

## World Meteorological Organisation



## WHAT IS THE WMO?

The World Meteorological Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations dedicated to international cooperation and coordination on the state and behaviour of the Earth's atmosphere, its interaction with the land and oceans, the weather and climate it produces, and the resulting distribution of water resources. It is also the international standardization organization in the fields of meteorology, hydrology, climatology and related environmental disciplines. The Secretariat, headquartered in Geneva, is headed by the Secretary-General. Its supreme body is the World Meteorological Congress.

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE WMO?

Established by the ratification of the Convention of the WMO on 23 March 1950, today, it has a membership of 193 Member States and Territories.

Within its mandate in the areas of **weather**, **climate** and **water**, WMO focuses on many different aspects and issues, including:

*Monitoring of  
greenhouse gases*

*Weather forecasts*

*Observations*

*Research*

*Standard setting*

*Capacity development*

*Developing warning  
systems*

*Monitoring*

In order to achieve its long-term goals, WMO assists Members with technology transfer, training for capacity development, collaboration on research and the provision of weather, climate and water-related services. The Organization also contributes to policy formulation in areas related to weather, climate and water at national and international levels.

WMO supports National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to monitor the integrated Earth System observation network, provide vital weather and climate information worldwide. Their early and reliable warnings of severe weather and fluctuations in air quality as well as of climate variability and change allow decision-makers, communities and individuals to be better prepared for weather and climate events. Their warnings help save life and property, protect resources and the environment and support socio-economic growth.

In 2019, the World Meteorological Congress

approved the way forward towards a new vision and strategy for hydrology and water resources after a special Hydrological Assembly, which heard calls to “count every drop because every drop counts.” The Congress approved eight long-term ambitions that should guide the development of WMO activities relevant to water:

1. **No one is surprised by a flood;**
2. **Everyone is prepared for drought;**
3. **Hydro-climate and meteorological data support the food security agenda;**
4. **High-quality data supports science;**
5. **Science provides a sound basis for operational hydrology;**
6. **We have a thorough knowledge of the water resources of our world;**
7. **Sustainable development is supported by information covering the full hydrological cycle;**
8. **Water quality is known;**

The **Hydrology and Water Resources Programme (HWRP)** of WMO promotes the effective use of hydrology in sustainable development to reduce the risk and impacts of water-related disasters and to support effective environmental management at international, regional, national and basin levels.

The **Flash Flood Guidance System** is a global project to enhance the capacity of hydrological and meteorological forecasters to forecast, respond to and address the issues associated with flash floods, especially the lack of capacity to develop effective flash flood warnings.

The **Integrated Drought Management Programme** supports stakeholders at all levels by providing policy and management guidance and by sharing scientific information, knowledge and best practices for Integrated Drought Management.

## THE WAY FORWARD

**I look forward to collaborating with WMO in developing adaptation strategies to ongoing climate change and increasing environmental resilience in ways that minimise the impacts of droughts and floods. The effective fulfilment of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation is key to strengthening social resilience. Strengthening environmental resilience and social resilience are key to adaptation strategies to minimise the effects of climate change, especially on the poorest living in most vulnerable situations.**

Pedro Arrojo-Agudo

UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation

\*The Special Rapporteur held a meeting with WMO representatives on 23 March 2021

