



The Nineteenth Session of the North Eurasian Climate Outlook Forum

(NEACOF-19)

Opening remarks

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, all protocol observed

It is my honor to join you at this inaugural online session of the Nineteenth session of the North Eurasian Climate Outlook Forum, and deliver this opening remark, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Mr Petteri Taalas.

First, I would like to express the organization's deepest appreciation to Government of the Russian Federation for organizing this important event. Special thanks to the Hydromet Service of Russia and the North EurAsia Climate Centre (NEACC), participants and all partners.

The World Meteorological Organization has long been championing the view that timely provision of robust and high-quality climate information, products and services will significantly help to reduce climate risks and impacts in climate sensitive sectors, serving as a foundation for adaptation, mitigation and sustainable development options.

Regional Climate Outlook Forums are key elements in the implementation of the Global Framework for Climate Services and the most effective mechanisms for developing user-driven products and services and communicating those to users at regional and national scale.

Over last two decades RCOFs have demonstrated many benefits, including promoting broad awareness and acceptance of seasonal forecasts, improvements in Members' capacities to develop and interpret such forecasts, and the provision of useful information for decision-making at national level.

In 2017, WMO undertook a comprehensive and global review to examine gaps in the interpretation, creation and dissemination of RCOF products. The review resulted in a unanimous call for transformation of the RCOF process including mainstreaming of objective seasonal climate forecasting underpinning RCOF products; expanding product portfolio, based on standardized operational practices, including climate monitoring, forecast verification, sub-seasonal products, and climate change-related products such as observed trends and attribution of extreme events.

Recently approved by a decision of the WMO's seventy-second session of Executive Council last month, RCOF process is now moving away from consensus-based outlook and striving to operationalize the provision of objective seasonal outlooks (OSO) and tailored products for country level service delivery.

The objective seasonal outlook approach involves the use of multi-model ensemble of dynamical climate models and follows a more traceable, reproducible, and well-documented procedure - including model selection, bias correction, calibration and statistical downscaling - that is amenable to assessments of forecast quality (verification).

Regional Climate Centres are expected to actively contribute to the implementation of this proposal in the regions.

WMO recently released the State of Climate Services 2020 Report, which focuses on risk information and Early Warning Systems. The above-mentioned EC-72 supported the publication of the regional state of climate report.

La Niña has developed and is expected to last into next year, affecting temperatures, precipitation and storm patterns in many parts

of the world, according to the World Meteorological Organization. The NEACOF will provide a regional platform to discuss the impacts of La Nina on the climate patterns over the region and to identify those areas/sectors considered most at risk when La Nina impacts.

We see the NEACOF as an important platform to pave the way for the transformation of the RCOF process and products.

With this in mind, we have a role to play in ensuring that Regional Climate Outlook Forums (RCOFs) will continue serving as the vehicle for the development of all ranges of user-driven products and services in support of sectoral user groups, and for cascading and communicating those at regional and national scales.

The need for development of such credible climate information product is even more striking today when the consequences of a changing climate are already threatening lives and livelihoods across the planet – through more severe and frequent extreme weather, droughts and tropical storms, dangerous heatwaves, rising sea levels and diminishing arctic sea ice.

In concluding, I would like to assure you of WMO continued support and guidance to the implementation of climate services and the RCOFs process worldwide. I look forward to a productive meeting and deliberations.

Thank you.

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