ICPAC

Concept Note: Stronger Together – Regional Climate Centre Collaboration for Early Warning and Climate Services

Venue: IGAD Pavilion

Time: Thursday 12 November 2026, 13:30-15:00

Session at a glance

ICPAC proposes a 90-minute side event at the IGAD Pavilion to showcase how Africa's WMO Regional Climate Centres (RCCs) are working together. The session will highlight the RCC community of practice, share tools and methods for objective seasonal forecasting, and chart the way forward for deeper collaboration, including jointly developed continental-scale programmes.

Item	Detail
Proposed title	Stronger Together: How Africa's Regional Climate Centres Are Joining Forces for Early Warning and Climate Services
Lead organiser	IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC)
Co-organisers	ACMAD, AGRHYMET, SADC Climate Services Centre, ECCAS CAPC-AC, North Africa Network, Indian Ocean Network, and WMO
Venue	IGAD Pavilion, COP31, Antalya, Türkiye
Duration	90 minutes
Target audience	Negotiators, NMHS directors, regional economic communities, WMO and UN agencies, humanitarian and anticipatory-action actors,

Item	Detail
	development partners, climate finance institutions, researchers and youth
Language	English

Background and rationale

Climate hazards do not stop at borders. Droughts, floods, cyclones and heatwaves routinely cross regional boundaries, so regional centres must collaborate to deliver timely and consistent early warning information. The 2023–2024 El Niño illustrated this clearly, bringing severe flooding to Eastern Africa and drought to Southern Africa within the same season.

Africa's WMO-designated and emerging Regional Climate Centres form the bridge between global forecasts and national services. They include ICPAC for the Greater Horn of Africa, ACMAD at continental level, AGRHYMET for West Africa and the Sahel, the SADC Climate Services Centre for Southern Africa and ECCAS CAPC-AC for Central Africa, alongside the North Africa and Indian Ocean networks. Together, they convene Regional Climate Outlook Forums (RCOFs), produce seasonal outlooks and build the capacity of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs).

Yet the centres often work in parallel, with uneven computing capacity, data access and staffing. Innovations such as objective seasonal forecasting, machine-learning forecasts, risk-transfer tools and impact-based products tend to emerge in one region and spread slowly to others. Funding is fragmented across short-term projects, which limits the sustainability of these initiatives. Closer collaboration offers the most promising route to closing these gaps. A shared community of practice, common standards under the Global Framework for Climate Services, and initiatives such as AGRA-ICPAC, ACCORD and SEWA allow centres to pool data, tools and expertise. This directly supports the UN Early Warnings for All initiative, which aims to protect everyone on Earth with early warning systems by 2027.

Three pillars of collaboration

1. The established RCC community of practice

The community of practice connects forecasters, researchers and data officers across Africa's RCCs and their NMHSs so that shared problems are solved together rather than in isolation. It serves as a standing network for exchanging methods, data, tools and lessons learned.

Its activities include joint training and staff exchanges, shared verification of sub-seasonal to seasonal forecasts, and peer learning across RCOFs. It also enables the co-development of tools, such as objective forecasting methods, machine-learning forecasting and impact-based products, that can be transferred from one region to another.

2. A common framework for objective seasonal forecasting

WMO Decision 9 (EC-72), adopted by the WMO Executive Council at its 72nd session, calls for operational regional climate forecasting to transition to objective, transparent, reproducible and scientifically

rigorous seasonal prediction methods. In effect, it asks WMO Members and designated regional centres to move away from the subjective negotiation that has historically shaped consensus forecasts. Over the past six months, the RCCs have developed a common framework for objective forecasting and held workshops to share the tools that support it.

3. Pitching continental-scale programmes

The RCCs aim to move beyond fragmented, region-by-region project proposals towards jointly designed, multi-region, pan-African climate service programmes. Presented together to international funders, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund and bilateral development partners, such programmes can attract larger, longer-term investment and reduce duplication across regions.

Objectives

The event aims to move African RCCs from parallel effort to a joined-up network with shared tools and sustained funding. Specifically, it will:

1. Showcase the RCC community of practice and its results in joint training and tool sharing.
2. Agree on priority areas for joint work across RCCs, such as data sharing, AI model development, computing and forecast verification.
3. Discuss the implications of the current strong El Niño for seasonal outlooks and expected impacts in each region.
4. Identify opportunities to jointly develop and pitch continental-scale climate service programmes to international funders.

Expected outcomes

By the end of the session, the organisers expect the following outcomes:

1. Greater visibility of the RCC community of practice among negotiators, NMHS directors, WMO and development partners, supported by concrete examples of joint training, tool sharing and forecast verification.
2. Wider awareness and uptake of the common framework for objective seasonal forecasting, positioning African RCCs as early implementers of WMO Decision 9 (EC-72).
3. A shortlist of priority areas for joint RCC work, covering data sharing, AI and machine-learning model development, computing resources and forecast verification, to guide the next workplan of the community of practice.
4. A shared cross-regional understanding of how the strong El Niño is likely to shape upcoming seasonal outlooks, informing coordinated early warning messages and anticipatory action across regions.

Session programme

The 90-minute session opens with a presentation from ICPAC on progress in RCC collaboration, followed by a moderated panel discussion with the co-organising centres, WMO and partners, and an open exchange with the audience.

Time	Session	Speaker / lead
0:00–0:10	Welcome and opening remarks: purpose of the session and why RCC collaboration matters for Early Warnings for All	ICPAC Director, ACMAD Directo
0:10–0:25	Presentation: Progress in African RCC collaboration The common framework for objective seasonal forecasting and shared tools;	Masilin Gudoshava
0:25–1:00	Panel discussion: Stronger together – from parallel effort to a joined-up network Moderated panel on priority areas for joint work, the transition to objective forecasting, El Niño preparedness and joint continental programmes	Moderator: Dr. Hussen Seid Panellists: ACMAD, AGRHYMET, SADC Climate Services Centre, ECCAS CAPC-AC, RCC Nodes- IOC and North Africa and WMO
1:00-1:15	Questions from the Audience	
1:15–1:25	Signing of the MOU's Remarks from respective institutions	Dr. Hussen Seid
1:25–1:30	Key messages, next steps and closing remarks	Masilin Gudoshava