

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

Tenth Session of the South-East European Climate Outlook Forum (SEECOF-10)

Belgrade, Serbia, 20-21 November 2013



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MEETING REPORT

I. Introduction

I.1 Background

The tenth session of SEECOF was focused on the winter climate of 2013-2014. It has been conducted in Belgrade, Serbia, on the kind invitation of the Permanent Representative of Serbia with WMO. As it was one of the IPA Project activities, the participation of the IPA Project beneficiaries was financed by the budget of the IPA project: "Building resilience to disasters in Western Balkans and Turkey", while the participation of other countries from the sub-region was supported by the World Meteorological Organization as a contribution towards the implementation of the Global Framework for Climate Services.

I.2 Date & venue

The tenth session of the South-eastern European Climate Outlook Forum was conducted on 20 and 21 November 2013 at the Sumadija Hotel in Belgrade, Serbia.

I.3. Participants

The meeting was attended by 37 participants including 14 participants' representatives of seven countries beneficiaries of the IPA Project: Building resilience to disasters in the Western Balkans and Turkey. See **Annex 1**.

I.4 Agenda & programme

The provisional Agenda & the tentative Programme was circulated to all attendees for comments & adoption. It was adopted with minor adjustments. See **Annex 2**.

II. Description of the meeting

II.1 Working arrangements

II.1.2 Meeting concept & format

Based on the recommendations of the scoping meeting on Mediterranean Climate Outlook Forum, the SEECOF-10 session was conducted following the first session of the Mediterranean Climate Outlook Forum, which provided regional inputs to the production of climate outlook for the South-East European' sub-region.

The meeting concept and format was developed by the host institution in close collaboration with the Meteorological Agency of Spain and the WMO Secretariat, taking into account the recommendations of the previous SEECOF- session.

The training on long-range forecasting was held prior to the MedCOF-1 and SEECOF-10, as part of capacity-building component of the Climate Services Information System.

The conduction in a consecutive way of all three events, which addressed climate services related issues common to the experts and users of all countries of the Mediterranean region, was a great

example of how to leverage the human, technical and financial resources, at the same time contributing to an enhanced cooperation towards a common goal.

The SEECOF-10 had 5 sessions, including 3 thematic sessions, as follows:

Session I: Opening

Session II: Verification of the SEECOF-8 and SEECOF-9 climate outlooks

Session III: Production of the climate outlook for the winter of 2013-2014

Session IV: Interaction with the end-users

Session V: Closing

More information on the concept and format of the meeting is available in *the Information Note on local arrangements (Annex 3)*.

II.2 Chairmanship

Each session was co-chaired by one or two country representative(s), as follows:

Session I: Mr Branko Bijelic

Session II: Dr Roxana Bojariu

Session III: Mr Branko Bijelic, Mrs Jasminka Smailagic & Mrs Dunja Mazzocco-Drvar

Session IV: Mr Ilian Gospodinov & Mr Branko Bijelic

Session V: Mr Branko Bijelic.

II.3 SESSION I: OPENING

SEECOF-10 was opened at 09:00 o'clock on Wednesday, 20 November 2013 at the Sumadija Hotel in Belgrade, Serbia.

On behalf of the host institution (RHMS of Serbia), Mr. Branko Bijelic opened the session as the session's co-chair and the SEECOF's focal point. He welcomed all countries' representatives, all participants and guests. He expressed his gratitude to the WMO Secretariat for facilitating the organisation of the SEECOF-10. In his opening statement, he outlined the Agenda and the approach to the discussions. Further he invited Dr Bojariu Roxana to chair the Session II.

II.4. SESSION II: VERIFICATION OF THE SEECOF-8 CLIMATE OUTLOOK FOR WINTER 2012/2013 AND SEECOF-9 FOR SUMMER 2013

The session was chaired by Dr Roxana Bojariu from Romania and considered the following two draft Documents:

1. '*Analysis and Verification of the SEECOF-8 Climate Outlook for the winter of 2012-2013 for the SEECOF region*' and
2. '*Analysis and Verification of the SEECOF-9 Climate Outlook for the summer of 2013 for the SEECOF region*'.

Mr Branko Bijelic introduced the final version of the first document on the '*Analysis and Verification of the SEECOF-8 Climate Outlook for the 2012/2013 Winter Season for the SEECOF region*' that was adopted.

In summary, the SEECOF-8 outlook was in principle correct regarding temperature except for the western and eastern parts of the inland of Turkey whilst the mixed patterns of observed

precipitation were consistent with the lack of a clear forecast signal as reflected in the SEECOF-8 outlook statement.

The second document on '*Analysis and Verification of the SEECOF-9 Climate Outlook for the 2013 Summer Season for the SEECOF region*' was introduced by Ms Jasminka Smailagic from Serbia and adopted by the participants.

In summary, the SEECOF-9 outlook was in principle correct regarding precipitation; also, in most of the SEECOF region, except in Israel, temperatures were correct.

Mr Bijelic added some info about the process and the outcome of SEECOF-9, which, co-ordinated and led by RHMSS and SEEVCCC, was held online in April and May 2013. He thanked the SEECOF member-countries for their active participation as well as the RA VI RCC Node on Climate Monitoring for providing the climate monitoring results for the summer 2013.

During discussions, the Session reflected on the issue of the reference period on which the anomaly information is based. It was emphasised that a couple of NMHSs prepared their National Climate Reports with the 1981-2010 years as the reference period.

The fact that the host introduced tercile categories in the climate monitoring maps was highly acknowledged. The related consistency in the presentation of monitoring and prediction information was strongly recommended by the Expert Meeting on Scoping Global Seasonal Climate Updates (GSCU; cf. <http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/wcp/wcasp/GSCU.html>). The extension of this approach, however, requires an enhanced provision of related data by the SEECOF countries.

Finally, it was concluded that the definition of a forecast success or failure depends on the tercile boundaries; therefore, the forecast verification process enhances the awareness not only of the temporal changes in average temperature and precipitation values, but also of their distribution function evolution in time.

II.5. SESSION III: PRODUCTION OF THE CLIMATE OUTLOOK FOR WINTER 2013/2014

The session III focused on the production of the climate outlook for the winter of 2013-2014, based on the regional and countries' inputs.

Due to its complexity & duration it had 3 co-chairs and namely: Mr Branko Bijelic and Mrs Jasminka Smailagic from Serbia, and Mrs Dunja Mazzocco-Drvar from Croatia.

II.5.1. Regional inputs

Dr Roxana Bojariu delivered a talk on '*Climate variability and the main influence factors in the Southeast Europe and Caucasus region*'. It was concluded that predictability exists in the South-eastern Europe and Caucasus sub-regions and again encouraged an extended predictability study for the SEECOF region as a scientific basis for the further discussions.

Mr Cristian Viel, France, presented the analyses and predictions for December-January-February 2013/2014 from GPC global models and discussed the large-scale anomalies relevant for the SEECOF outlook.

Mr Ernesto Rodriguez Camino, Spain, presented the MedCOF-1 Consensus statement on the Climate Outlook for the 2013/2014 winter season adopted on the MedCOF-1 meeting.

Mr Dragan Mihic, Serbia, presented the SEEVCCC dynamical downscaled outputs for December-January-February 2013/2014 and discussed the anomalies relevant for the SEECOF outlook.

II.5.2. Countries' inputs

The following SEECOF countries' representatives presented their national and/or regional seasonal outlooks and briefly introduced the used methods and data/products:

- Mr Artur Gevorgyan, Armenia;
- Mr Tamas Kovacs, Hungary;
- Mr Ilian Gospodinov, Bulgaria;
- Mr Omer Demir, Turkey;
- Mr Yoav Levi, Israel (the National Climate Outlook was received later);
- Ms Antigoni Voudouri, Greece (the National Climate Outlook was received earlier, archived on the Forum).

The presentations were followed by a consensus oriented discussions amongst the SEECOF-10 participants that resulted in the adoption of the SEECOF-10 outlook statement '*Seasonal Outlook for the winter of 2013-2014 for the Southeast Europe and Caucasus Region*'. See **Annex 4**. It was consistent with the MedCOF-1 consensus statement, noting various forecasts from different dynamical and statistical models assessed by experts from the entire region.

II.6. SESSION IV: INTERACTION WITH END-USERS

Session IV was co-chaired by Mr Gospodinov and Mr Bijelic.

Mr Milan Dacic delivered a presentation titled 'Research and development agenda in Serbia and SEE – CCFAP as contribution to the WMO RA VI RCC Network, highly recommended functions and the RCOF process'. A brief overview was provided on the UNFCCC articles about the commitments along with their UNFCCC framework addressing the needs, conditions and priorities of the developing countries and the countries with economies in transition. Various aspects and challenges were demonstrated in connection with the research and development agenda, particularly focusing on the GCOS Action plan along with the WCPR Program. Also, it highlighted the increasing need for the paradigm shift in the prediction research and underlined the importance of the launch of the Belgrade initiative on climate change as a means of enhancing sub-regional SEE collaboration on the most relevant and urgent matters. In the conclusion, it was stressed the need for a shared/joint super computer facility for the SEE region that could serve both for the national multi-hazard early warning systems and for the climate variability and climate change operations.

On behalf of Ms Danica Spasova, Mr Milan Dacic delivered the presentation titled 'Multi – Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS): Policy and legal framework in Serbia as a useful example for RCOF regions'. The presentation provided a brief historical perspective on Republic Hydrometeorological Service of Serbia (RHMSS), its establishment and activities, focusing on the main achievements within the governmental administration reform and the implementation of the National Program for the integration of the Republic of Serbia in European Union over the last decade. The central theme covered by the presentations in addition to the multi-hazard early warning system was the enhanced capacity of RHMSS to support Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation.

Mr Aleksandar Petrovic delivered a presentation on 'National spatial data infrastructure for Serbia'. It provided a general introduction to IGIS solutions illustrating both its purpose and benefits concluding with some additional information on its current use in Serbia.

Ms Barbara Tolic from Croatia's National Power Company (HEP) in her presentation '*Importance of Meteorological and Hydrological services in HEP group*' described the correlation between the hydro-meteorological services and energy utilities, shedding light on the currently installed generation capacities (thermal, hydro, renewables) along with the energy balance in the Croatian power system.

Mr Branko Sparavalo from Electric Power Company of Serbia (EPS) delivered a talk on the '*Influence of Meteorological Factors on Electric Energy Consumption and Use of Meteorological data and Forecasts for the Planning of the Power System Operations*'. The focus of the presentation was on the nexus between weather and energy demonstrating the impact of different meteorological factors on the changing patterns of energy consumption. The system for the forecast of the Drina River basin inflow was described too.

II.7. SEESION V: CLOSING

Session V was chaired by Mr Bijelic, who wrapped up the entire SEECOF-10 meeting and noted that all the information on SEECOF-10 is made available on the SEEVCCC' website: <http://www.seevccc.rs>.

The chair of the session thanked all of the participants for their dedication and valuable inputs to the discussion as well as the WMO Secretariat staff for their support and advice. He also thanked the organising team for the efficient arrangements facilitating the meeting.

The 10th Session of SEECOF was closed on Thursday, 21 November 2013 at 17:01 o'clock.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

The following conclusion and recommendations have been made during the session.

III.1. Conclusions:

1. The definition of a forecast success or failure depends on the tercile boundaries; therefore, the forecast verification process enhances the awareness not only of the temporal changes in the average temperature and precipitation values, but also of their distribution function and evolution in time.

III.2. Recommendations for the way forward:

1. NMHSs from the SEECOF region still using older referent climatological periods (1961-1990, 1971-2000) should make an effort to prepare their monthly means, to disseminate them, to prepare the national climate reports and the assessments of the previous SEECOF Climate outlooks with reference to 1981-2010 climatological period.
2. Following the SEECOF-8 meeting, new communication opportunities are made available through the online SEECOF Forum. This is a sub-forum for discussions related to climate research. The participants are encouraged to open discussions on any topics of interest, but also to suggest topics for future training courses,
3. For further research on climate variability and the main influence factors on the climate of the SEECOF region, the SEECOF participants are encouraged to upload papers with related topic to the climate research sub-forum,

4. The SEECOF experts should do the objective probabilistic verification based on the WMO Commission for Climatology' document for verification,
5. A template for the national climate report and assessment of the previous SEECOF Climate outlook should be developed by SEEVCCC and proposed for discussion and adoption to SEECOF-12 participants for further use.
6. The NMHSs from the SEECOF region are encouraged to consider the possibility to develop a concept of a SEE activity for a future joint/shared super computing facility to support the long-range forecasting, the climate related activities and the disaster risk reduction analyses, including the multi-hazard early warning systems.

IV. Attachments and Annexes

The report has 4 attachments and annexes as follows:

1. List of participants
2. Agenda
3. Information Note on local arrangements
4. SEECOF Outlook for winter 2013-2014