Review of ArabCOF Concept

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Scoping Meeting Objectives (Recap)

- Discuss the ArabCOF establishment, functions, outputs and institutionalization process, including data needs and capacity development requirements;
- Identify the potential partners;
- Review and synthesize the available regional climate change information for the Arab Region; and
- Discuss how to utilize the RICCAR Regional Knowledge Hub for ArabCOF operations.
Mission

- Generate and disseminate consensus-based seasonal climate outlooks for the Arab Region
- Collaborative assessments of observed and projected climate over the Arab Region
- Facilitate user-provider interaction and support provision of policy-relevant climate information
- Support national capacity building efforts, both for country inputs to ArabCOF and use of ArabCOF products for national level applications
- Align closely with RICCAR, GFCS and other relevant global/regional initiatives

Functions

- Produce regular seasonal climate outlooks for the Arab Region based on global as well as regional climate predictions as well as the available national-level operational predictions.
- To examine, draw upon and prepare long-term regional climate scenarios based on climate change projections generated through ensembles of Regional Climate Model simulations for the Arab/Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Domain that was established under the Coordinated Regional Downscaling Experiment (CORDEX) under RICCAR.
- To facilitate better understanding of the regional implications of climate change to the Arab Region as brought out by the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) results.
- To review the analysis of extreme climate events and their trends over the Arab region using standard WMO climate indices, with a focus on temperature, precipitation, heat waves and sand and dust storms (SDS).
- To support the development of climate watch systems at the regional/national levels that can provide early warning services to Arab countries, to enable better preparedness to major climate anomalies and extremes.
Functions (contd.)

- To promote better understanding of the impact of aerosols, particularly SDS, on regional climate of the predominantly arid zones of the Arab Region, including its possible linkages with the global climate.
- To coordinate monitoring and analysis of prevailing winds regimes (e.g., the Shamal, Khamasin, etc.) with a view to predict changes on seasonal time scales.
- To liaise with other RCOFs serving Arab countries in different sub-regions, such as PRESANORD, MedCOF, SEECOF, GHACOF, FOCRAII, etc., with a view to pursue and communicate a common understanding of climate characteristics, climate trends, seasonal predictions and seasonal forecasting for the Arab region.
- To serve as a knowledge-base platform for the collection, review and dissemination of climate outlooks and scenarios for the Arab Region.

Establishment

- Recommendations from this meeting, reflecting a collective backing of the ArabCOF concept
- Seeking appropriate formal endorsements at country level as well as regional level, ensuring broader ownership
- Agreement on hosting/coordinating (ArabCOF sessions can be held in different member countries by rotation, but will need a permanent coordination arrangement for continuity and sustained timely operations)
- Institutional set-up, including sustainability aspects
  - Coordinating Secretariat
  - Technical Secretariat
- Developing an Action Plan
- Stakeholder mapping and involvement including universities, user agencies and other partners
- Roles for ESCWA, WMO and other partner agencies of RICCAR
- Links with RICCAR and GFCS
Coordination Secretariat

- Coordinating Secretariat
  - Requesting Arab Met Services to designate a national representative to serve on the ArabCOF;
  - Planning and executing ArabCOF sessions in a timely manner including resource mobilization, management and logistics;
  - Issuing invitations to ArabCOF sessions;
  - Consolidating and communicating the official reports of ArabCOF meetings, and submitting those reports for formal consideration by the concerned entities;

Technical Secretariat

- Coordinating with members and the League of Arab States Secretariat including the Arab Permanent Committee on Meteorology regarding the preparation and conduct of ArabCOF meetings;
- Collecting, maintaining and disseminating information generated by the ArabCOF;
- Coordinating with WMO on the technical aspects of ArabCOF processes and integration of global/regional inputs (including the relevant GPCs, RCCs, etc.);
- Liaising with other sub-regional RCOFs operating the Arab Region, e.g., PRESANORD and MedCOF, including the agencies implementing them;
- Ensuring information links with the RICCAR regional knowledge hub and the GFCS.
Data Input Needs

- Country-level observed data (primarily for country use)
- Country-level predictions
- Global/regional seasonal predictions (GPC/RCC products)
- Global/regional climate change projections (CMIP/CORDEX archives)
- Inputs based on National Communications
- IPCC data products
- Other global/regional data

Expected Output

- Consensus statements on seasonal outlook for temperature and precipitation, in tercile probability format (once/twice a year for the key seasons of the year) – other parameters?
- Regional climate watch advisories
- Consensus statements on climate change assessments for the Arab Region including:
  - Observed trends
  - Global/regional influences
  - Sectoral impacts
  - Future projections (near-term/long-term)
  - Sectoral implications of projected regional climate
- Communication of uncertainties associated with climate predictions and projections
- Monitoring and evaluation of ArabCOF products
Capacity Development

- Seasonal predictions and tailoring for national needs (e.g., Climate Predictability Tool)
- Guidance on infrastructural requirements
- Facilitating access to global/regional climate prediction/projection products
- Climate monitoring, assessment and watches
- Research needs
- Pre-COF training workshops
- Downscaling; Climate Services Toolkit; in-country training
- Interpretation of global/regional inputs (WMO updates, IPCC reports, etc.)
- Guidance on National Climate Outlook Forums
- Thematic areas (e.g., DRR, water, agriculture, health, etc.)
- User awareness/interface