



Assessing the value of seasonal climate forecasts in decision-making

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Seasonal climate forecasts (SCF) are widely recognized as having the potential to inform and support decision-making across a range of sectors to help businesses and society at large better adapt to climate variability and change. However, SCF do not have intrinsic value per se, as this is only acquired through their capacity to influence the decisions of those using the forecasts (Murphy, 1993). Hence, the assessment of SCF value in decision processes needs to be oriented towards the benefits that the users may acquire by using the forecasts (Rescher, 1969). However, different conceptualisations of the value of applying SCF to decision-making have generated diverse understandings of the benefits of SCF, ranging from those that are economically quantifiable to those of a more qualitative nature.

The aim of this paper is threefold. Firstly, we discuss factors that influence the value of SCF in decision-making, such as the characteristics of the end-user, the context of decision-making and the quality of the forecast itself. Secondly, we review common methods currently applied to assess the value of SCF in decision-making processes. Thirdly, the paper considers critical aspects arising from empirical studies, including issues related to the current emphasis on the quantification of value; the potential implications and limitations of such methodological approaches; and possibilities for understanding and employing different available methods to assess the value and benefits of SCF in decision-making in the future. By doing so, the paper constitutes an important contribution to ongoing discussions on how to effectively and adequately evaluate the use of climate information such as SCF in supporting decisions. This in turn, relates to wider ongoing discussions on how to adequately produce and operationalize (as well as evaluate) climate services that respond to users' needs and add value to their decision-making processes.