



Climate Watch in RA VI - First Climate Watch Advisory for a long-lasting heat wave over South-Eastern Europe in summer 2012

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A Climate Watch system is an early warning system, which uses climate monitoring information and results from long-range forecasts to detect long-lasting extreme weather periods like heat waves, cold spells, floods or droughts. If, based on the assessment of the state of climate, the long-term monitoring and prediction results, an extreme weather situation is expected, a Climate Watch Advisory will be issued and sent to the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs). Then the NMHSs may evaluate the situation and, if necessary, provide their national users with further information on the expected event.

Such a Climate Watch System has been suggested by the WMO to be implemented in all regions as mandatory functions of Regional Climate Centres (RCCs). In Europe, the WMO RA VI RCC Node on Climate Monitoring (RCC-CM) is responsible for issuing Climate Watch Advisories in coordination with the partners of the RA VI RCC-Network.

In mid July 2012 the first Climate Watch Advisory was issued and sent to the NMHSs, indicating a higher probability of above normal temperature in South-Eastern Europe. Already the results from the 7th South East European Climate Outlook Forum (SEECOF-7) online forum detected "more likelihood for above normal summer season temperature in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula". The entire June and the first half of July were characterised by higher-than-normal temperatures in South-Eastern Europe. In addition, the seasonal forecasts from different institutions and the monthly forecast from ECMWF indicated a higher probability for above normal temperature in this region. A regular assessment of the results from monitoring and long-range forecasts implicated a fortnightly update of Climate Watch Advisory during the following eight weeks. Due to lower absolute temperature at the end of September in this region a final Climate Watch Advisory was issued to declare the end of this phase.

The first Climate Watch Advisory has proven to be an effective instrument for an early warning within the RCC of RA VI.