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Experts meet for UN meteorological forum to discuss action plan on climate change



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More than 600 delegates have gathered today in Geneva for a United Nations meteorological conference to discuss implementing a new action plan to help countries cope with the devastating effects of climate change.

For the next three weeks, the [16th World Meteorological Congress](#) will bring together representatives from 189 countries to lay out the future policies of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and address continuing concerns over global warming.

The congress will also consider a report by a high-level taskforce [recommending](#) the establishment of a Global Framework for Climate Services in an effort to help countries manage both the risks and the opportunities of climate variability.

In a [message](#) delivered to the gathering, [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon emphasized the Global Framework's importance and called on the Congress to continue assisting poor and environmentally vulnerable nations adapt to the growing and inevitable impacts of climate change.

“The science that is the foundation of your work must continue to drive our response to climate change,” he said. “I urge you to continue your work to improve predictions and early warning on impending weather and climate hazards. The issue will only grow in importance.”

The taskforce's recommendations include the establishment of a new global system to provide climate services aimed at helping countries understand and adapt to climate change, reduce the risk of disasters from extreme events and ultimately save lives.

WMO Secretary-General Michel Jarraud also underlined the importance of the Global Framework.

“We all share the same planet, the same atmosphere, the same ocean, the same multi-faceted climate. Every community, every socio-economic sector is affected by climate variability and climate change,” Mr. Jarraud said. “This is what the Global Framework for Climate Services is. It is about making the best possible information available to decision-makers.”

About 90 per cent of disasters in recent decades have been caused by weather or climate-related hazards such as tropical cyclones, storm surges, floods and droughts. Economic losses from these hazards, which currently amount to about \$100 billion per year, are rapidly rising and can inhibit the pace of development by years if not decades.

The WMO is a UN specialized agency dealing with the state and behaviour of the Earth's atmosphere, its interaction with the oceans, the climate it produces and the resulting distribution of water resources.

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