



**M. Jarraud, WMO Secretary-General, comments on the Occasion  
of the UNFCCC Fourteenth Conference of Parties  
(1 – 12 December 2008, Poznan, Poland)**

**Climate information protects lives and livelihoods**

Climate-based decision-making saves lives and sustains economic growth. Climate information and predictions support farmers, water managers, energy developers, public health officials, national planners, tour operators, and other key players in virtually all socio-economic sectors. All countries need climate-based tools and information now to cope with current climate changes and to plan for future global changes.

Climate change is a major threat to socio-economic development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction. Advances in meteorology, oceanography and hydrology have bolstered climate prediction and information services, to provide better, more cost-effective tools to manage climate-related risks and their societal impacts. Climate information empowers farmers to optimize production, thus protecting large populations from famine and starvation. Collaborative mechanisms are necessary for developing countries to have the climate observations they need to improve early warnings of extreme weather and to manage a variety of climate risks.

The World Climate Conference-3, to be held in Geneva (Switzerland) from 31 August to 4 September 2009, intends to strengthen climate monitoring and seasonal to multi-decadal climate predictions while bridging the gap between the climate predictions and those who need that information now. It will provide a global framework for making reliable and timely climate information accessible for all to use in day-to-day decision-making, especially in the developing world.

This framework complements the Bali-to-Poznan-to-Copenhagen process to reach a global mitigation strategy for climate change. Policy-makers need to understand the current state of global emissions in the atmosphere to make the best-informed decisions. The WCC-3 framework supports improved baseline monitoring and observations to understand the status of our atmosphere, while at the same time giving communities the information they need to adapt now.

Seasonal, annual and multi-decadal climate predictions provide information that decision-makers need for planning from months out to decades. The National Meteorological and Hydrological Services of the 188 Members of the World Meteorological Organization collect, process and analyze information in support of such climate predictions.

Investments in climate observations, monitoring and predictions are of vital importance. Gaps in global coverage of climate observations still exist and must be filled to produce the most reliable and accurate climate predictions for all regions. Filling coverage in the developing world and especially in the Least Developed Countries is of particular importance, as those countries are most vulnerable to short- and long-term climate change.

WMO, along with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), leads the United Nations System's initiative to deliver as one on climate knowledge. The WCC-3 global framework will support this broader UN initiative and will engage all partners to strengthen climate adaptation and risk management.

WCC-3 is the latest milestone in a series of WMO-initiated efforts. The First World Climate Conference in 1979 led to the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (co-sponsored by WMO and the United Nations Environment Programme), which shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007; the WMO World Climate Programme; and the World Climate Research Programme (co-sponsored by WMO, the International Council for Science and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO). The Second World Climate Conference led to the creation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as well as the establishment of the Global Climate Observing System.

I am confident that WCC-3 will contribute to the success of global initiatives aimed at improving society's resilience to climate risks, so I wish to invite governments, international organizations and civil society to participate fully in this outstanding opportunity.