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Subseasonal-to-Seasonal Southeast Asia Predictions Training Workshop Series - Halfway Point

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Subseasonal-to-Seasonal predictions have a relatively high skill score in the Southeast Asia (SEA) region, even up to a lead time of 4 weeks in some cases. Anticipating hazards in the SEA region at this timescale, such as onset timing and breaks in the two monsoon seasons, extreme hot and cold conditions, or major drought and flood events, could be very useful. However, many countries in the region have yet to use subseasonal predictions. Hence, the S2S-SEA Workshop Training Workshop Series is a 4-year programme developed to promote the uptake of S2S products in SEA. Meteorological Service Singapore as host of the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre partnered with the S2S Prediction Project, IRI (International Research Institutes for Climate and Society) and ECMWF for the first workshop in 2017, with regional end-users RIMES (Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia) and UNESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) joining in 2018.

The first 2 workshops introduced subseasonal prediction concepts to the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and equipped them with the tools to kick-start the development of their own products. In particular, the first workshop provided an introduction to subseasonal forecast and the S2S Prediction Project, conducted case studies using IRI Data Library, and focused on rainfall and temperature anomalies. The second workshop extended from analyses of rainfall anomalies to indices (e.g. number of dry/wet days in a week), and introduced PyCPT developed by IRI for processing and comparing dry days (with/without canonical correlation analysis). Results from these workshops showed that parts of SEA have better skill than others; however, preliminary discussions raised the issue that these regions may not necessarily match user needs.

Subsequent workshops will therefore focus on bringing NMHSs together with various regional end-users for product co-development. With the interest on extremes in the region, ensemble plume and probabilistic forecast will also be introduced in the upcoming workshops' practical sessions. The workshop series also hopes to develop toolsets and easy to use products that, owing to manpower and resources constraints at NMHSs, are vital for the region.