

Climate Information as a Public Good or commodity

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Talking Points

- ▶ **Setting the scene/context**
 - ▶ **The Present Situation**
 - ▶ **What are the implications of this situation**
 - ▶ **Constraints**
 - ▶ **Consequences**
 - ▶ **Way Forward and Concluding Remarks**
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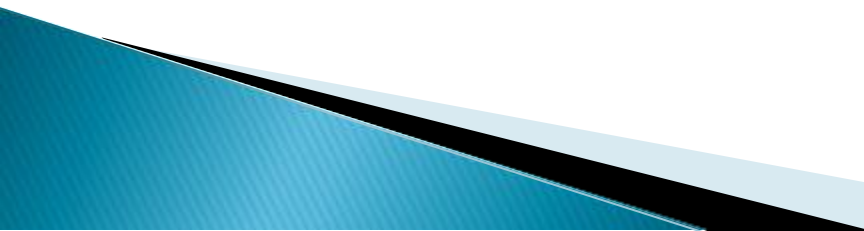
Setting the Scene and Definitions

- ▶ **Climate information** – In reality the correct terminology is **weather** and **climate**
- ▶ **Information:** processed/ secondary data: In this context (*weather and climate forecasts, warnings and advisories, statistical data*)
- ▶ **Public good** :Any service or product provided without profit by an organisation for the benefit of society (*protection of life and property, enhanced quality of life, mitigating and managing impacts of extreme weather and climate such as disaster risk reduction*);


The Present Situation

- ▶ At the **global level** (inter-Governmental level) the WMO is the official voice on weather and climate;
- ▶ At the **country level**, the official responsibility falls upon the National Meteorological Services or Agencies funded and mandated by the governments;
- ▶ The public good services are/ should be free;
- ▶ However some meteorological service providers have become semi-autonomous and operate commercially or do cost recovery
- ▶ Some weather and climate information is not free (*for example, insurers/ reassures, investors and banks, consultancies and technology companies*)


Implications (what this entails)

- Climate information for public consumption is funded by the tax payer;
 - The public has a right to the information;
 - The information should be easily accessible and affordable in some cases;
 - The information must come from trusted sources (*accuracy, reliability, traceability, timely, quality controlled and meeting international/ WMO standards*);
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Constraints

- ▶ Many weather and climate information providers are severely underfunded and so are failing to fulfil their mandates yet there is a growing demand for products and services;
 - ▶ The private sector has taken advantage of this gap and now offering services that are competing with NMSs;
 - ▶ Provision of weather and climate information is now business and no longer just a service
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Consequences

- ▶ The future of NMSs is under threat due to the entry by other players such as the private sector and “briefcase/ fly by night climate experts”;
 - ▶ There is increased risk of lower-quality services from private sector entities which, in turn, increase risk to public safety and property (sensational, conflicting and confusing);
 - ▶ There are no rules regarding the integrity of the information, accountability, verification and ethics in the production and provision of weather and climate information;
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Way Forward and Concluding Remarks

- ▶ NMSs have to accept the new reality and change otherwise they face redundancy;
 - Integrate in-country networks to increase observations and fill gaps in spatial coverage;
 - Embrace opportunities such as big data, internet of things, smart sensors, cloud computing and social media available in the private sector;
 - Use and maximise benefits from cutting-edge research and technical developments and innovations,
 - Incorporate indigenous knowledge science in your early warning systems
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Way Forward and Concluding Remarks (Ctnd)

- ▶ Addressing climate change begins with observations, monitoring, data management and forecasting and early warning (*funding of NMSs is crucial and inevitable*);
 - ▶ NMSs are single nationally designated authorities on weather warnings;
 - ▶ There is need to regulate issuance of climate information to protect users/ consumers;
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