

INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION  
OF BROADCAST  
METEOROLOGY

Edition 24

Spring 2007

Special points of  
interest:

- EMS Conference
- CHANGE
- 13th AGM
- Secure & Sustainable Living Conference

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## Up Front

## Monterrey Cancelled

**It is a long while since we have issued an edition of "Up Front", and you deserve some explanation of what has been happening "behind the scenes".**

We had hoped that this edition of our Newsletter would be full of details about the Monterrey conference. This, however, is not to be. As you will know from email circulation, the organisers of the umbrella "Forum" event in Monterrey found themselves short of funds, a situation complicated by inconclusive elections in Mexico and a consequent paralysis of government decision-making. We were informed in late January that the Monterrey conference could not go ahead; in truth, we were concerned about the prospects well before this. We ideally would have needed to "sign off" on the conference in the autumn months to allow adequate organising time for the scale of event which we had hoped for.

The committee are now examining other options and possibilities. Some of these may spring from the new initiative from the Environment Directorate of the European Union, described in the following pages. The EU are concerned that its citizens understand fully the impacts of Climate Change, and the actions needed now to minimize the risk

of such

Change becoming catastrophic. Accordingly, the EU invited some 50 people active in weather broadcasting within Europe to a meeting in Brussels in late February, to examine the possibility of establishing a network of weather broadcasters who might help raise awareness of Climate Change.

The outcome of this meeting was to establish a "core group" of six persons to help advance this concept. The Core Group will provide guidance and advice to a secretariat, which the EU will establish and fund, to service this network.

Three members of the IABM Committee – Tomas Molina, John Teather and Gerald Fleming – serve on this core group, which had its first meeting in Brussels on April 18<sup>th</sup>. At this meeting, Tomas Molina was elected Co-Chair of the group along with Mr Martin Hedberg of Sweden; the other members are Ms Marina Raibaldi from Corsica and Mr Jaroslaw Kret from Poland.

The remit of this network lies within Europe but the EU are acutely aware that Climate Change is a global problem; one that will require cohesion within the global community if it is to be tackled effectively. The IABM is, of course, a truly international organisation, with

members in all corners of the world. We will, over the coming months, be examining with the EU how the resources of the IABM might be used to give global reach to this concept of weather broadcasters becoming active voices in raising awareness and understanding. We understand that this may be a difficult political issue for many of our members, but it is also a task in public education; surely the most important such task that the profession of Meteorology has ever faced.

It is still the intention of the committee to pursue the organisation of a Second World Conference on Broadcast Meteorology with a view to bringing weather broadcasters and Climate Change experts together, to tease out the details and subtleties in the way our atmosphere is responding to the increase in Carbon Dioxide and other gasses. We also need to find new and innovative ways of telling this story to our public, ways which will respect the integrity of both the science and our audience. We need to inform and educate people without alarming or frightening them. We need to empower them to understand that control of the earth's thermostat is truly in their own hands.

*Gerald Fleming*

# CHANGE

## Meeting of Meteorologists

As part of the European Commission's "You control climate change" awareness-raising campaign, more than 45 meteorologists and television weather presenters from across the European Union met in February at the Commission's Berlaymont headquarters in Brussels.

Speakers include Mr Jerry Lengoasa, Assistant Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organisation, and two lead authors of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's forthcoming Fourth Assessment Report, Prof Stefan Rahmstorf of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (Germany) and Professor Pavel Kabat of Wageningen University and Research Centre (the Netherlands). Six members of the IABM Committee were in attendance.

### 'You Control Climate Change' – an awareness raising campaign

In recent years, public awareness of the seriousness of climate change has grown significantly. Surveys show that it is now among the top three environmental concerns amongst European citizens. Despite the concern, many people feel that they are individually powerless to act when faced with the scale of the problem.

The "You Control Climate Change Campaign", launched by the European Commission's Directorate-General for

Environment aims to dispel this negative perception. It sets out to further raise awareness of the seriousness of climate change for our society, and encourages people to act by making small changes in their behaviour. Examples of these small changes include turning down the heating thermostat, switching off the standby mode on appliances, reducing car use and increasing recycling - all of which collectively add to significant reductions in greenhouse gases.

Based on the results of past opinion polls, the target group was identified as

those people who "sometimes" make an effort to protect the environment and tend to be sceptical about how much of a difference their efforts make.

The campaign seeks to raise awareness via different channels including television, online and outdoor advertising, a dedicated website as well as a special schools programme.

The "You control climate change" campaign was launched in Brussels on 29 May 2006 and in all other EU Member States between 30 May and 9 June. In capital cities across Europe, giant banners were unveiled on public buildings, many famous statues wore the campaign t-shirt, and various other events took place to launch the campaign and to draw attention to the importance of individual involvement.

The schools campaign is a vital element of the campaign and targeted students and teachers alike. In order to attract schools to make a pledge, information and promotional material was mailed to over 1.1 million secondary school children across the EU.

Participating schools were encouraged to keep track of their efforts to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and make a pledge to combat climate change. Pledges were made both collectively and individually. All participating schools will receive a certificate of participation from DG En-

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vironment of the European Commission.

Other events under the umbrella of the schools programme included the organisation of more than 32 events across Europe. These involved debates, quizzes, media visits to flagship schools, workshops with secondary school students, and screenings of Al Gore's popular film, "An Inconvenient Truth" followed by a presentation of the schools campaign.

Over 15 teacher organisations have been involved in the schools campaign, which helped spread the campaign messages to an even wider audience.

Furthermore, at least five Ministers of Education were actively involved in the promotion of the schools campaign. Finally, various competitions amongst schools were organised in over 13 countries.

#### Television advertising

Advertising was screened on both BBC World and MTV in September and October 2006 and then again in late December and early January 2007. Two television advertisements were featured. One more classic in style, geared towards a mature audience; the other an animation targeting the youth audience.

Holiday makers on 11 ski slopes in Austria and Switzerland still have the opportunity to view the 'You Control Climate Change' advertisements on giant screens, which will continue until 18 February. Carnival revellers will also see the advertisement on the giant screens in Piazza San Marco. Interestingly, the advertisements were adapted to make them more relevant for the surrounding areas.

Giant banners on prominent buildings were erected in 16 capital cities across the EU. The majority of the aforementioned building facades were draped in giant posters for the very first time which added to the impressive visual effect. Buses, billboards, and bus/tram shelters in 15 countries also featured the advertisements.

Full-page advertisements in quality newspapers including La Repubblica

(IT), Gazeta Wyborcza (PL) Hospodarske Noviny (CR) and Kathimerini (GR), appeared in 14 member states of the European Union. See below for examples of the advertisements.

Online advertising appeared on Yahoo! at the time of the launch. Currently our advertising is available for view on popular video sharing websites such as You Tube, My Space etc.

#### Campaign Website

The 'You Control Climate Change' website: <http://www.climatechange.eu.com> is the first non-specialist website devoted to climate change that is available in 19 languages. The site provides comprehensive information on climate change and a range of online tools which makes learning easy and fun. The tools include a carbon calculator, over 50 practical tips on how to make a change have an impact, animated tools, a special school section with tools such as video podcasts, brochures, quizzes etc.

Valuable partnerships have been established during the campaign, creating a multiplier effect. Ministries, cities and even the film world have partnered with the 'You Control Climate Change' campaign, using our visual identity and other materials. Some of our partners include:

- Finnish Climate Change Communications campaign
- Luxembourg national climate change campaign

- Ministries of Environment across the EU
- Spanish cities of Santander and St. Jacques de Compostela
- European premieres of the film, 'An Inconvenient Truth'

The 'You Control Climate Change' campaign has also received the 2006 AICA (International Association for Environmental Communication) prize for Climate Change Communications: "Communicating with Citizens Improves the Environment: Communicate Climate Change".

Our animated advertisement was recently awarded 'advert of the week' on influential marketing outlet Brand Republic

2007 has already seen several interesting promotional activities taking place including the dissemination of a New Year's resolution e-card, directing citizens to the website's 'tips' section, outdoor advertising in ski resorts and during the Venice carnival, dissemination of the animation film: 'Climate Change Superheroes' on television and online. During the year, the campaign will continue with the schools programme, enriching the website with more tools and in more languages, notably Romanian and Bulgarian, outdoor advertising in several Member States.



## Ambitious targets agreed to reduce global warming

Angela Merkel, German chancellor, and commission president José Manuel Barroso at the European council in a bid to avert potential human calamity, carbon emissions are to be slashed by 20% by 2020 as a result of decisions taken at the summit meeting on 8-9 March. This figure could go up to 30% if countries outside the EU agree to match the commitment.

Coming together at the EU's spring council, heads of state not only agreed on the emissions reduction but also to a 20% increase in energy efficiency, a 10% increase in use of biofuels and a binding 20% target for the use of renewable energy sources.

The topic is "extremely important for the whole of humanity" said Ms Merkel. "To reduce global warming by 2 percent we need to take the necessary measures, avoiding what could well be human calamity", she explained.

While the proposals gained unanimous agreement, the way to achieve them is still undecided. Countries have varying experience of biofuels and renewable energy sources. Although 60% of the world's wind power market is already in the EU, not all

countries have access to wind power, and others worry that offshore generation will not be productive for them.

Recognising the problem, Mr Barroso pointed out that the target for the use of renewables is a joint one, and that "national targets must reflect national situations [to] collectively meet the overall binding target". EU efforts to reduce emissions are by far the most ambitious in the world. The first steps towards making the aims a reality will be presented in the autumn.

With emissions reduction targets decided and the process of creating laws to achieve them next on the list, the EU can face the G8 summit in June as a world leader in the fight against climate change.

"We will do all we can to bring the process forward when we meet representatives from Brazil, South Africa, China and other industrialised countries" said Ms Merkel.



## 13th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held during the EMS Conference between the 1st - 5th October at the Euroforum, San Lorenzo de El Escorial, C/ del rey, 38, 28200 San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Madrid.

The committee had hoped to hold it in Monterrey, and realises how difficult it will be for members to attend the EMS Conference.

The constitution does allow for 'proxy voting' and so it would be very helpful for members to email their votes to [secretary@iabm.org](mailto:secretary@iabm.org) as soon as possible.

The main point of the AGM other than receiving reports is to elect the committee for the ensuing

year. Tomas Molina will complete his three years this time around and therefore a new Chairman needs to be elected. Tomas has kindly agreed to stay on the committee.

The nominations to be considered by members in October are shown opposite:

The agenda will be:

1. Apologies for absence, and notification of postal votes.
2. Minutes of the 12th Annual General meeting
3. Any matters arising.
4. Report of the outgoing Chairman, Tomas Molina.
5. Report of the outgoing Honorary Secretary, John Teather.

6. Report of the outgoing Treasurer, Gerald Fleming.

7. Election of Directors and Officers.

8. Resolutions.

9. Any other business.

Chairman	Claire Martin
Vice Chairman	
Secretary	John Teather
Treasurer	Gerald Fleming
Membership	Inge Neidek
Publications	Bill Giles
Ordinary Members	Tammy Garrison
	Paul Gross
	Dieter Walsh
	Gemma Puig
	Tomas Molina
	Stephen Quoa
African Representative	
Asia Representative	Yoshikazu Idesako

## Scientific 'consensus' on global warming doesn't exist

By Robert Cohen, San Jose Mercury News

The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change summary, released Feb. 2, states that it is "very likely" that changes in climate are due to human influence. More recent comments in various media outlets have focused on a scientific consensus which supports the panel's conclusions. Those who question this consensus have been compared to Holocaust deniers, and some have been threatened with job dismissal. This is no longer science, but scientific socialism. I do not agree with all of the IPCC conclusions and know through peer discussions that the idea of a consensus in the meteorological community is false.

The IPCC was formed under U.N. auspices, and while each expert contributed a few pages of the report, the final publication was vetted through governmental committees before release, where significant changes could be made. The documents signed by the contributing experts note that they agree with the pages they contributed, but not necessarily the complete report nor its conclusions.

There are a number of inconsistencies in the report. The most glaring is that the models on which the conclusions depend do not agree with various sets of observations. Following are a few specific examples: The summary notes an increase in mean sea level of 7 inches during the 20th century, with a forecast rise of an additional 7 to 23 inches by 2100. Observations, however, do not

agree with these predictions. Stockholm, which has the world's longest sea level measurement record of about 1,200 years, has shown increases in sea level of only plus-or-minus 0.06 inches per year, with an average very close to zero; these observations are well below the model predictions.

The Pacific Island nation of Tuvalu, barely above sea level, has requested permission to move its people to Australia or New Zealand, based on the predicted sea level rise. However, satellite data and sea level measurements indicate falling sea level at the island. The models predict that temperature increases will appear first at the poles. However, data published after the release of the IPCC Summary indicate that temperatures in the Antarctic have not increased during the previous 50 years. Those data frequently quoted in the media of increasing temperatures are only from a small region occupied by scientists; the Antarctic region as a whole does not show rising temperatures.

Away from the earth's surface, models predict that temperature trends should show a strong increase with height, particularly in the tropics. However, observations indicate upper atmosphere temperatures showing flat or decreasing temperature trends.

Research has also shown that slight changes in energy from the sun can significantly affect the earth, particularly in terms of clouds, which are a

weak link in the global warming models. The level and amount of cloud can determine whether temperatures will warm as the cloud layer limits heat dissipation to space or whether temperatures will cool as the sun's incoming energy is reflected back to space before reaching the Earth's surface.

Temperature has fluctuated significantly in the past, with shorter-term cooling and warming trends of about 1,500 years superimposed on long-term cycles of ice ages and glacial melting. The 1,500-year cycle includes the Medieval Warming Period and the Little Ice Age, which together extended from about 900 to 1850 A.D. During the former, literature and archaeology provide evidence that the Vikings found grapes in Newfoundland, naming their new settlement Vinland. The Little Ice Age was associated with major diseases which were rampant, due at least partially to the cold weather. As the Arctic ice edge advanced, Inuit hunters in kayaks were observed as far south as Scotland around 1700.

Clearly, these changes were not due to human influence. It has yet to be determined whether we are in a warming period which is part of the normal climate cycle.

Is it worth destroying our economy and lifestyle based on an unproven theory which does not correlate with historical observations?

## Bush Climate Report Shows U.S. Greenhouse Gases Skyrocketing

WASHINGTON, DC, March 5, 2007 (ENS) - The United States will emit about 20 percent more greenhouse gases by 2020 than it did in 2000, according to a draft report that the Bush administration was scheduled to submit to the United Nations a year ago.

The internal administration report, which was obtained by the Associated Press, estimates that U.S. emissions

of greenhouse gases from the burning of coal, oil, and natural gas will rise from 7.7 billion tons in 2000 to 9.2 billion tons in 2020 - an increase of 19.5 percent.

The growth in emissions was expected, but highlights how out of touch the Bush administration is with world opinion and the efforts of other countries to curb climate

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change.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality, CEQ, which is responsible for the draft report, says that how much the administration can do to cut emissions beyond merely slowing the rate of increase will become clear "as the science justifies."

The report forecasts increasing droughts and "a distinct reduction" in the spring snow pack covering the north-western states, which supplies most of the region's drinking water.

The United States currently is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases - responsible for about one-quarter of the world's emissions.

When President George W. Bush took office in 2001, one of his first acts was to repudiate the Kyoto Protocol signed by President Bill Clinton, and it has never been sent to the U.S. Senate for ratification.

The protocol, an amendment to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, requires most industrialized countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2 percent below 1990 levels by the end of 2012.

The latest projections from pre-2004 EU Member States (EU-15) show that greenhouse gas emissions could be brought down to eight percent below 1990 levels by 2010. An October report by the European Environment Agency, EEA, shows that *"if all existing and planned domestic policy measures are implemented and Kyoto mechanisms as well as carbon sinks are used, the EU-15 will reach its Kyoto Protocol target."*

The next 10 new EU member states also are on track to achieve their individual Kyoto targets, despite rising emissions, largely due to economic restructuring in the 1990s, says the EEA. The two most recent EU member states were not part of the block last

October when the report was produced.

President Bush has said that abiding by the Kyoto Protocol would hurt the U.S. economy. He has argued that voluntary emissions reductions and better technology such as clean coal, nuclear power, and energy efficiency would do the job of limiting global warming.

U.S. scientists, businesses and environmental groups say that if irreversible global warming is to be avoided, binding targets even more stringent than those of the Kyoto Protocol should be set.

On April 14 campaigners will be demonstrating in cities across the United States to call for 80 percent cuts in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The CEQ says its final version of the report will "show that the president's portfolio of actions and his financial commitment to addressing climate change are working."

The draft U.S. report comes one month after the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, issued their strongest warning to date - finding that global warming is occurring, that humans are "very likely" responsible, and that warming is expected to continue for centuries, even if greenhouse gas emissions are curbed at once.

Average global temperatures could rise by over six degree Celsius (11 Fahrenheit) by the end of the century, the panel said.

The IPCC report was endorsed by 113 governments, including the United States.

The U.S. states are taking the initiative from the federal government with four regional programs to curb greenhouse gas emissions. California has led the field by aiming to cut its emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and to meet

the target of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

A variety of bipartisan legislation establishing controls on greenhouse gas emissions and cap-and-trade plans for the main greenhouse gas carbon dioxide are making their way through the Democrat-controlled Congress.

James Connaughton, chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, has said the administration stands firm on its belief that regulating carbon emissions would undermine the U.S. economy.



*"We still have very strong reservations about an overarching, one-size-fits-all mandate about carbon,"* he said in November. Connaughton said most bills in Congress aimed at cutting emissions of carbon dioxide probably would raise energy prices. A CEQ spokesperson blamed the delay in submitting the report to the United Nations on an "extensive inter-agency review process."

The Board of Directors of the American Association for the Advancement of Science warned at its annual meeting in February that, *"Delaying action to address climate change will increase the environmental and societal consequences as well as the costs. The longer we wait to tackle climate change, the harder and more expensive the task will be,"* the scientists said.

## Global Warming: Enough to Make You Sick

Oysterman Jim Aguiar had never had to deal with the bacterium *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* in his 25 years working the frigid waters of Prince William Sound. The dangerous microbe infected seafood in warmer waters, like the Gulf of Mexico. Alaska was way too cold.

But the sound was gradually warming. By summer 2004, the temperature had risen just enough to poke above the crucial 59° F mark. Cruise ship passengers who had eaten local oysters were soon coming down with diarrhoea, cramping and vomiting - the first cases of *Vibrio* food poisoning in Alaska that anyone could remember. As scientists later determined, the culprit was not just the bacterium, but the warming that allowed it to proliferate.

*"This was probably the best example to date of how global climate change is changing the importation of infectious diseases,"* said Dr. Joe McLaughlin, acting chief of epidemiology at the Alaska Division of Public Health, who published a study on the outbreak.

The spread of human disease has become one of the most worrisome subplots in the story of global warming. Incremental temperature changes have begun to redraw the distribution of bacteria, insects and plants, exposing new populations to diseases that they have

never seen before.

A report from the World Health Organization estimated that in 2000 about 154,000 deaths around the world could be attributed to disease outbreaks and other conditions sparked by climate change.

In Sweden, fewer winter days below 10 degrees and more summer days above 50 degrees have encouraged the northward movement of ticks, which has coincided with an increase in cases of tick-borne encephalitis since the 1980s.

Researchers have found that poison ivy has grown more potent and lush because of increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

In Africa, mosquitoes have been slowly inching up the slopes around Mt. Kenya, bringing malaria to high villages that had never been exposed before.

*"It's going to get very warm,"* said Andrew Githeko, a vector biologist who heads the Climate and Human Health Research Unit at the Kenya Medical Research Institute in Kisumu. *"That's going to mean a huge difference to malaria."*

In 1996, health authorities reported a human case of tick-borne encephalitis in the Czech village of Borova Lada, elevation 3,000 feet. Until then, the *Ixodes ricinus* tick, which carries the disease, had never been seen above 2,600 feet.

The case caught the attention of Milan Daniel, a parasitologist the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education in Prague who has been studying the movement of ticks in the Czech Republic for half a century.

He scoured the Sumava and Krkonose mountains and found that the ticks had migrated as high as 4,100 feet largely because of milder autumns over the last two decades, according to a series of studies published over the last four years.

From 1961 to 2005, the mean temperature in the Krkonose Mountains had increased about 2½ degrees.

*"This shift of the ticks,"* Daniel said, *"is clearly connected with climate changes."*

According to a landmark United Nations report released this month, global warming has reached a point where even if greenhouse gas emissions could be held stable, the trend would continue for centuries.

The report painted a grim picture of the future - rising sea levels, more intense storms, widespread drought.

Predicting the future of disease, however, has proven difficult because of myriad factors - many of which have little to do with global warming. Diseases move with people, they follow trade routes, they thrive in places with poor sanitation, they develop resistance to medicines, they can blossom during war or economic breakdowns.

*"No one's saying global warming is the whole picture here,"* said Dr. Paul R. Epstein, associate director of the Centre for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard University. *"But it is playing a role. As climate*

*changes, it's projected to play an even greater role."*

In a Beltsville, Md., laboratory filled with bathroom-sized aluminum chambers, U.S. Department of Agriculture weed physiologist Lewis Ziska is peering into the future of one of the key components of global warming - rising carbon dioxide levels.

CO2 levels have been on the rise since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution more than 200 years ago. Today, they are at their highest point in more than 650,000 years.

In the tightly sealed chambers, Ziska re-created pre-industrial conditions by turning down the concentration of carbon dioxide to 280 parts per million. In another box, he simulated the present with 370 parts per million. In a third box, he pumped up the carbon dioxide to 600 parts per million, the estimate for 2050.

Much of Ziska's work has centered on ragweed. The weeds inside the tanks suck up carbon dioxide. *"It's like feeding a hungry teenager,"* he said.

Ziska found that current conditions produced 131% more pollen than pre-industrial conditions. Future conditions produced 320% more.

*"For us weed biologists, this is the worst of times and the best of times,"* he said.

*"A small amount of warming can go a long way, as far as changing disease transmission dynamics,"* said Dr. Jonathan Patz, director of Global Environmental Health at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

## Global Warming Alarm: Doomsday for Australia?

It was something of a double whammy for one of the world's most desirable cities.

The ominous report issued earlier this month by the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was frightening enough: The evidence of global warming was unequivocal, most likely caused by humans, and likely to continue for centuries.

But another report had been issued, just one day before, by Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization. And its conclusion read like a dagger through the heart of the land down under. If global warming continues at its current rate, the CSIRO report warned, life in the city of Sydney could be completely transformed by the year 2070.

In just one generation, Sydney could slide into a near permanent state of drought. There could be a dramatic rise in deadly bushfires. Temperatures would rise 10 or 15 degrees Fahrenheit, or more. Heat-related deaths would soar from nearly 200 to more than 1,200 a year. The report was very grim reading, especially for the people of Sydney.

To better understand how Australians were responding to this "doomsday scenario," I met with Michael Archer, the dean of the science faculty at Sydney's University of New South Wales.

Watch Mark Litke's report on the "doomsday scenario" tonight on "World News." Check your local listings for air time.

Professor Archer is a noted geologist and palaeontologist, who has studied the history of climate change and its effects on prehistoric life. He is among the prominent scientists who have warned repeatedly that global warming posed a dire threat to mankind.

I interviewed Archer as we walked on the predictably sun-drenched Bondi Beach in the Sydney suburbs. It seemed an appropriate location, since Australians have known for years that the growing hole in the ozone layer over neighbouring New Zealand has made the sun's rays increasingly harmful in this part of the world.

Were residents of Australia surprised by the two reports?

In a sense, it was a confirmation of what we knew was going to happen anyway. As a geologist, I've seen these

sort of things recorded in the rocks we've studied for the last 30 years. The thing that worries is the rate of change, the pace at which this is going to happen.

How are Australians responding?

I think the biggest problem we've got in Australia is the one that we have all around the world. We are very poor responders to SLOW change. If someone takes a swing at you. You know what to do -- DUCK. But if somebody tells you over the next 50 years your world is going to profoundly change, you think, "Eh! Am I gonna be alive or not? ... Do I really worry about it?"

We've always been a little bit, "Ah, she'll be right, mate! Ya know, it's not too much of a panic." But just now, they seem to be worrying up. I think the message is coming in from all over the globe from this latest report. Suddenly people are saying, "Okay, maybe MY life won't change personally that much, but what about my KIDS?"

The people of Sydney certainly did not need a report to know that something was terribly wrong. This part of Australia is in its seventh year of drought.



Absolutely! Everybody who's been affected by this drought says they don't have any living memory of anything as bad as this. We know that geologically, there have been far worse droughts in the past. So we think, "Okay, this is a taste of what's to come."

If we have climate change, what we do know is southern Australia is going to go powder dry, northern Australia is going to be afflicted with violent weather patterns. We don't know what's going to happen in eastern Australia. My guess is mangrove forests are going to invade the beaches, Bondi Beach (where we're standing now) is gone, so there are changes coming down the line.

Yes, the drought has been a wake-up call.

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Could what's happening in Australia be the "canary in the coal mine" for the rest of the world?

Yes, in more ways than one. We've got about 95, maybe 98 percent of our population living along the coastline. [With the ice sheets at the poles and Greenland melting] the sea levels will be 100 meters (330 feet) higher than they are today. Forget Venice. I mean we're talking about sharks in the middle of (downtown) Sydney.

The warnings now being issued by the scientific community sound almost biblical, the coming of an apoca-

lypse.

They are apocalyptic. On the other hand, they're appropriately apocalyptic. We think of an apocalypse as something that happens overnight. Okay, this is a slightly slower apocalypse, if you like, but it's no less profound. And it's going to obliterate the world as we currently know it. It's going to make change within one generation very, very visible and very uncomfortable. It is an apocalypse. I don't think that's inappropriate.

## SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING:

### Social and Economic Benefits of Weather, Climate and Water Services

Madrid, Spain, 19 to 22 March 2007

**Weather-, climate- and water-sensitive decisions are made by millions of people worldwide each day. As part of the ongoing effort to improve security and sustainable living, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) held an international conference from 19 to 22 March, 2007 on the social and economic benefits to society of the products and services provided by the meteorological and hydrological community, the backbone of which is formed by the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) of WMO Members.**

This event was held in Madrid, Spain with the collaboration and support of the Government of Spain (Ministry of Environment) and under the gracious patronage of Her Majesty Queen Sofia. Assistance and support towards the organization of this conference have also been received from the Governments of Finland, France, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. EUMETSAT, the European Commission, the World Bank, the world Tourism Organization and several commercial sponsors have been important supporting partners.

As the questions of climate change and variability play an increasing role in government decisions, the Con-

ference will provide an important occasion for representatives of various sectors of society to describe how the environment impacts them; how weather, climate and water information helps them make decisions and reduce risks; and what changes would be needed to improve decision-making.



This is an opportunity for essential dialogue, where service providers can learn more about how their products and services are used and where improvements are needed to increase their value to society and the economy. It is also an occasion for users and decision makers to better appreciate the current capabilities, responsibilities and limitations of service providers. By bringing together decision makers, users and service providers, WMO aims to increase further the utility of weather, climate and water knowledge for the social and economic benefit of all nations.

Governments are faced with many crucial decisions concerning such vital

areas as population growth, poverty reduction, water and food security, health and safety, prevention and mitigation of natural disasters, adaptation to climate change, energy management, protection of the environment, finance, recreation and tourism, transporta-

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tion and other sectors of society. Addressing these issues requires weather-, climate- and water-related information to be effectively integrated into decision-making to develop sustainable policies.

### Purpose of the conference

- To demonstrate the relevance of the activities of WMO and National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to contemporary social and economic realities
- To ensure a greater understanding and appreciation of social and economic benefits of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in relation to user requirements, public-private partnerships and globalisation
- To highlight the fact that resources provided to pertinent services should be considered as investments rather than expenditures

### Conference objectives

- To describe how the environment affects various sectors of society
- To explain how weather, climate and water information helps in the decision-making process
- To outline changes required to improve decision-making
- To provide leaders of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services with an opportunity to learn about how their products and services are used
- To understand where improvements are needed to increase the value of these services to society and the economy
- To help decision makers understand the current capabilities, responsibilities and limitations of NMHSs

### Expected outcomes

- Conference statement
- A CD of presented papers and a book based on the keynote lectures
- A 216-page, fully illustrated book '*Elements for Life*'
- A comprehensive manual of guidelines and case studies on the effective use of weather, climate and water information in support of social and economic benefits and sustainable development
- A review and synthesis of the way everyday social and economic decisions are influenced by weather, climate and water information and services, and their benefits to society
- A comprehensive publication on the global social and economic benefits of meteorological and hydrological information, including case studies, best practices and recommendations

## Some benefits of weather, climate and water services

### Protecting lives and property

While the number of global disasters from weather-, climate- and water-related disasters has increased over

the 1956-2005 period nearly 10-fold, the reported loss of life has decreased from 2.66 million between 1956-1965 to 0.22 million between 1996-2005. This reduction can largely be attributed to enhanced disaster risk reduction policies and tools, including contingency planning and early warning systems.

Rapid radio warnings issued by the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, and the building of shelters in vulnerable areas, have contributed towards reducing the cyclone-related death toll from over 300 000 in 1970 to 200 in 1994.

Between 1992 and 2004, the USA National Weather Service's specialized radar system prevented over 330 fatalities and 7, 800 injuries from tornadoes – also saving more than US\$3 billion in economic losses.

In late 2006, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology provided early bushfire warnings, allowing the New South Wales Rural Fire Service to issue pre-emptive fire bans across the state. Despite tinderbox conditions, officials had to contend with only one major fire.

### Preserving health

The 2003 heat wave killed around 40 000 people in western Europe. July 2006 was one of the hottest months on record but research output, using studies from National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, helped reduce casualties to around two thousand, or by 95 per cent.

Botswana's National Malaria Control Programme uses tailored seasonal climate predictions and weather information as part of an effective Malaria Early Warning System. In recent years, several European partners have joined forces to improve seasonal rainfall predictions for much of southern Africa.

A recent study by the Kenya Medical Research Institute estimated that early seasonal forecasts, coupled with rapid medical treatment, could reduce hospital admission costs to around US\$2.50 per child, potentially saving US\$27,000,000 per million malaria patients.

In 2002, the severe Asian dust storm closed over 4 000 schools and caused a serious reduction of industrial working hours. Three years later, the Korea Meteorological Administration issued effective warnings of a similar storm, allowing companies to change air filters in advance and schools to send children home.

### Assisting agriculture

In 2004, Zimbabwean farmers who had used the El Niño forecast produced 18.7 per cent more than those farmers who had not.

Economic benefits for wheat, cotton, barley and sorghum crops generated by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology's "Farm weather" agricultural fax service have been calculated at about six times more than the cost of

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)  
the service itself.

Since the advent of the RANET community radio service in 1997, hundreds of thousands of farmers in Africa and Asia have received weather and climate information and recommended crop management practices, especially planting dates, before the start of each season.

#### Avoiding economic losses

Benefits from investment in meteorological and hydrological services have been estimated in the order of ratio 1 to 10. Recent studies have shown that returns from investments in modernization of meteorological and hydrological services is in the order of 1 to 3 above the estimated yield from the original infrastructure.

It has been estimated that the use of hydro-meteorological information in the Russian Federation prevented economic losses of approximately 11.4 billion roubles (US\$400 million) in 2004. The following year, savings increased to 13.9 billion roubles (US\$500 million).

In the United States of America, electricity suppliers save US\$166 million every year through the use of 24-hour temperature forecasts.

#### Supporting transport

The economic value of snow forecasts to road maintenance operations in Sweden has been calculated at 0.48 million SEK (US\$70 000) for each snowstorm or 9.6 million SEK (US\$1.34 million) per typical year.

The World Area Forecast Centre at the Met Office,

United Kingdom, has improved the accuracy of wind forecasts – especially important to aviation – in the northern hemisphere by around 20 per cent over the past six years.

September 2005 saw the launch of the 1250th international drifting buoy completing the first component of the World Meteorological Organization's Global Ocean Observing System which is contributing towards improved safety in the world's coastal regions.

#### Enhancing holidays and leisure

An Environment Canada survey in Greater Vancouver estimated that the tourism industry loses US\$7.45 million for every event (such as fog) which significantly reduces visibility.

A mean annual temperature increase of 1.8°C would reduce the duration of Alpine snow cover by some 40 days according to climate change projections by Météo-France. Many resorts are now promoting more summer-oriented activities such as hiking, canoeing and paragliding.

Spanish five-time winner of the Tour de France cycling race, Miguel Induráin, has said: "The bicycle, the tyres and even the jersey are selected on the basis of meteorological data."

## Snow less Winter First for Tokyo

by: BBC News 1 March 2007

The Japanese capital has experienced its first winter without snow for 131 years, weather officials say.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said it had recorded no snow in central Tokyo between December and the end of February, the official winter months.

This the first time no snow has fallen

in winter since records began in 1876, the agency said.

Officials said the winter had been unusually warm, but added that snow could still fall in the coming weeks.

And they played down a direct link to global warming.

"We believe El Nino can be one factor. Another theory is that the seasonal southward movement of cold air from the Arctic region was not sustained and weak," one official from the agency said.

"It's a bit of stretch to link this directly to global warming. But the winter was very warm, for sure."

The official, quoted by the AFP news agency, said cold air is expected to move into the Tokyo region in the middle of March.

"We might see snow then. In the past, Tokyo has had snow as late as April 17," the official added.

Tokyo is more likely to experience snowfall in early spring than in winter, according to the meteorological agency.

Four years ago, a December snowfall was the first to be recorded in the Japanese capital for 15 years.





## Seventh EMS Annual Meeting and Eighth European Conference on Applications of Meteorology (ECAM)

### Focus on High Impact Weather

The EMS and ECAM are organising their meeting together for the fourth time. After a very successful conference in Utrecht two years ago, these conferences are evolving as a forum for the exchange of ideas on future strategies in meteorology and climatology, that involves the whole atmospheric and related communities: scientists, service providers, manufacturers and users.

Following the WMO conference on Social and Economic Benefits of Weather, Climate and Water Services (held in March 2007 in Madrid), the release of the IPCC report 2007 and the publication of the Stern report, the theme of our meetings is **High Impact Weather**.

### 8th European Conference on Applications of Meteorology

The central focus of ECAM is the application of meteorology for society. The conference will provide a platform where meteorological community can exchange their ideas, results, needs, demands and aims for now and the future.

### 7th EMS Annual Meeting

The 7th EMS Annual Meeting will address a wide spectrum of scientific and application topics in atmospheric sciences - *Atmosphere and the Water Cycle*, *Forecasting the Weather from one day to one year ahead*, *Climatology* (under the auspices of ECSN) and *Meteorology and Society*.

### Conference themes

#### Meteorology and customer value:

Transport, Energy, Safety/High Impact Weather, Health, Air Quality, Economy, Insurance, Tourism, Aviation and Aerospace Meteorology, Socio-economic Impact

#### Strategies for the Future of Meteorology in Europe

#### Atmosphere and the Water Cycle

Geophysical Fluid Dynamics, Small-scale Processes, Moist Processes, Dynamical Meteorology, Atmospheric Hazards, Environmental Meteorology, Hydrometeorology, Agrometeorology, Air-Sea Interaction, Middle Atmosphere, Space Weather

#### Climatology

addressing the theme "Climate variability in Europe and its societal impact, in the past, present and future": Assessment of climate change and variability in Europe, including extremes

and its societal impacts over the last millennium. Climate scenarios for the 21st century

#### Forecasting the Weather from one day to one year ahead

THORPEX (including AMMA), High resolution Models, Nowcasting, Verification

#### Meteorology and Society

Bringing Meteorology closer to Society, Gender, Media, Education, History, Scientific Libraries, Strategies for the use of the Internet

#### Location and Dates

1 - 5 October 2007

Euroforum, San Lorenzo de El Escorial, C/ del rey, 38, 28200 San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Madrid



The town lies 50 km northwest of Madrid

## The Bill Giles Report

Former Senior Broadcast Meteorologist at the BBC Weather Centre

**The idea that climate change is being fuelled mainly by the increase in carbon dioxide was strongly condemned this week by a programme on television entitled "The Global Warming Swindle."**

A few illustrious scientists were wheeled out to, not only refute the latest report of the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change, but to try to completely dismiss it out of hand saying it was based on totally flawed research and unacceptable mathematical computer models, and that the change in climate is entirely due to the changing output of the Sun.

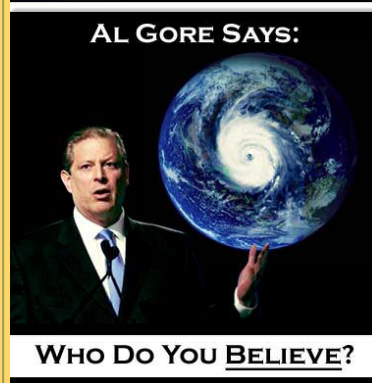
I believe that they have made the same mistake as some of those who choose the carbon dioxide theory in believing that it is one or the other; it is not as simple as that. The job of the broadcast meteorologist is to translate the science of meteorological prediction, which is now almost exclusively based on computer models, into a language that the listener or viewer will understand. It is a very difficult task to find meteorologists who can effectively cope with this as I found out whilst leading a team of twenty broadcast meteorologists at the BBC Weather Centre; in fact I could only use about 3% of the people recruited and trained in forecasting the weather. This is no slur on weather forecasters in general, as they do a very good job, but more of a statement on the difficulty that all areas of science has in describing their research to the layman. Describing forecast weather five days ahead is not an easy task so to look and discuss climate change over the next century is even more difficult.

In meteorology even the simple forecasting of, say, temperature for a few days ahead can be complicated and depend on numerous factors such as the time of the year, the stability of the atmosphere, wind velocity, latitude and altitude to name but a few. Climate change has many more factors to consider so although the vast

majority of the world's mathematical and environmental scientists consider increasing greenhouse gases as being primarily responsible for the warming of the planet, I think some

*We inherited a beautiful lush green planet and if we make a mistake with this one we will pass on to future generations a brown barren landscape.*

weight must also be given to solar activity and even natural climate variability. We must not get polarised on this issue, although I must say that it seems likely that the greenhouse gases far outweigh any of the other factors. The problem comes when



translating this science into a language non-scientists will understand and this, in my opinion, is where initial training and continuous updating of the broadcast meteorologist from every country in the world is of paramount importance. This should be done in conjunction with The World Meteorological Organisation where new funding must be found to cope with years of neglect now that the subject of the effects of rapid climate

change are top of the agenda in many countries of the world. The old adage is even truer today that "It is no use doing the best forecast (of days or even centuries ahead) if you cannot communicate it to the ordinary person". After all they are the ones who will make any mitigation work, not national governments, no matter what they might legislate. So we come to the problem of communicating this message out to the legislators both at International, National and Local level through the media.

It is not in doubt by anyone of note that the Earth is warming up with, globally, the warmest eleven years that we have been able to measure occurring in the last twelve years, in fact there is some justification to say that the last decade could well have been the warmest in the last 500 years or even the last 1300 years. The message has to be kept simple for the journalists who, by and large, only want scare stories and sound bites, and also for the politicians who fund most of the research (although increasing amounts are being funded by the large multi-nationals, some of whom have a vested interest in keeping the status quo). We need to push on quickly to train scientists, especially broadcast meteorologists, to get the ever-changing messages across in a sensible and simple way.

The Earth's climate continually changes from warm periods to cold and back to warm again so we shouldn't be surprised that the climate we see ourselves in now is different to that experienced by even our parents and grandparents, but we need to mitigate the likely effects of this rapid change rather than put our heads in the sand and say "don't worry it's all to do with the Sun and it will right itself" because if it isn't, by the time we realise it will be far too late.

We inherited a beautiful lush green planet and if we make a mistake with this one we will pass on to future generations a brown barren landscape.

## Last View from the Chair - Tomas Molina



Tomas Molina - the Chairman of the IABM



## Former WMO Secretary-General Prof. Obasi Passed Away

It was with great sadness that the Board of the IABM learned of the recent death of Professor Godwin Obasi, Secretary General Emeritus of the World Meteorological Organisation.

Perhaps his most enduring memorial, however, is the wonderful building which now serves as the Headquarters of WMO; a building which gives the organisation a commanding presence in Geneva and which embodies a confident, dynamic science which – rightly – considers itself to be at the very centre of human activity and development.

From our own point of view, we appreciate the extent to which Prof Obasi was open to our own dialogue and engagement with WMO; an engagement which brings weather broadcasters right to the centre of world meteorology; which allows their voices to be heard.

He was granted very few years to enjoy a well-deserved retirement. We pass our condolences to all in WMO who knew him and who worked alongside him, and, through you, his most eminent successor, to his family and friends. May he rest in peace.



Professor Obasi was a towering figure in world meteorology for over two decades. As a strong leader of WMO from 1983 to 2003, he brought the organisation into the modern era, building on the long tradition of consensus but still managing to ensure that the hard questions were answered in a positive and decisive manner.

His forward thinking ensured that the problem of Climate Change was firmly on the WMO agenda from a very early stage. This allowed the organisation, through the formation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and then the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to provide global leadership in assessing this most fundamental of problems facing mankind, and to identify the difficult path which humanity must follow if the stability of our climate is to be confirmed.

On behalf of the Board of the IABM

*Gerald J Fleming*



## The organisation that represents all those involved in Broadcast Meteorology

### ...and finally.....

Pollution from Asia is helping generate stronger storms over the North Pacific, according to new research. Changes in the North Pacific storm track could have an impact on weather across the Northern Hemisphere.

Satellite measurements have shown an increase in tiny particles generated from coal burning in China and India in recent decades, researchers report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The team, led by Renyi Zhang of Texas A&M University, studied pollution and clouds between 1984 and 2005, concluding that increasing particles enhanced the cloud updraft to generate more intense thunderstorms than previously. Comparing 1984-1994 with 1994-2005 they found an increase of 20% to 50% in deep convective clouds.

The Pacific storm track, they noted, plays a critical role in global atmospheric circulation, and altering this weather pattern could have a significant impact on the climate.

"The intensified storms over the Pacific in winter are climatically significant," the researchers wrote. "The intensified Pacific storm track can also impact the global general circulation."

A particular threat, they added, is the potential for increased warming of polar regions.

## The Association Committee



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African Representative  
**Stephen Quoa**



Asia Representative  
**Yoshikazu Idesako**

These are the current committee members of the Association who were elected at the Annual General Meeting.

The IABM is an organisation that is run by volunteers who give their time freely to advance the profession of Broadcast Meteorology.

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The Association is grateful to these companies for their continuing support

