

Operational methods for linking providers and users of seasonal predictions

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The activities of persons, agencies and governments are sensitive to climate variability and change to varying degrees. Decisions for planning, operations, risk management and for adaptation (covering time scales from seasonal to centennial) in important socio-economic sectors would be improved by not only increased user's knowledge of climate issues and by the availability of user-friendly products tailored for their needs, but by regular interaction with climate professionals. Implementation of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) will foster user interface mechanisms that bring providers and users together in a more consistent and sustained approach. An invaluable opportunity for sectoral representatives to interact with climate professionals occurs during Regional and National Climate Outlook Forums (RCOFs and NCOFs). When possible, these collaborations involve face-to-face dialogue. Modern methods using the Internet and telephone technologies help to maintain the provider-user relationships in the interim period between traditional forums. In some sectors, the users organize climate forums to which the climate professionals are invited. Such mechanisms build knowledge and confidence, and reduce the chances that valuable information will go unused, when a critical climate-sensitive decision is required. In addition, they support an ongoing evaluation and improvement cycle for increasingly effective climate services, from the user's perspective. This poster will refer to examples and case studies of good practices in engagement of users in COFs and of user-driven forums such as the Malaria Outlook Forum (MALOF) established by the health sector in Africa. It will discuss CCI efforts to develop relevant guidance and promotional materials in that regard. It will outline recommendations, developed in collaboration with experts from WMO's Technical Commissions for Agricultural Meteorology and Hydrology, and health partners, for the establishment of sector-driven climate forums for the agriculture, water and health sectors in vulnerable regions.