

Meteorological Cooperation with West African countries



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Conference of Directors of the West African National
Meteorological and Hydrological Services

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International cooperation is one of the Spanish State Meteorological Agency's strategic focus points and it has been achieved by helping to strengthen the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to improve the services they provide to society. Furthermore, and within the general framework of Spanish cooperation, the objectives of the Africa Plan focus mainly on West African countries.

Based on the above, three different meetings were used to create a new environment of cooperation in West Africa during the year 2007. In February the meeting of Regional Association I in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), in March the Conference on Security and Sustainable Living Conditions: socio-economic benefits of hydro-meteorological services held in Madrid, and in May that year the XV Congress of the WMO. Thus, while these events took place, exploratory meetings were held with the main actors, WMO and the countries from the area. This gave rise to a formal proposal for cooperation in West African countries by the Spanish State Meteorological Agency (AEMET), with the support of the WMO, by forming a Conference of Directors of West African National Meteorological Services: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, in addition to Spain and the Secretariat of the WMO participated in this new forum.

The Conference is the governing body which defines the action plans of the AFRIMET programme, which is project-based, on the solid basis of the NMHS's "appropriation" of the measures specified in the yearly "Action Plans", beginning in Las Palmas in October 2007.

The Conference received financial support from a State Meteorological Agency trust fund which is deposited with the WMO. This is a "seed fund", aimed at increasing capacity.



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Strategic goals of the action plans

The management of the AFRIMET cooperation programme and the prioritisation of activities according to the needs of the National Meteorological Services are reviewed on a yearly basis at the meetings of the Conference of the Directors of AMS's which resulted in the corresponding actions plans of Las Palmas-2008, Niamey-2009, Banjul-2010 and Sal-2011. The actions are currently in line with the following strategic goals for increasing capacity:

Strategic goal Nu. 01:

Essential techniques for the NHMS's, with priority being given to the creation of meteorological alert systems (improvements to telecommunications, use of satellite information and coordination between countries) on the one hand, and the provision of climate services and technical reports on climate change scenarios, on the other hand;

Strategic goal Nu. 02:

Meteorological application techniques through pilot projects, consolidated in three fields: marine, agricultural and health;

Strategic goal Nu. 03:

Management techniques, in particular concerning strategic planning and mobilising resources. Actions for countries emerging from social conflicts or natural disasters. Raising awareness of the National Meteorological Services, and other timely actions.



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Strategic goal Nu. 01

➤ Improvement of the regional telecommunication networks

Identification of the current condition of the specific meteorological communication networks and establishment of a plan to recover them and guides to their funding

➤ Improvement to the ability to interpret satellite images and products

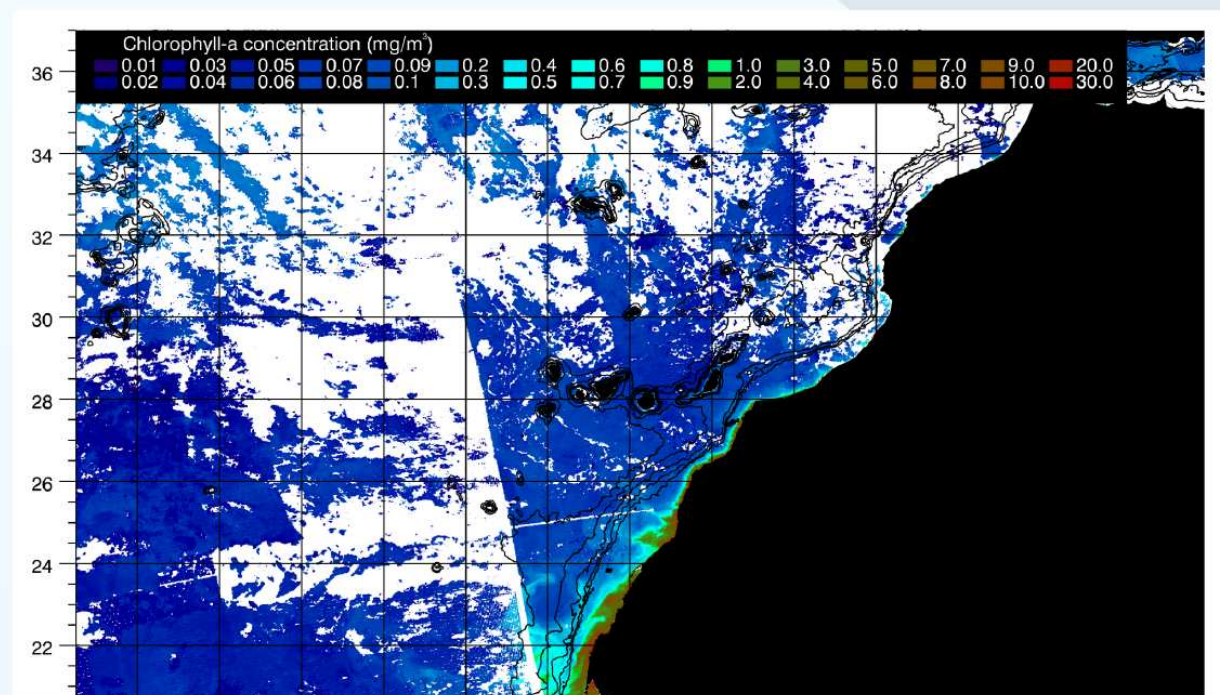
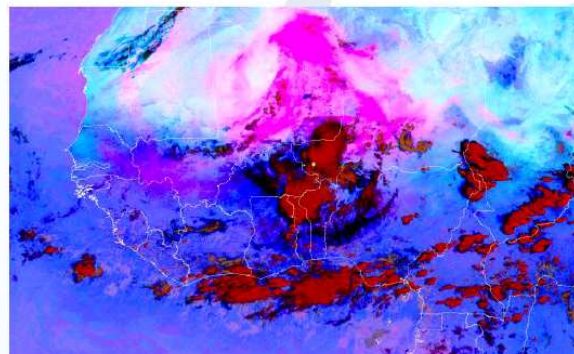
Establishment of a training programme specific to the region, in conjunction with other partners such as EUMETSAT

➤ Increasing the ability to draft national reports on climate change

Increasing the ability to monitor the climate and draft national reports on climate change scenarios through specific courses

➤ Improving the ability to interpret numerical climate modelling products

Increasing the ability to make better use of the numerical climate modelling products through specific courses



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Strategic goal Nu. 02

MARINEMET

The project to transfer Marine Meteorological technology whose objective is to improve marine safety in the region and the fishing capacities of countries, takes place with the participation of the State Ports of Spain and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria University (Spain).

The pilot project takes place in Cape Verde, Gambia, Mauritania and Senegal.

The project is based on the following modules:

- Acquisition of equipment: tide gauges, weather stations
- Training of experts (international field)
- Dissemination of products and training in the countries

METAGRI

The project is in line with the region's food safety policies.

The project was established according to the following modules:

- Roving seminars to professionally train farmers:
 - In 2009 Phase 1 was completed as a pilot experiment, aimed at 5 countries
 - In 2010 Phase 2 extended the experiment to all French-speaking countries
 - In 2011, throughout Phase 3, there will be roving training seminars for English-speaking countries
- Evaluation of results Report
- Establishing agro-meteorological information networks



HEALTHMET

The Project of reinforcement of institutional abilities and links between the meteorological, climatological and health services, which is coordinated with other initiatives such as MERIT.

Comprises the following modules:

- Analysis of needs, by compiling a list of the needs of each country
- The creation of Climate-Health work groups, initially in Burkina Faso and Mauritania, to be subsequently extended to Niger, Nigeria and Mali
- Training of experts both in the international field (SDS-WAS, IRI), and through domestic seminars
- Startup of the activities resulting from national Climate-Health work groups

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Strategic goal Nu. 03

This strategic goal includes those activities aimed at strengthening the National Meteorological Services through professional training in management, increasing awareness of these services and the AFRIMET programme, and training in the mobilisation of resources.

- Cooperation with countries emerging from social conflicts and natural disasters (EMERMET)
- Feasibility study for establishing an operational Marine Meteorology service which takes into account the extension of the project to the rest of the coastal countries, from Mauritania to Nigeria, and which considers the sources of funding it requires (MARINEMET).
- Feasibility study for establishing an operational agro-meteorological service, including the amount of funds which must be donated to start this up (METAGRI);
- Feasibility study for the possibility of the national climate-health working group continuing and their operational requirements, including the potential means of funding (HEALTHMET);
- Feasibility study for establishing a sub-regional virtual service for hydro-meteorological alerts (ALERMET);
- Grants programme through AEMET and encouraging the use of internet training.
- Raising awareness of the National Meteorological Services and of the AFRIMET programme through www.afrimet.org
- Support the consolidation of the strategic plans of the National Meteorological Services.
- Timely actions such as providing assistance for the 1st Conference of Ministers responsible for National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in Africa (Nairobi 2010)





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