 billion, will allocate half of its resources to mitigation and half to adaptation. The GCF has eight strategic results, including low-emission power generation and increased health, food, water and livelihood security. Climate services as a tool for adaptation at the national and local levels are therefore eligible for GCF funding, as are climate services for renewable energy that contribute to mitigation. Countries wishing to access the GCF will designate Nationally Designated Authorities that will oversee preparation and submission of projects. United Nations agencies are also eligible to access the Fund and WMO has submitted a request for accreditation.

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