AIR AND WATER COMPONENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

March 22 WORLD WATER DAY

March 23 WORLD METEOROLOGICAL DAY

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WORLD WATER DAY – 2023

ACCELERATING CHANGE



This year celebration of World Water Day is related

to the actions needed to be implemented in order to accelerate the changes we must make in order to cope with water crisis and achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals no. 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation by 2030.

The sixth goal of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda is about how we can all access clean water and sanitation, preserve our health and use water wisely.

Today, world community notes with concern that we are far from achieving this goal. Billions of people and communities cannot develop and live healthy, because the rights of all who need to have access to water and sanitation are not yet fulfilled. The new agenda, underlines the actions and commitment needed to be done, to proper manage our daily water from a qualitative and quantitative point of view. Stronger measures and actions must be undertaken by governments, businesses, organizations, institutions and associations involved in water policies. Next week, at the UN Water Conference in New York on 22-24 March 2023 these commitments will constitute the base of the new Water Action Agenda.

United Nations presents the global water and sanitation crisis and emphasize that:

- In recent decades, almost half of the wetlands around communities have disappeared, which will increase the risk of floods;
- Agriculture and industry is consuming more than over 80% of the available water;
- Due to climate change, drought would increasingly affect water resources availability and food supplies. Flooding would endanger water and sanitation facilities, contaminating water resources;
- The poorest and most vulnerable members of world population, disproportionately affected by the crisis, would have the hardest fight to get authorities to improve their water and sanitation services.

The human population growth and the constant acceleration for more and more clean water will increase the demand for this resource, the need for energyintensive water pumping, transportation and treatment. This increasing demand must be mitigated by several key decisions like adopting climate-smart agricultural techniques and increasing the safe reuse of wastewater.

This year general theme "Accelerating change!" it is complemented by a more detailed one: "Make the change you would like to see in the world! Every drop or gesture counts!".

In fact, we can do small steps to mitigate climate change by taken simple measures that involves water:

Save water: Take shorter showers and don't let the tap run when brushing my teeth, doing dishes and preparing food.

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- Stop polluting: Don't put food waste, oils, medicines and chemicals down my toilet or drains.
- Eat local: Buy local, seasonal food and look for products made with less water.
- Protect nature: Plant a tree or create a raingarden use natural solutions to reduce the risk of flooding and store water.
- Clean up: Take part in clean-ups of my local rivers, lakes, wetlands or beaches.
- Travel more sustainably and save energy.

This year logo picture associated with WWD starts from an old story of the Quechua people of Peru about a hummingbird which is trying to put out a huge forest fire by carrying a few drops of water in its beak. When she is asked how she thinks she can put out the fire in the forest, she answers: "I do my part. Every drop counts!". The campaign launched by Un-Water thus encourages people to be like the hummingbird, that is, to do everything in their power to help solve the water and sanitation crisis.

On the current projections, it is estimated that by 2050, population growth will increase the demand for water by 55% which will cause great pressure on natural water systems. The future of this resource and humanity depends on finding effective and sustainable solutions for its management and equitable distribution, and achieving this goal depends in large part on adequate practices for water use.

As presented in the SWA (Sanitation and Water for All) briefing papers "the water and sanitation sector are already affected in many different ways by weather and climate-related phenomena such as variability, seasonality and extreme weather events. These often negatively impact the availability, accessibility, affordability and quality of water and sanitation. Climate change puts additional stress on achieving public health targets. For example, if there is a decline in the availability of water supplies (e.g. due to lowering of water levels), people may be forced to drink contaminated water (e.g. untreated surface water), leading to an increase in waterborne diseases. The pollution of wells and flooding of latrines also increases the risk of a higher incidence of infectious diseases".

Changes in water use, the new demands determined by an increase population, challenges generated by climate change, the actions needed to reach the sixth UN SDG 2030 Agenda are the main topics which will be covered by the new Water Action Agenda.

BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD

Răzvan BĂTINAŞ, PhD. Lecturer

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WORLD METEOROLOGICAL DAY – 2023

THE FUTURE OF WEATHER, CLIMATE AND WATER ACROSS GENERATIONS



This year's World Meteorological Day (WMD) celebrates 150th anniversary of World Meteorological Organization (WMO) since its foundation as International Meteorological Organization (IMO), in 1873. For this event, the achievements, progress and potential of WMO community are about to be remembered/presented through a special theme: *The future of weather, climate and water across generations*.

The main challenges of the humanity in the past 150 years, present and future are: a rise in average global temperature of more than 1 °C, extreme manifestations of weather, warmer and more acidic ocean water, the rise of sea levels and the melting of glaciers and ice. On the other hand, in the latest decades, the fast development of science and technology improved the weather forecasts and early warning life-savings, as well as new tools like machine learning and Artificial Intelligence are expected to.

Let's have a short journey through the last 150 years of weather and climate service in order to point out the main achievements and challenges!

• In the 19th century, the standardization of maritime data and meteorological observations at sea is considered to be the milestone of weather forecasting, due to lieutenant Matthew Fontaine Maury (US Navy). Beginning with 1860, Admiral FitzRoy started to issue storm warnings for sailors of the coast of UK, and one year later, general weather forecasts. The first use of electric telegraph for transmitting weather reports was made in 1849, but the Morse Code was not a proper system for exchanging meteorological observation data from large areas.

In the opening of IMO (1873), Prof. Buys Ballot stated: "It is elementary to have a worldwide network of meteorological observations, free exchange of observations between nations and international agreement on standardized observation methods and units in order to be able to compare these observations". In its early years, IMO achieved improvements in meteorological instrumentation – and efforts to develop a worldwide network of meteorological stations.

At the end of the 19th century, the *First International Polar Year* (1882-1883) set up observing stations around the North Pole, while, at the *Second International Polar Year* (1932-1933) the importance of these observations for weather forecasting around the world was demonstrated.

• The **20th century**, marked by The First and Second World War, has recorded, in the late 1950's, major steps for the meteorological programme, by solar radiation and atmospheric ozone measurements and set a new era for the atmosphere observations: the first Earth-orbiting satellites SPUTNIK-1 and SPUTNIK-2 were launched (1957), as well as the first world's weather satellite (on the April 1st, 1960)-TIROS-1. As a result of these actions, in 1963, WMO launched *World Weather Watch Programme*, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. It was meant to

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realize meteorological observations over land, on sea and from space; prepare weather forecasts and warnings; exchange information globally and in real time.

Another important feature of the late 20th century was the development of *Numerical Weather Prediction* (NWP) program which significally improved the accuracy of weather forecasts.

Extreme weather phenomena, like storms, floods, droughts and others were present in the Earth's history, but 1970's brought new *Challenges*, as the terrible drought in Africa or the world's deadliest known tropical cyclone in today's Bangladesh (it killed up to half millions of people). The latter tragedy set the foundation of *WMO Tropical Cyclone Programme*, that covers all oceans affected by tropical cyclones and its purpose is to observe and research for improving monitoring, forecasts and warnings.

The Water Decade (International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade) and Climate change were among the two main concerns in the 1970's and 1980's. The Water Decade showed the high pressure on freshwater resources and the importance of oceanographic and hydrological services for climate prediction, water resource management and security. The first statement on climate changes was issued in 1976 and World Climate Research Programme was established in 1979, while in 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change came into being.

• Into the **21st century**, the development of weather observations and modelling technologies led to the following results: more reliable five-days forecast; real time access to observations; a growing number of observations; seasonal and long-term forecast, used in agriculture, health system, water, transport etc.; an increase in data exchange in areas like hydrology, atmospheric composition etc., which will help monitoring and prediction of all Earth-system components.

Regarding the *challenges*, *Global Climate reports* show that climate change indicators (greenhouse gas concentrations, surface temperature, ocean heat etc.) are at record observed highs, generating more extreme weather and climate events: longer/more intense heatwaves, heavier rainfall, and more severe droughts. For this, it is necessary to improve monitoring, prediction and communication regarding the evolution and effects of weather ("what the weather will be and what the weather will do"). This will help communities to understand and adapt to the weather conditions in the future.

Early Warnings for All it's the initiative of WMO to be sure that everyone is protected by early warning systems in the next five years. It is considered to be a cheap and effective way to protect people and goods of extreme weather. For example, an investment of US\$800 million on such systems in developing countries would avoid losses of \$3 to 16 billion per year (Global Commission on Adaptation).

• The future is considered to *raise the demand for weather, climate and water forecast information in support of decision-making*. All these services are influenced by technology evolution (supercomputers, satellite technology, smart mobile devices etc.), as a result of investments mostly from the private sector.

Researches are very important to understand the scale and peace of changes in weather, climate and water circle and help us to adapt to these changes.

Climate changes is not only about changes in temperature, but into a lot more elements: wetness and dryness, winds, snow and ice, coastal areas and oceans. "Without urgent and deep reduction of emissions, limiting global warming to 1.5° C is beyond reach", the IPCC latest report states.

Our action today will shape the future of the planet!

Traian TUDOSE, PhD Lecturer

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