

Comparative overview of climate services in WMO and GMES activities

Georgi Kortchev, Antoaneta Yotova, Tatiana Spassova, Lora Taseva
National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Abstract

The great interest and concern worldwide regarding climate change issues put the concept for climate services in the focus of attention of many international and European organizations at present. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has established and developed WMO Integrated Global Observing System (WIGOS) to address the need for improved climate information and to provide an effective interface between researchers, service providers and decision-makers. In 2009, WMO organized the 3rd World Climate Conference during which it was decided to start building of a Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). The concept of climate services is also applied in the activities of intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO) - a voluntary partnership of governments and international organizations, including WMO and European Commission, for coordination of efforts to build a Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS). On the other hand, the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) Programme - the European Union contribution to the GEOSS, is going on.

Taking into account these facts, the understanding of and current practice in climate services, mainly ones related to WMO and GMES activities, are briefly described in this paper. A comparative overview is made to find the cross-points which can enable the National Hydrometeorological Services (NHMs) to perform strategic planning and to optimize resources in the time of economic difficulties.

The present situation in the above aspects is examined on the example of the Bulgarian HMS - National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NIMH-BAS). Operational and research activities carried out at NIMH-BAS are discussed from the point of view of developing climate services within both WMO-GFCS and GMES activities in a complimentary way. Based on results from current projects, in particular – the project “Building Capacity for a Black Sea Catchment Observation and Assessment System supporting Sustainable Development” (EnviroGRIDS), practical steps towards improved climate services are proposed for further implementation.