**Climate services for sustainable climate-resilient development
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Concept note for COP 18 side event

When: Friday, 30 November 2012, 18:30—20:00

Where: Side Event Room 4

Organizers: World Meteorological Organization and partners

**Objective**

This side event will inform conference delegates about how the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) can support national and regional efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and climate change on public health, disaster risk, water resources, food security and other sectors.

**Key messages**

* The scientific understanding of the climate system has advanced to the stage where it is now possible to provide operational climate services.
* The GFCS is a partnership amongst governments and will support them in delivering and using climate services.
* The GFCS is driven by user needs. Users have a critical role in defining the services that are provided.
* The GFCS is an excellent investment that will more than pay for itself by reducing the costs of climate impacts and promoting sustainable development.
* The success of the GFCS will depend on fully engaging governments, the United Nations system and other partners in delivering services and building the capacity of users.

**Background**

The GFCS is a global partnership of governments and organizations that produce and use climate information and services. It seeks to enable researchers and the producers and users of information to join forces to improve the quality and quantity of climate services worldwide, particularly in developing countries.

The GFCS builds on continued improvements in climate forecasts and climate change scenarios to expand access to the best available climate data and information. Policymakers, planners, investors and vulnerable communities need climate information in user-friendly formats so that they can prepare for expected trends and changes. They need good-quality data from national and international databases on temperature, rainfall, wind, soil moisture and ocean conditions. They also need long-term historical averages of these parameters as well as maps, risk and vulnerability analyses, assessments, and long-term projections and scenarios.

Depending on the user’s needs, these data and information products may be combined with non-climate data, such as agricultural production, health trends, population distributions in high-risk areas, road and infrastructure maps for the delivery of goods, and other socio-economic variables. The aim is to support efforts to prepare for new climate conditions and adapt to their impact on water supplies, health risks, extreme events, farm productivity, infrastructure placement, and so forth.

Expanding the production, distribution and use of relevant and up-to-date climate information can best be achieved by pooling expertise and resources through international cooperation. UN agencies, regional institutions, national governments and researchers will work together through the GFCS to disseminate data, information, services and best practices. Key partners include WMO, WHO, UNEP, UNESCO, UN Water, ISDR, FAO, UNDP, WFP, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The GFCS implementation plan was adopted by the World Meteorological Congress in October 2012. It will guide the development of the information resources that are so urgently needed for building climate resilience and preparing adaptation plans. It will also advance efforts to identify and meet user needs for climate information; promote the effective application of climate observations, socio-economic data, models and predictions to solving national, regional and global problems; develop a system for transforming data into information products and services to inform decision making; and increase the capacity around the world for producing and using climate services.

**Programme**

Moderator: WMO

18:30 Opening remarks: Implementation of Climate Services for Sustainable Development – Mr. Michel Jarraud, Secretary General, WMO

18:40 (Title TbD) – H.E. Mr. State Secretary Gadgil (Norway)

18:50 User-centered Approach for Provision of Climate Services – Ms. Maria Neira, WHO

19:00 Interactive discussion with the Speakers and the Panelists:

UNESCO/IOC Mr. Peter Dogse

 UNDP TbD

 FAO Ms Cassandra DeYoung

 UNEP TbD

 ISDR Mr. John Harding

IFAD Mr. Gernot Laganda

WFP Mr. Richard Choularton

UNECA Dr Seleshi Bekele

Qatar TbD

19:50 Wrap up and closing remarks

20:00 Close

N-B: Representatives of UN Members and agencies not on the podium will be offered reserved seating in the front of the hall.

**Contacts**

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