

Voluntary Cooperation Programme and Development and Regional Activities

April – June 2011

VCP News

Requests for VCP assistance received from April to June 2011

The VCP Secretariat received requests for support from Bangladesh, Cook Islands, DR Congo, Guinea and Tanzania. For more details on these and other outstanding requests, please visit our website at www.wmo.int/dra/vcp/partner.

Update on requests that are supported and in process

Between April and June 2011, VCP requests from Bangladesh, Cook Islands, DR Congo, Guinea, Pakistan, Samoa, and Tanzania found partners. For an overview of on-going projects and links to partners and donors, please check our website at <http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/dra/vcp/on-going.php>.

We welcome offers of support for unmet outstanding requests!

IPM meeting

The IPM Meeting was held on 11 and 12 April 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland. The main donor countries came together to discuss their future investments and priorities. The final report will soon be available on the following website: <http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/dra/vcp/eventsandmeetings.php>

New IPM Members

We welcome the intention of the National Weather Services of Mexico and Hong Kong to join the group of major donor members in the annual Informal Planning Meeting of the VCP and inter-sessional activities that support the VCP activities and projects.

WMO Congress

The 16th WMO Congress was held from 16 May to 3 June 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland. The VCP was present with a booth and generated a lot of interest. We also welcome the 34 new subscribers to this newsletter, who registered at the booth. We are hoping to create new partnerships and fund more projects in the future. For more information on WMO Congress, please visit the WMO website at http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/lsp/congress/index_en.php

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New flyer added to info pack

A new thematic flyer was added to the “Partnerships in Weather, Climate and Water for Development” DRA information pack. The flyer on “Integrated Flood Management” explains the issues related to flooding and links to the Flood HelpDesk. It can be downloaded from the web at <http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/dra/publications.php> and is available in English, French and Spanish.

Staff update



Ms. Magaly Robbez has left the VCP team as of 1 May 2011. She was appointed Secretary for the Regional Office for Africa and will therefore still be working in the DRA Department. We wish her all the best for this new task.



Ms. Corinna Schermer, Information and Outreach Officer for the DRA Department, has also left the team as of 30 June 2011. Her work, such as this newsletter, will be continued by the Secretariat.

Development Activities Update

Norway supports Pilot Project for SMS Weather Alerts to Fishing Community on Lake Victoria (Uganda)

In May 2011, the first stakeholder meeting of the Pilot Project was held in Kempala, Uganda. It was organized to train community leaders on the Mobile Weather Alerts project and explain how they should register subscribers to the Mobile Weather Alerts. The community leaders will be promoting the project among their communities on the lake and support users of the service. An Agreement has been signed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway for financial support to the pilot. To find out more about the project, visit the newly developed website at <http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/dra/rmo/MWA.php> for regular updates and news. This project is closely linked to the Severe Weather Forecasting Demonstration Project for East Africa, financed by the World Bank and WMO.

Fellowship Fund Appeal

The Fellowship Fund Appeal, launched on World Met Day 2011, has started well. We have received some donations but are looking for your help to promote the appeal further. Please post a link to your website, download the flyer from the internet, join us on Facebook and of course make a donation! Your support will help to realize the dreams of young meteorologists in developing and least developed countries. www.wmo.int/appeal

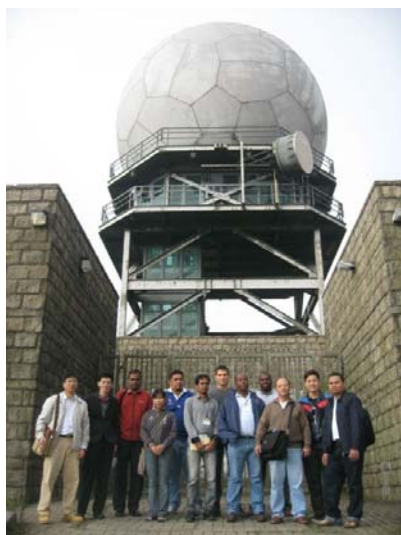
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Training for the international meteorological community by Hong Kong Observatory

A training course on "Automated Weather Station Network", organized by the Hong Kong Observatory as part of its contribution to VCP, was held between 29 November and 3 December 2010. Eleven participants from Belize, Ecuador, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Macao, China, Malaysia, Maldives, Moldova, Samoa, Sri Lanka and Swaziland attended the course. The participants considered the training very rewarding and useful. They indicated that the knowledge acquired would lead to improvement in the operation of their automated weather station networks as well as in the better use of the observations and information gathered.



The Observatory's Ms. Queenie Lam and Mr. L.O. Li also lectured at the "Regional Seminar on Aeronautical Meteorology Services in Asia" organized by the Civil Aviation Administration of China jointly with the China Meteorological Administration under the VCP in Beijing, China on 11-15 April 2011. Experience in the issuance of SIGMET and implementation of a competency assessment system for aeronautical meteorological personnel was shared with more than 30 participants from 14 members/countries. The Aviation-weather Disaster Risk Reduction (ADRR) website (<http://adrr.caem.wmo.int>) developed by the Observatory as a regional WMO Pilot Project was also introduced at the seminar, before its official launch by Dr. Herbert Puempel, Chief of Aeronautical Meteorological Unit, WMO, subsequently on 18 April 2011 in Hong Kong, China.

Later this year, HK VCP will host a training workshop on "Implementing Competency Assessment for Aeronautical Meteorological Personnel" at the Observatory in Hong Kong on 5 - 9 December. The training workshop is part of a series of WMO regional workshops to assist Members in the implementation of the new Aeronautical Meteorological Personnel Standards recently approved by the 16th World Meteorological Congress.



Good Bye to the Climate Database Modernization Program - A Major Source of Data for Climate Research (Sharon LeDuc, IEDRO)

For over a decade, the Climate Database Modernization Program (CDMP) had been very successful in preserving and enhancing the availability of valuable climate and environmental data. Unfortunately, the program has run out of funding.

CDMP provided stewardship of data needed for research and scientific understanding, provided end users with services such as infrastructure planning and protection of life and property, and sought to preserve and make easily available historical weather data so that scientists could improve climate models to better predict when and where extreme climate events were likely to occur [similar to the International Environmental Data Organization (IEDRO)]. CDMP has cooperated with many national meteorological services, the World

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Meteorological Organization (WMO) and other organizations that recognize the potential value of their data. Stewardship required the preservation of and availability of these data.

CDMP supplied resources to many types of data preservation projects, including digitizing surface and upper air measurements, analyzing weather observations by individuals, and scanning photos and graphs that tracked changes in glacier size, solar activity, and old weather maps. CDMP also supported keying and validating digitized data, enhancing the usability and overall research value of digitized information.

CDMP researchers understood the need for and value of high quality data. Research required that data and results be open and reproducible. CDMP services were in strong support of current, significant scientific issues. One of those issues was climate change and variability.

The historical records of surface observation, e.g. surface temperature and precipitation, and upper air observations provide critical information for understanding the strengths of, and improvements needed for, modeling the earth's atmosphere and land processes. This enhanced understanding will lead to improvements in the science incorporated into models. Retrospective modeling (reanalysis) provides information at more resolved spatial and temporal scales as input for determining risk and adaptive actions for specific events. These data were valuable to determining risk even before being incorporated into models. Also risk at one location is more completely understood when data from a broader geographic area are available. The atmosphere and its processes extend to and require global and solar information.

The WMO and IEDRO are sad to see the CDMP program come to a close. Only with accurate information about the past can we make necessary preparations for the future. With historic weather data we can conduct climate change research, forecast the spread of disease, and improve flood forecasting. Rescuing historic environmental data can do more to prevent human suffering and death than any other endeavor in the 21st century.

Appreciatively so, the WMO and IEDRO have been honored to partner with CDMP in joint efforts to provide useful climate data to weather scientists, whose work reduces undue suffering and loss of life from natural disasters and climate change. WMO and IEDRO recognize the closing of CDMP is an impetus to increase their contributions to both the preservation and improved availability of environmental data. WMO and IEDRO will work to match the services that have been provided by CDMP. We hope that affiliates will also collaborate with us in this endeavor to better our understanding of our planet.

Management by e-learning: A UK Met Office Programme

To date, over 100 participants from developing countries have completed the Management by e-learning (MeL) web-based training. The course is presented on the website www.met-elearning.org, which is managed and funded by the Met Office (UK), as part of their contribution to the VCP. The course is designed for mid-level managers of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) in developing countries or for those employees who want to increase their knowledge on the essentials of management, providing a foundation for further career development.

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Following review of the previous courses, the MeL course has been updated and the next course will run from mid-September 2011 for 20 weeks. The course will be made up of ten modules, each delivered by tutor-facilitated online teaching and learning. The course also includes a forum where participants can discuss topics with the tutor and other participants from around the world.

Proposed modules include: How to use the e-learning programme (including the use of personal learning logs); The purpose of a manager's job and the process of management; Personal time-management; The concept of management style — how to lead and motivate your team; How to build your team and conduct meetings to communicate and solve problems; The principles of planning and how to apply these to a project; How to define a vision for your organization and identify values that will help achieve it; How to use plans as a basis for monitoring and managing the performance of your team; How to manage the learning and development of team members; How to influence others through persuasion and negotiation; Programme review assignment.

The course is provided free to participants (while there is no charge made to course participants, their NMHS is responsible for any costs incurred in getting access to the website (www.met-elearning.org) and all coursework is completed online. On completion of the course, the participant will receive a certificate signed by WMO and the Met Office.

For more information or to register your interest, please fill in the online form at www.met-elearning.org/moodle/. Click on 'Management Skills' under course categories then select 'Management by e-learning Information Portal'. Log in as 'guest' if required. Alternatively you can email your interest to international@metoffice.gov.uk. Applicants will need approval from both their Director and the course facilitators.

Media Systems to enhance delivery, improve awareness and protect lives (David Robinson, UK MO)

Through Met Office UK VCP efforts, and in conjunction with WMO and other partners, more than 40 developing countries have been provided with mini-media systems that enable the National Meteorological Services (NMSs) to prepare their own television broadcasts and forecasts for newspapers and websites. In addition, support is provided in terms of the continuing need for spares and maintenance for these systems, as well as ongoing training for weather presenters and technical support staff.

Media systems are an important element for public weather services in developing countries, with benefits including disaster warning, public awareness and education, national ownership of the information, use of appropriate culture and language, and - significantly - visibility of the NMS in national government.

The UK VCP activities often engage staff from the Met Office to assist with various projects and share their experience. The Met Office's Media Designer, David Robinson is a frequent support for VCP. David has over 20 years experience working in TV weather and is now part of a team that helps with VCP media projects.

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I originally went to Africa with the VCP team seven years ago to improve the graphics on TV and the general look of the weather broadcast, training people to use Met Office weather graphics software 'WeatherEyePC'.



As well as the setting up of TV studios, David also uses his presentational training skills to give new TV weather presenters the encouragement and guidance in presenting that are needed for a polished performance in front of the camera, using a ChromaKey Studio.

In April 2009 David helped set up the first TV weather broadcasts in Guyana. The Ministry of Agriculture in Guyana also wanted to use the new broadcast service to give information to workers affected by the weather – such as fishermen and farmers. So David created extra graphics for information such as tide times for the fishing industry and warnings of prolonged periods of dry weather for farmers. When the new broadcasts were up and running, The Ministry of Agriculture received numerous letters from farmers and fishermen thanking them for this new service - a service that can help save lives.



Earlier this year, in March, David also worked with the Rwanda Meteorological Service on their WeatherEye system. David is next set to travel to the Comoros Islands - for a VCP project being run jointly by the MO and WMO - to set up their first TV weather studio.

WMO/CMA 40th China Study Tour and Regional WIS Training Seminar

The 40th China Study Tour, coupled with the Regional Training Seminar on WMO Information System was held at the headquarters of the Chinese Meteorological Agency (CMA). It was officially opened by Dr Zheng Guoguang, Administrator of CMA and Permanent Representative (PR) of China with WMO, Dr Branski, President of CBS and Dr Pailang SHI, WMO Director of WIS.

Since the Study Tour programme began in 1978, senior officials from NMHSs of many developing countries have been provided with a platform to discuss and exchange experience on key issues relating to the development and improvement of meteorological services and their contribution to national development. This year's event witnessed the donation by CMA of communication and information systems such as CMACAST and MICAPS systems to all the participating countries aimed at enhancing the capabilities of these countries in the implementation of WIS in Asia.

After the 2 day WIS Seminar, the group, comprised of Directors and senior staff of NMHSs from 15 RA II countries, visited Meteorological Bureaus/Offices at the provincial, regional and county levels in Gansu and Guandong Provinces. During these visits, discussions focused on matters relating to WIS meteorological service for drought and agriculture, severe weather events such as typhoons, tropical maritime forecast as well as their

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associated socio-economic impacts. There were practical demonstrations of the Chinese experience on these issues including service delivery and public awareness.

New development initiatives

Economics of meteorological services for disaster management

In April 2011, SOPAC/SPC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with WMO and SPREP to conduct work on a preliminary economic analysis of improved weather and climate services in the Pacific. SOPAC observes that at least 44 per cent of disasters reported since 1970 were hydrometeorological (weather/climate related) in nature. As a result, strong weather and climate services are critical for Pacific island countries to predict negative events and develop strategies to cope. Unfortunately, WMO observes that the Pacific often struggles to maintain national meteorological/hydrological services, cautioning that, if not addressed, critical services – such as the generation of tropical cyclone warnings – could be jeopardized and disasters increase.

WMO hopes that the analysis conducted by SOPAC/SPC will provide evidence of the nature and potential value of investing in improved weather services and strengthen arguments for investing in improving the services as well as their institutions. SOPAC/SPC adds that the analysis should also identify preconditions to realise and or maximise benefits in the future (identifying enabling environment/ policy issues).

Preliminary findings of the analysis and a draft report are anticipated to be available for review around September.



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