

**STATEMENT AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE
54th IMO PRIZE TO DR EUGENIA KALNAY**

by

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Dr Alexander Bedritsky, President of WMO,

**Dr John L. Hayes, NOAA Deputy Assistant Administrator and Permanent Representative of the
United States with WMO,**

Dr Eugenia Kalnay,

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Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to have this opportunity to participate in the presentation of the Fifty-fourth International Meteorological Organization (IMO) Prize to Professor Dr Eugenia Kalnay-Zwicky, a highly respected scientist who has made outstanding and lasting contributions to the science of meteorology and whom I have known for many years. I would like to thank the National Academy of Sciences for hosting this ceremony in Washington D.C. and for providing the excellent arrangements.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This auspicious occasion offers me the opportunity to present you some information on the prestigious IMO Prize, the highest scientific distinction of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), which is awarded annually and will be presented shortly to Dr Eugenia Kalnay. Additionally, I would also like to say a few words on her exceptional scientific achievements.

Firstly, allow me to recall that in 1950 WMO took over the responsibilities of its predecessor, the International Meteorological Organization (IMO), a non-governmental body composed of Directors of National Meteorological Services which had been established in 1873 by the First International Meteorological Congress. At the same time, WMO took over IMO's financial assets.

In 1955, the Second World Meteorological Congress decided that some of these assets would be used for a high-level annual award, the IMO Prize, which would reward outstanding work in meteorology and contributions to international collaboration in meteorology. In 1971, after WMO expanded its responsibilities to embrace hydrology, the context of the IMO Prize was extended accordingly.

Each year, WMO Member countries are invited to nominate candidates for the IMO Prize. The selection of the recipient is considered one of the highest responsibilities of the WMO Executive Council, which is carried out during an in-camera meeting at the yearly EC session.

The prestigious IMO Prize consists of three elements:

- A fourteen-carat gold medal, bearing the WMO emblem and the inscription "*For outstanding work in the field of meteorology*";
- A parchment scroll bearing the citation of the award; and
- A modest financial award.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to recall that Dr Eugenia Kalnay was born in Argentina, where she received in 1965 a License in Meteorology from the University of Buenos Aires. Subsequently, she came to the United States to pursue her graduate studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, under the direction of Jule Charney, father of modern dynamical meteorology and recipient of the 1971 IMO Prize. Dr Kalnay also received her Ph.D. in meteorology in 1971 and it has been noted that she was the first woman to receive a doctorate in meteorology at MIT. Let me add that this is only the second time the prestigious IMO Prize is awarded to a lady, the first being to Dr Joanne Simpson in 2002.

I wish to underscore that this IMO Prize has been awarded to a scientist with 2 nationalities. Through the years, while pursuing a rich and engaging career in the atmospheric sciences in the United States, Dr Kalnay has never ceased to maintain close contact with her native country, in particular with the University of Buenos Aires, where she frequently lectures and directs theses candidates, and which in 2008 awarded her a *Doctorate Honoris Causa*.

Dr Kalnay has published more than 100 peer-reviewed papers and her book "*Atmospheric Modeling, Data Assimilation and Predictability*", which was reprinted 5 times and enriched by her vast teaching experience, in particular at MIT and the Universities of Uruguay, Oklahoma and Maryland.

She has been a pillar of the weather and climate research community, in particular at NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center's Global Modeling and Simulation Branch and at NOAA/National Centers for Environmental Prediction's Environmental Modeling Center, during a period when ground-breaking advances in atmospheric and oceanic observation, modeling and predictive capabilities have taken place, having developed in particular the NASA 4th order global model, which was which was for more than 15 years the core of many data assimilation and forecasting experiences, having also co-developed widely-used ensemble forecasting and breeding methods, as well as the local ensemble Kalman filter, among many other key scientific achievements.

I was very fortunate to meet Eugenia in the course of my own career, so perhaps I can provide you some first-hand personal experience:

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Please allow me to add that, before the WMO IMO Prize, Dr Kalnay also received NASA's Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal (1981), 2 US Department of Commerce gold medals (1993, 1997) and a silver medal (1990), the American Meteorological Society's Jule Charney Award (1995), a Senior Executive Service Presidential Rank Award (1996) and the University of Maryland-wide Kirwan Award (2007), among other key distinctions.

Mr President, Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I could continue to speak at great length on Dr Kalnay's achievements and her qualities as a scientist. However, I am sure that the President of WMO, Dr Bedritsky, will also have many fine things to say about her. I will, therefore, conclude by offering Dr Kalnay my warmest personal congratulations and those of her friends and colleagues at the WMO Secretariat in Geneva, for the legitimate recognition of her outstanding contributions to WMO and to international meteorology, through the award of the 54th International Meteorological Organization Prize.

Thank you.
