

# **TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) – SOUTH ASIA HYDROMET FORUM CLIMATE SERVICES WORKING GROUP**

## **1. Background and Rationale**

Climate variability and change pose significant challenges to societies, economies, and ecosystems across South Asia. Effective climate services provide reliable, user-centric, and actionable climate information to support decision-making in key sectors such as agriculture, health, water resources, energy, and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

Given the interconnected nature of climate risks, a regional approach to climate services is essential to enhance data accessibility, cross-border knowledge exchange, and sectoral coordination. The Climate Services Working Group (CS WG) will act as a regional platform to strengthen the delivery and application of climate services, ensuring that National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and key stakeholders can effectively anticipate, prepare for, and respond to climate-related risks. Through regional collaboration, capacity building, and resource mobilization, the WG will help NMHSs, and stakeholders effectively manage climate-related risks in the region.

## **2. Objectives**

The CS WG aims to:

1. Strengthen regional collaboration to enhance climate services and promote cross-border knowledge exchange.
2. Improve access to climate data and forecasting tools for better service delivery.
3. Strengthen NMHS and stakeholder technical expertise, infrastructure, and operational capabilities to deliver accurate and user-driven climate services.
4. Ensure climate services are integrated into national and regional adaptation and resilience strategies.
5. Establish a phased WG work plan, prioritizing short-term and long-term actions for implementation.

## **3. Responsibilities**

### **A. Enhancing Regional Climate Services Framework**

- Establish a regional coordination mechanism to align national climate services efforts and foster collaboration.
- Integrate WG activities with existing frameworks such as WMO Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF) and Climate Services User Forum (CSUF).
- Support policy alignment and institutional linkages through National Framework for Climate Services (NFCS) to ensure climate services contribute effectively to national adaptation and DRR strategies.

### **B. Improving Climate Data Access and Standardization**

- Strengthen observed, historical, seasonal, and longer-term climate data-sharing protocols across NMHSs.
- Facilitate the development of interoperable, user-friendly digital platforms for climate data dissemination.

- Promote quality assurance standards for climate information, ensuring consistency and reliability.

#### C. Strengthening Stakeholder Engagement and Capacity Development

- Facilitate training programs and workshops to enhance NMHSs' capacity in delivering climate services.
- Engage with government agencies, private sector actors, NGOs, and civil society to promote the uptake of climate services.
- Promote co-production of climate services, ensuring they are demand-driven and user-focused.
- Advocate for gender-sensitive and socially inclusive approaches in climate service development.

Compile and disseminate case studies on best practices in climate service implementation.

#### D. Mobilizing Resources and Ensuring Sustainability

- Develop a regional resource mobilization strategy, engaging donors and development partners (e.g., World Bank, WMO, RIMES).
- Coordinate funding efforts to avoid duplication and optimize investments in climate services.
- Promote sustainable public-private partnerships to enhance climate service innovation and delivery.

#### E. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Work Plan Implementation

- Develop a structured work plan with clear short and long-term goals.
- Establish a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to track progress and impact.
- Ensure regular WG meetings, progress reports, and feedback mechanisms to improve climate services implementation.

### 4. Expected Outcomes

1. A structured work plan with priorities for short-term (years 1–2) goals, ensuring phased and achievable implementation.
2. A well-coordinated regional climate services framework supporting national initiatives.
3. Improved accessibility and standardization of climate data across South Asia.
4. Enhanced support for tailored, user-driven climate services for agriculture, health, water, energy, and DRR.
5. Strengthened institutional and technical capacities of NMHSs and stakeholders.
6. Sustainable funding mechanisms and partnerships to support long-term climate services delivery.

### 5. Governance and Coordination

- The CS WG will be composed of representatives from NMHSs of South Asian countries, technical experts, sectoral agencies, and development partners.
- The WG will work in close coordination with UKMO, RIMES, and relevant international agencies.

- A rotational chairing system will be established to ensure shared leadership and accountability.
- The WG will convene periodic meetings (quarterly or bi-annually) and report progress to the Executive Council.