SASCOF-17

South Asian Seasonal Climate Outlook Forum (Winter Session) & Climate Services User Forum (CSUF) – Water & Agriculture

September 23-24 and 28, September 2020
(to be held online due to CoViD-19 pandemic)

Background

South Asian climate is influenced by both tropical (Oct-Dec) and temperate mid-latitude (Dec-Feb) circulation systems during the winter months. Southern parts of South Asia, including peninsular India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and southern coastal areas of Myanmar are influenced by North East Monsoon (Re-establishment of prevalent north easterly trade-wind regime over South Asia associated with the southward movement of the ITCZ), while extra-tropical activity dominated by "Western disturbances" influence the northern parts of the region including Afghanistan, Pakistan, north India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar. It is therefore necessary that seasonal forecasts for winter season be issued at two different times - one during September/October for southern region and the other during November/December for northern region.

The crucial role of winter rains and the growing recognition of the benefits of SASCOFs in articulating and sharing seasonal climate information have led to the need for regularly conducting winter SASCOFs. Winter sessions of SASCOF's were started in 2015 keeping in view the importance of winter seasonal climate to key user sectors. The first winter SASCOF session was held in Oct 2015, at Chennai, Tamil Nadu India, followed by Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar in 2016, Male, Maldives in 2017, Colombo, Sri Lanka in 2018 and Thiruvananthapuram, India in 2019.

Forum

The objective of the forum is to prepare consensus seasonal climate information on regional scale that provides a consistent basis for preparing national level outlooks. Such platforms also serve to interact with user sector to understand and enhance the use of climate information.

The SASCOF-17 is **scheduled to be held in online due to CoViD-19 pandemic**. The Regional Climate Center (RCC), Pune of India Meteorological Department (IMD), UK Met Office (UKMO), Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early-warning System for Asia and Africa (RIMES) and WMO (World Meteorological Organization) shall provide technical support. The Reginal Climate Center (RCC), IMD-Pune in collaboration with RIMES, UK Met Office and WMO shall be involved in organizing this online session of SASCOF.

Overview of the agenda

The Day 1 & 2: September 23-24, 2020 - Technical session will consider available seasonal prediction output from WMO Global Producing Centers (GPCs) and the Lead Centre for LRF MME together with presentation of country forecasts and discussions.

Days 3: September 28, 2020 – User oriented sessions focused on sharing, understanding and interpreting the seasonal climate outlook. It is proposed to focus on Agriculture and Irrigation sectors during this session of winter SASCOF as winter rains in south Asia play a crucial role in the productivity of irrigation based agricultural sectors. SASCOF-17 will **feature "Climate Services User Forum focused on Water** sector **(CSUF)".** 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. The session will recommend further needs of the sector in terms of customized products and tools to support decision-making.

Participation

All National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) of South Asia; invited national and international experts; experts from WMO and RIMES; experts from RCCs (Tokyo Climate Center JMA, UK Met Office and other GPCs, IMD & Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM).

Outcome

SASCOF-17 will prepare a climate outlook for the 2020 winter season covering the months from October to December. NMHSs from SASCOF member countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, as well as several regional and global experts will jointly prepare this consensus outlook.

The CSUF special session will focus on interface with users from the Water and agriculture (linked to water) sector to interpret seasonal climate information and understand their specific needs with a view to further customizes climate information.

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