



35th Session of South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF-35) for October to December (OND) Season

24th September 2026

and

Climate Services User Forum (CSUF)

1st October 2026

(both to be held online)

Concept Note

Background:

South Asian climate is influenced by both tropical (October-December) and temperate mid- latitude (December-February) 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 the winter season be issued at two different times - one during September/October for the southern region and the other during November/December for the northern region.

The crucial role of winter rains and the growing recognition of the benefits of SASCOFs in articulating and sharing seasonal climate information has led to the need for regularly conducting winter SASCOFs. Winter sessions of SASCOFs 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 October 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. Last six years (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025) SASCOF October to December (OND) Sessions were held online.

Objectives:

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

An online session of SASCOF-35 is tentatively scheduled on 24th September 2026. The associated Climate Services User Forum (CSUF) is also scheduled online on 1st October 2026. The Regional Climate Centre (RCC), Pune of India Meteorological Department (IMD) jointly organize the meeting with Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early-warning System for Asia and Africa (RIMES), UK Met Office (UKMO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and UNESACP.

Expected Outcome:

SASCOF-35 will prepare a climate outlook for the 2026 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 session will focus on interface with users from the various application sectors to interpret seasonal climate information and understand their specific needs with a view to further customizing climate information.

Overview of the Agenda

Day 1: September 24, 2026 - Technical session will consider available seasonal prediction output from WMO Global Producing Centers (GPCs) and the Lead Centre for LRFMME together with presentation of country forecasts and discussions.

(Intermediately, finalizing draft consensus statement for seasonal climate outlook through E-mail communications with SASCOF participants.)

Day 2: October 1, 2026: User-oriented sessions focused on sharing, understanding, and interpreting the seasonal climate outlook.

Participation:

Experts from National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) from all South Asian countries, experts from international organizations like WMO, RIMES, Regional Climate Center (RCC), Tokyo Climate Centre (JMA), UK Met Office (UKMO) and other WMO Global Producing Centers (GPC). Participation from IMD and Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), the National Center for Medium-Range Weather Forecast (NCMRWF), the National Center for Ocean Information Service (INCOIS), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and World Health Organization (WHO) are going to participate in the session.