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On World Meteorological Day, UN spotlights crucial role of weather prediction



World Meteorological Day 2010 60 years of service for your safety and well-being

23 March 2010 – With the ever-improving ability to predict climate having saved millions of lives around the world, the United Nations weather-monitoring agency is marking its 60th anniversary today as it celebrates World Meteorological Day.

The World Meteorological Organization ([WMO](#)) was founded on 23 March 1950 to promote international cooperation in the field of weather, climate, water and other related sciences, and was designated a UN specialized agency the following year.

Under the theme “60 years of service for your safety and well-being,” the WMO is using the Day to raise awareness of the work of its 189 members’ National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS).

“I would like to pay tribute to the meteorological community worldwide working together continuously beyond all borders to save and protect people, their homes and their livelihoods,” Michel Jarraud, WMO Secretary-General, said in a [message](#) marking the Day.

The agency works around the clock to facilitate the provision and exchange of nearly real-time information from its 189 NMHSs and 35 regional specialized meteorological centres around the world. Data is collected from some 10,000 land stations, 3,000 aircraft, 1,000 upper-air stations and 1,000 ships and nearly 70 satellites.

With natural hazards posing a serious threat to human security, WMO is working on early warning systems and effective preparedness measures, which have helped to drastically reduce the loss of lives.

Through monitoring surfaces and groundwater as well as through quality controls, the agency has been able to issue authoritative warnings on dwindling water supplies, especially in the face of population growth and water pollution.

Since its founding, WMO's achievements have included issuing timely alerts on the thinning of the ozone layer and, together with the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)), setting up the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ([IPCC](#)).

"I am convinced that WMO, together with its Members, will be even more relevant in serving humanity over decades to come," Mr. Jarraud said. "We owe this capability to successive generations of meteorologists and hydrologists from all countries."

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