

## Announcement

### **Sixteenth Session of the South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF-16), Climate Services User Forum (CSUF) – Water & Agriculture Online via Video Conference**

*20-22 April 2020*

#### **Background**

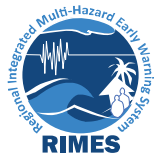
South Asia is home to about one-fourth of the world's population and occupies only 3% of the global land area, making it the most densely populated geographical region in the world. Predominantly, the weather and climate of South Asia is dominated by the South-West monsoon. Almost 70-80% of the total annual rainfall occurs during the monsoon season (June–September), and the monsoon can have significant socio-economic impacts on sectors of the countries of this region. Seasonal to inter-annual variability of monsoon rainfall, both in amount and distribution, often results in severe droughts or floods over this densely populated region, with large-scale impacts on the agrarian societies in terms of agricultural production and food security. As there is a strong link between the impacts of the summer monsoon and the overall economic condition of South Asian countries, in order to plan and implement programs to encourage sustainable economic growth, South Asia requires ever more accurate, reliable and useful information about the monsoon as well as early warnings about monsoon activity.

The monsoon is a strongly coupled phenomenon in which ocean, atmosphere, and large landmass are integral components of the system. The science behind the South Asian monsoon and its variability on different time and space scales is quite complicated and monsoon prediction is still considered to be a difficult problem. However, the last few decades have seen remarkable advances in the understanding and prediction with a longer lead time of several aspects of the monsoon, mainly the rainfall strength and its pattern.

Regional Climate Outlook Forums (RCOFs) are being conducted in many parts of the world to provide consensus seasonal climate information on a regional scale. In line with the goals of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), RCOFs also offer an opportunity for the providers of climate services and sectoral users to interact to strengthen and demonstrate the use and value of climate services in sectoral decision-making. The South Asian Seasonal Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF) was established in 2010 by the South Asian members of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Since 2010, SASCOF sessions have been organized every year just prior to the summer monsoon season. Given the substantial benefits derived from the annual summer SASCOFs, the first winter SASCOF was held in October 2015. Based on the recommendations of the first SASCOF, a capacity building training workshop for participants from South Asia was started from SASCOF-2. Conducting of Climate Services User Forums (CSUF) in conjunction with SASCOF forum meeting commenced in 2014.

#### **The SASCOF-16 Forum**

The objective of the forum is to prepare consensus seasonal climate information for the region that provides a consistent basis for National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) to prepare national-level outlooks. Such platforms also serve to interact with the user sector to understand and enhance the use of climate information.



The SASCOF-16 and CSUF was originally scheduled to be held in Bangladesh, hosted by the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD). RIMES in collaboration with Regional Climate Centre (RCC), India Meteorological Department (IMD), Pune and the U.K. Met Office shall be organizing SASCOF-16 supported through the ARRCC program

***In view of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, this season's SASCOF-16 & CSUF session will be held online through video conference during 20-22 April 2020, consisting of 3 hourly sessions spread over 3 days.***

## Funding

The UK Met Office working in partnership with the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), is implementing the UK aid-funded **Asia Regional Resilience to a Changing Climate (ARRCC) programme**. The four-year program commenced in 2018 and aimed to strengthen weather and climate services across South Asia. The program will deliver new technologies and innovative approaches to help vulnerable communities use weather warnings and forecasts to better prepare for climate-related shocks. SASCOF-16 is being funded by ARRCC under its Work Package 2, Strengthening Climate Information Partnerships- South Asia (SCIPSA) on Seasonal Prediction.

## Overview of the Agenda

**Pre COF: April 20, 2020** - Technical session will consider available seasonal prediction output from WMO Global Producing Centers (GPCs) and the Lead Centre for LRF MME together with a presentation of country forecasts also capacity building training for officials of the met departments from South Asia.

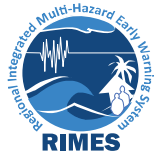
**SASCOF & CSUF: April 21-22, 2020** – The SASCOF-16 is expected to provide climate outlook for the 2020 summer monsoon season. The SASCOF-16 will feature the “Climate Services User Forum focused on Water & Agriculture sector (CSUF).” The CSUF will bring together experts in seasonal predictions and operational users from agricultural and irrigation departments of South Asian countries, creating a platform for understanding seasonal climate information to make effective use to manage climate risks in the region.

## Participation

All National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) of South Asia; invited national and international experts; experts from WMO and RIMES; experts from Regional Climate Centers (RCCs), UK Met Office and other GPCs, IMD etc.

Participation in SASCOF-16 is mainly by invitation and by nominations from the Permanent Representatives of the respective countries with WMO as well as partner agencies, especially from user sectors.

The Blue Jeans (<https://www.bluejeans.com/>) platform will be used for organizing this event online via video conference. The details about how to use the BJ platform will be communicated to the all the participant soon.



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