**International Symposium on Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia**

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**WMO**

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO), founded in 1950, is a specialized agency of the United Nations for weather, climate, and water. WMO contributes to the understanding of the interactions between climate and agriculture through dedicated observations of the climate system; improvements in the application of agrometeorological methods especially with climate predictions; proper assessment and management of water resources; and promotion of capacity building in the application of meteorological and hydrological data.

**FAO**

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), founded in 1945, is a specialized agency of the United Nations, mandated to raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy. The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) assists Asia-Pacific countries with policy advice and technical expertise in agriculture, economic and social development, fishery, forestry and sustainable development to make the region food-secure for present and future generations.

**ESCAP**

The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP), is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region. Established in 1947 with its headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand, ESCAP focuses on issues that are most effectively addressed through regional cooperation and carries out work in three main thematic areas, i.e. poverty reduction, managing globalization and tackling emerging social issues. Under the thematic group of managing globalization, its Environment and Sustainable Development Division (ESDD) strives to enhance regional and sub-regional policy dialogue and strengthen the capacity of policy and decision makers in harmonizing rapid economic growth with limited environmental carrying capacity of the region, through application of Green Growth approach for achieving sustainable development and climate change resilient societies.

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**UN Economic and Social Commission For Asia and Pacific**

**University of Dhaka**

**Announcement**

International Symposium on Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia

Dhaka, Bangladesh  
25-29 August 2008
INTRODUCTION

Across South Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), large populations depend on semi-subsistence agriculture for their livelihoods. Rainfall in the semi-arid and sub-humid regions of South Asia is highly variable and undependable and influences agricultural productivity. Farming practices in these regions have developed as a response to such climatic risks.

According to the Fourth Assessment Report of the WMO/UNEP Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released in 2007, future projections of climate change indicate that South Asia is very likely to warm during this century. Also, freshwater availability is projected to decrease and coastal areas will be at greatest risk due to increased flooding from the sea and rivers. Sea level rise in Bangladesh is expected to impact over 13 million people with a 16% loss of national rice production. In some South Asian countries, a substantial reduction in crop yields from rainfed agriculture could occur. Additionally, dramatic changes in the land use patterns in South Asia compound the problem of climate change.

The agricultural sector, including crops, livestock, fisheries, forestry, and land and water management, is both a bearer and a contributor of global climate change. Some specific options have already been identified, tested and documented for climate change mitigation and adaptation for agriculture sector, such as sustainable land and forest management; changing varieties; more efficient water use; altering the timing or location of cropping activities; improving the effectiveness of pest, disease and weed management practices and making better use of seasonal climate forecasts to reduce production risks. If these options are widely adopted, they could have substantial potential to offset negative impacts from climate change and take advantage of positive impacts. To cope with climate change more effectively in South Asia, it is necessary to identify integrated adaptation and mitigation options for a range of agroecosystems so as to enable a favourable policy environment for the implementation of the framework.

It is with this background that the Ohio State University, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) and the University of Dhaka in collaboration with a number of agencies are organizing the International Symposium on Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 25 to 29 August 2008.

This symposium aims to bring together experts from national meteorological/hydrological and agricultural departments, international and regional organizations/institutions; and policy makers from national planning/financial departments to present state-of-the-art papers, real world applications and innovative techniques for coping with climate change and offering recommendations for planning and implementing an effective Agriculture Mitigation and Adaptation Framework for Climate Change in South Asia.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE WORKSHOP

Senior experts in the field of climate change and agro-meteorology, sustainable agricultural development and national economic/financial planning agencies will be invited to prepare state-of-the-art discussion papers to address the above objectives. The programme for the symposium will be designed to engage all participants in discussions on these discussion papers and develop appropriate recommendations for all organizations involved in sustainable agricultural development in South Asia.

The workshop should result in enhanced capacity to: identify/understand impacts, vulnerability and adaptation; select and implement adaptation actions; enhance cooperation among South Asian countries to better manage climate change risks; and enhance integration of climate change adaptation with sustainable agricultural development in South Asia.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING

Proceedings of the Meeting will be published by Ohio State University, WMO, FAO, ESCAP, and the University of Dhaka and will be widely distributed to promote the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Framework for South Asian Agriculture.