

GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR CLIMATE SERVICES (GFCS)

How it came into existence?

The Heads of State and Government, Ministers and Heads of Delegations present at the World Climate Conference-3 (WCC-3), held from 31 August to 4 September 2009 in Geneva, through the Conference declaration, decided to establish a Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) to strengthen the production, availability, delivery and application of science-based climate monitoring and prediction services. The declaration decided that a task force, consisting of high-level independent advisors, would prepare a report, including recommended action on the proposed elements of the Framework, taking into account the concepts outlined in the Brief Note annexed to the Declaration.

What is the GFCS?

It is a Framework designed to mainstream climate science into decision-making at all levels and help ensure that every country and every climate-sensitive sector of society is well equipped to access and apply the relevant climate information. The overarching goal of the Framework is:

To enable better management of the risks of climate variability and change at all levels, through development and incorporation of science based climate information and prediction services into planning, policy and practice.

How GFCS helps countries to deal with climate variability and change?

Climate services deal with the generation and provision of a wide range of information on past, present and future climate and its impacts on natural and human systems. Given the complexity of and requirements for climate services, addressing the immense variety of user needs for climate services is beyond the capacity of any single organization, a small group of organizations or a country. It calls for an unprecedented collaboration among institutions across political, functional and disciplinary boundaries. The GFCS is, therefore, conceived as an integrating set of international arrangements which will be built upon the established global climate observation and research programmes as well as operational structures into an end-to-end product generation, service provision and application system. The "Global Framework for Climate Services" is user-need driven, as a process and includes five major components:

(i) observations; (ii) climate research, modeling and prediction; (iii) a climate services information system (CSIS); (iv) a climate user interface programme (CUIP); and (v) capacity building.

How the GFCS is relevant to the UNFCCC process?

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has been instrumental in facilitating and coordinating the contributions of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to assist Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to fulfill their obligations, particularly under articles 4, 5, 6 and 9 of the Convention. WMO fosters and furthers collaboration among members of the UN system and with other international organizations in observations, climate research and application of climate information in various sectors. WMO co-sponsors the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), and, the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The GFCS integrates these collective efforts to promote cooperation in scientific, technological, technical, socio-economic and other research, systematic observation and development of data archives related to the climate system for implementation of adaptation programmes under the Convention. Furthermore, the GFCS fits well within the adaptation and technology building blocks of a future climate change deal to strengthen actions on vulnerability assessments; national adaptation plans; enabling policy environments; arrangements for sharing knowledge (e.g. through regional centers and the UNFCCC's Nairobi Work Programme (NWP); and tools for risk reduction and sharing, such as insurance.