EMS Annual Meeting Abstracts Vol. 15, EMS2018-319, 2018 © Author(s) 2018. CC Attribution 4.0 License.



The new CH2018 climate change scenarios: an example of an effective climate service in Switzerland

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In light of the climatic changes that affect environment, livelihood and different sectors of the economy across Switzerland, long-term planing is needed to adapt to these challenges. One important basis for climate adaptation are the provision of up-to-date climate change scenarios on the local to regional scale. In Switzerland, this need has been recognized by the official adoption of the National plan for climate adaptation by the Swiss government in 2013. The mandate has been assigned to MeteoSwiss, which coordinates and conducts the scenario activities in close collaboration with ETH Zurich and other institutes from academia.

The new cycle of national climate change scenarios "CH2018" are being launched in November 2018. They replace the currently official suite from CH2011. The new scenarios build on the improved scientific understanding and findings since 2011, e.g. from the fifth assessment report of IPCC. They incorporate results from the latest regional climate model projections over Europe from the Euro-CORDEX initiative, and take advantage of seven additional years of observations since 2011 to place the projections in an updated climatological context.

From the start of the project, CH2018 has been setup as a climate service being one of the priority areas of the Swiss National Centre for Climate Services (NCCS). To ensure that the scenarios are developed and communicated in a user-oriented way, different measures have been taken: (a) conduction of a survey on end-user needs across various sectors (b) establishment of a sounding board and (c) specific stakeholder dialogues with key scenario users. Furthermore, CH2018 closely interacts with the producers of subsequent Federal climate activities, in particular the Swiss pilot program on climate adaptation and other priority themes of the NCCS (e.g. Hydro-CH2018).

In the presentation we will show our general approach and institutional framework of the CH2018 scenarios from production to dissemination, including our lessons learnt from interaction with users. We further present our communication strategy in order to increase the uptake of the scenarios among the user community in Switzerland and show how the new scenarios will be brought into operation as a climate service in the long-run.