
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventieth session

Bangkok, 4-8 August 2014 (Phase II)

Item 3(f) of the provisional agenda*

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure
of the Commission, including the work of the regional
institutions: disaster risk reduction**

Report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones**

I. Introduction

1. The WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones is an intergovernmental regional body jointly established by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in 1972 and associated with the Tropical Cyclone Programme of WMO. Its first session was held in Bangkok in 1973. The forty-first session of the Panel was held in Dhaka from 2 to 6 March 2014.

2. The main objective of the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones is to promote measures to improve tropical cyclone warning systems in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, including dissemination of technical information on tropical cyclone research and forecasting operations to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of tropical cyclone-related disasters. The Panel develops activities under five components: meteorology; hydrology; disaster risk reduction (DRR); training; and research.

II. Forty-first session of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones

3. The report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones is based on the summary of the activities of the secretariat during the intersessional period and submitted to the Panel at its forty-first session (Dhaka, 2-6 March 2014).

4. As decided by the Panel at its fortieth session (Colombo, Sri Lanka, 25 February-1 March 2013), WMO in collaboration with ESCAP made arrangements to hold an integrated workshop in Bangkok from 27 to 29 November 2013. The secretariat of the Panel extended an invitation to the Panel Members through their Permanent Representatives to nominate focal points/experts for the Panel's Working Groups on Meteorology (WG-M),

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** The late submission of the present report is due to the late arrival of inputs from the secretariat of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones.

Hydrology (WG-H) and Disaster Risk Reduction (WG-DRR) for participation in the Workshop. Financial support in lieu of travel and per diem for the participants was arranged by the WMO from the Panel on Tropical Cyclones Trust Fund and by ESCAP. The secretariat of the Panel invited necessary inputs/feedback from the experts at the Panel's Working Groups and prepared a draft report for the endorsement of the Panel at its forty-first session.

5. In connection with the organization of the Integrated Workshop (Bangkok, 27-29 November 2013), the secretariat of the Panel, with the support of national meteorological and hydrological services of the member countries, updated the lists of focal points/experts for the Working Groups on Hydrology (WG-H) and Disaster Risk Reduction (WG-DRR) and the same were circulated to all Panel Members. Those lists are also available on the Panel on Tropical Cyclones website at: www.ptc-wmoescap.org/workingGroups.htm.

6. The secretariat of the Panel collected contributions from member countries for newsletters and published the newsletter "Panel News" (issue No. 35), which was distributed among the Panel on Tropical Cyclones member countries, ESCAP, WMO and the other international organizations concerned. The electronic versions of the newsletters are also available on the Panel on Tropical Cyclones website at the following weblink: www.ptc-wmoescap.org/newsletters.

7. As decided by the Panel at its fortieth session (Colombo, Sri Lanka, 25 February-1 March 2013), WMO has made arrangements with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), New Delhi, for the attachment of two storm surge experts, one each from the Maldives and Pakistan. The secretariat of the Panel extended an invitation for that training to both countries through their permanent representatives to WMO. The training for storm surge experts was hosted by IIT from 9 to 20 December 2013 and 17 to 28 February 2014. Financial support in lieu of travel and per diem would be provided to the participants by the WMO and from the Panel on Tropical Cyclones Trust Fund.

8. As per the recommendation of the Panel at its fortieth session (Colombo, Sri Lanka, 25 February-1 March 2013), WMO made arrangements with the Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC), New Delhi, for the attachment of three Tropical Cyclone Forecasters, one each from Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The Panel on Tropical Cyclones Secretariat extended invitations for the training to these countries through their permanent representatives to WMO. The training for the tropical cyclone forecasters was hosted by RSMC from 17 to 28 February 2014. Financial support in lieu of travel and per diem to the participants was provided by WMO and from the Panel on Tropical Cyclones Trust Fund.

9. The Panel has been collaborating with the Typhoon Committee in the implementation of a joint project entitled "Synergized Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP) for Coastal Multi-Hazards Early Warning System" which is funded through the ESCAP Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries. The beneficiary countries include Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Typhoon Committee, in collaboration with the Panel on Tropical Cyclones, successfully conducted three in-country pilot workshops in the Philippines, Bangladesh and Pakistan in 2013.

10. In connection with the organization of the SSOP in-Country Pilot Workshop in Islamabad on 10 and 11 October 2013, the secretariat of the Panel extended full cooperation to the Typhoon Committee/Panel on Tropical Cyclones joint expert team towards making the workshop successful.

11. In connection with the replacement of some of the existing tropical cyclones names in the Operation Plan (TCP-21) with the new names as proposed by Sri Lanka, the secretariat of the Panel collected consent/agreement from member States to the new names for their inclusion in the Operational Plan 2013 version accordingly.

12. With the support of the Panel, the Secretary of the Panel represented the Panel during the sixty-ninth session of the Commission (Bangkok, 25 April-1 May 2013).
