Dear Colleague,

This is my third circular letter and covers the period December 1998 to May 1999. There have been several activities of interest to the Commission since my last correspondence to you, but I believe the deliberations at the Thirteenth Session of the WMO Congress (CG-XXIII) last May will be of particular interest. It was my first Congress as president of a Commission and I believe it went well, and was certainly most enriching with respect to the opportunities for personal contact with Permanent Representatives of WMO Member countries and for the exchange of views concerning CCI activities. The CG-XIII commended the efforts of CCI in implementing its share of the Climate Agenda and other WMO programmes. I have summarized below some of the more important points dealt with by Congress, followed by a number of other activities underway during the period.

**Regional Climate Centres**

The concept of Regional Climate Centres (RCC) was approved and welcomed by Congress. CCI has been requested to define the attributes of an RCC and identify the range of functions they might perform. I would like to use this opportunity to seek your views and suggestions on this matter, which will be dealt with further by an informal task team set up by the President of CCI soon after Congress -XIII.

**Guide to Climatological Practices**

Congress strongly recommended that the Guide to Climatological Practices be finalized as soon as possible. We would all agree that this is a monumental and long overdue task that will require concerted action and perseverance from us all. Those CCI members, who have been contacted by the Secretariat to contribute topics to the Guide, coordinate chapters or both are kindly requested to respond positively and as soon as possible. We plan to use the Internet/Web as much as possible to communicate with each other and measure progress on this most important project.

**Warning of Heat Waves**

You may also be aware that the project "Showcase Project: Heat/Health Warning systems for heat waves and other extreme weather events" has been launched this summer in Rome. Congress welcomed this project, which will be carried out under the World Climate Applications and Services Programme in collaboration with the Public Weather Services programme. The project aims to devise measures to reduce mortality from cumulative heat stress, which has become a growing problem for many of the expanding cities of the tropical and sub-tropical belts. We are also exploring options for conducting similar studies in other major cities. Other Commissions have shown interest and are willing to identify experts who will participate in and follow the project.

**WMO Structure**

The issue of WMO structure and especially the issues of increasing the efficiency and reducing the cost of constituent body sessions provoked lively debates in subcommittees at Congress. The recommendation by the
EC Working Group on Long Term Planning to merge CBS and CIMO, for example, generated strong arguments both for and against. A new review of WMO structure and operating mode will be conducted by a small Task Team of the Executive Council, "To enable the Organization to respond more effectively to the evolving needs of Members and of society as a whole".

Resolution 40 of Cg-XII

The data issue generated considerably less discussion than at the previous Congress when the passage of Cg-XII Res. 40 represented a key milestone for WMO. CG-XIII saw the easier passage of a complementary resolution on hydrometeorological data (Res. 25). Congress appreciated the work performed by CCl on the data and especially through its contribution to the work of the Executive Committee Working Group on the Exchange of Meteorological Data and Related Products (EC-AGE).

CCI Terms of Reference

Congress approved the new Terms of Reference of the Commission (See Annex.), which define the responsibilities of the Commission with respect to the Climate Agenda and broaden its overall mandate for action on climate matters of interest to Members.

Climate of the 20th Century – WMO Publication

Congress noted the significant level of effort that is being brought to bear on this project by the Secretariat, an appointed project task group and manager, lead authors, a science writer and many regional and national experts. In a project of this magnitude, it is inevitable that there will be minor delays in coordinating the activities of all these people. While it appears that the publication will not now be distributed within the year 2000, it is anticipated that it will be ready for WMO Day in 2001. A smaller booklet foreshadowing the final publication will be issued to coincide with the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of WMO next year. Opportunities continue to be explored for producing multi-language versions and spin-offs in the form video and other media products.

CLIPS

Congress was pleased to note the progress that had been made in the implementation of the CLIPS project and the need to consider options for additional resources and a broader base for securing them. It was also pleased to note the linkages that were developing between important application areas, notably with the agricultural community. In particular, the development of the CLIMAG project under the START programme, offered a good opportunity to forge effective links between the climate research programmes, the Agrometeorology programme of WMO, and CLIPS. Through CLIPS, the agricultural community will be able to draw on the successes of climate research, especially in the field of seasonal time scale climate predictions, to improve crop yield predictions.

Congress was also informed of a proposed CLIPS – FISHERIES initiative. The connection between climate variability and fish behaviour is being seen as an important regulator of fishing catches in many areas of the world’s oceans. The proposal states that:

"Parameters of influence are now identified and their impact can be categorized on spatial and temporal scales. CLIPS for fisheries could therefore be applied through the development of specific products (sea-level pressure indices, zonal and vertical currents, sea turbulence etc.) based on climatological data sets". It is proposed that CLIPS for fisheries could start as a pilot project in a region where fisheries is a major industry. Such examples are revealing more and more how climate prediction is being perceived as a *sine qua non* for planning purposes.

Other News:

(1) **CCI AWG Sub-group Meeting**

A sub-group of the CCL Advisory Working Group met informally in March to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the different projects. The meeting was held back-to-back with the IACCA meeting (see below) and further advantage was taken of the fact that other people happened to be in the area on mission. It was agreed that while some progress had been made, much still needs to be done as far as the implementation of several CCI plans are concerned. One is related to the Guide to Climatological Practices already referred to above. While there had been some difficulties in meeting the demands of the priority list,
recent staff changes in the World Climate Programme Department of the Secretariat are expected to relieve
the situation through the latter half of the year.

(2) The Inter-Agency Committee on the Climate Agenda (IACCA)

The 3rd IACCA meeting was held immediately after the CCI informal CCL AWG Sub-group meeting. The major
points discussed at IACCA –3 and of interest to CCI are:

(a) Review of climate observing systems to underpin the UNFCCC and other environmental conventions;

(b) Review of the 1997-1999 El Niño/La Niña event. Here IACCA was briefed on the retrospective
    analysis of the El Niño/La Niña event of 1997-1999 that has been initiated under the framework of the
    IDNDR and carried out under the guidance of the UN Interagency Task Force on El Niño. It will be
    recalled that WMO, in collaboration with IOC of UNESCO and UNEP is managing the scientific and
    technical component of the retrospective;

(c) Actions to improve inter-agency cooperation in the development of appropriate response actions to
    climate change and variability.

On this issue IACCA considered ways to identify the range of options that are open to countries at different
stages of development in coping with the impacts of climate change and development. IACCA also explored
the current flexibility of funding mechanisms, such as the Global Environment and Facility (GEF), the United
Nations Foundation for International Partnerships (UNFIP) to support the issues dealing with the aims of the
Climate Agenda.

(3) Infrastructural Needs For Seasonal To Interannual Climate Prediction

An Initial Planning Meeting on the Coordination of Infrastructural Needs for Seasonal to Interannual Climate
Prediction was held in the new WMO Secretariat building in Geneva just prior to Cg-XIII. On this issue, it was
agreed that CCI, CBS and also CAS should work closely together. The development of an appropriate
infrastructure to support the emerging capabilities of seasonal to interannual climate prediction involves
considerable work but it is essential, in order that the benefits flow in a coherent manner for the maximum
benefit of all Members.

An 11-point operational framework was agreed and a copy of the report is now available through the WMO
Web Site at the following URL: http://www.wmo.ch/web/www/reports/lpm-cinsicp.html.

There are many important issues discussed in this report, however, the key aspects are that:

• NMHSs should play a central role in the flow of information and in the dissemination of seasonal time
  scale monitoring and prediction products, and should have access to data in conformity to WMO Res.
  40;

• Any new system must utilize to the full extent possible the existing capabilities of the WMO/WWW Basic
  Systems – GOS, GTs and GDPS and be developed in concert with the WMO/CLIPS project;

• Research and development on improving seasonal time scale predictions should continue to be strongly
  encouraged and supported, especially through the WCRP/CLIVAR and CLIPS efforts.

(4) The TRUCE and GURME Projects

The Global Atmospheric Watch (GAW) is a programme of WMO under which are operated a number of
measurement stations distributed throughout the world to monitor the composition of the atmosphere, including
estimates of trace gas concentrations and aerosols. The GAW is launching a new project for the "Coordination
of urban meteorological and environmental initiatives and efforts to better define the relationships and linkages
between urban environments and sustainable development, and between local, regional and global
environmental problems".

The GURME project complements the objectives of the WCP-Tropical Urban Climate Experiment (TRUCE); a
principal distinction being that the latter is aimed at studying tropical urban areas, whereas GURME is global.
Cg-XIII strongly supported the suggestion that GURME should draw from the knowledge gained through
experiments during TRUCE.
In the light of item (12), and in the context of the forthcoming International Conference on Urban Climatology (ICUC) in Sydney in November 1999, I would appreciate any information on activities that you are aware of that could be linked to Urban and Building Climatology. Such activities would be considered for grouping under the TRUCE/GURME framework.

Rapporteur and Working Group Reports

I have received reports of activities from several Members of the AWG – namely:

- H. Kondo (Japan): on items and meetings linked to International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR);
- V. Vent Schmidt (Germany): on activities in conjunction with GCOS and with setting up of Euro CLIPS and recommendations from a recent meeting of the ECSN;
- R. Basher (New Zealand): on data issues especially on the need to alert Parties to the importance of historical databases in the UNFCCC process and elsewhere;
- M. Nicholls (U.K): on his report of the CCI Task Team on the data issue to the EC Advisory Group on Exchange of Climate Data and Related Products (EC-AGE). He also represented the CCI in the meeting on the Infrastructural Needs for Seasonal to Interannual Climate Prediction.

During Congress, several delegates informally inquired about CCI activities. Many appreciated the work of the Commission. However some expressed the wish to see more CCI-related activities conducted in their respective regions. A few went further to reiterate an earlier request for the need to establish guidelines for designing buildings in harmony with the climate. It is clear then that a need is emerging to revisit the existing building codes with respect to climate aspects and update the recommendations for appropriate building materials to render buildings more efficient, comfortable, healthy and environmentally friendly. Such discussions and suggestions led me to reiterate before Congress the past and current efforts of CCI in the field of Urban and Building Climatology and that CCI may need to promote new and specific proposals. I invite your views on this and other proposals.

As was mentioned in my last circular letter Dr Chet Ropelewski asked to be relieved of his responsibilities as Chairman of the Joint Working Group on Climate Change Detection. Dr Tom Petersen, who will be assisted by Dr Chris Folland as the Vice-Chair, now replaces him. It is planned that the full Working Group, which is convened jointly by WCRP/CLIVAR, will meet before the end of the year to review progress in its support for the work of the Third Assessment of the IPCC that is currently underway.

All rapporteurs are reminded that they need to send an annual report of their activities to the Chairman of their Working Groups or to their Group leaders or a member of the CCI Advisory Working Group as the case may be. If, however, rapporteurs do not fall into the ambit of either of the Working Groups, they may forward their reports to me, with a copy to the Director of the WCP Department in WMO.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Y. Boodhoo
President
Commission for Climatology
New Terms of reference for CCI, as approved by Congress XIII

COMMISSION FOR CLIMATOLOGY (CCI)

The Commission shall be responsible for promoting and facilitating activities relating to climate and its relationship with human well-being, human activities, natural ecosystems and sustainable development, including:

(a) Coordination and consolidation of general requirements for observations, data collection, supply and exchange for all components of the WCP and its associated activities;

(b) Identification of best practices in the collection, quality control, archiving, access to and further management of climate data, including near-real-time data, proxy data, remote sensing data and metadata;

(c) Analysis and monitoring of climate, its spatial and temporal variations and the issue of climate data and products in support of research, applications and impact assessments;

(d) Development of statistical and other objective methods for analysing climate data;

(e) Evaluation and review of operational climate predictions; Preparation of authoritative statements on climate;

(f) Identification, development and improvement of services, applications and supporting research concerning the influences of climate and weather;

(g) Identification of priority areas relating to the climates of natural and managed ecosystems, and for alleviating problems arising from human effects on local and regional climate;

(h) Capacity building and technology transfer;

(i) Effective presentation of climatological information to users and the assessment of cost-benefit information;

(j) Provision of advice on issues relating to the access and availability of climatological data and services;

(k) The Commission has special responsibilities to advise and guide the World Climate Applications and Services Programme, and the World Climate Data and Monitoring Programme, while providing support to many activities under the framework of the Climate Agenda.