



# COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

## *Convention of the World Meteorological Organization*

**SUBJECT CATEGORY:**

Meteorology

**TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:**

Multilateral

**FORM:**

Legally-binding treaty

**STATUS:**

- In force internationally since March 23, 1950
- Ratified and signed by Canada July 28, 1950 and in force since then

**LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:**

**Lead Department:** Environment and Climate Change Canada

**Partner Departments:** Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Agriculture and Agri-food, Canadian Space Agency, Natural Resources Canada

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:****Web Links:**

- [WMO Secretariat](#) website
- [Text of WMO Convention](#)
- [Government of Canada Weather](#) website

**Contacts:**

[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

**COMPENDIUM EDITION:**

January 2020

**PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY**

This legally binding agreement governs Canada's membership in the UN Agency with the mandate to facilitate cooperation in matters related to weather, water, climate, and air quality. Signed by Canada in 1950, this agreement enables Canada to access and share critical information and research needed to provide weather, water and climate information to Canadians to support safety, social and economic well-being and health.. Further, this agreement allows Canada to access global data, which improves the accuracy of its weather predictions, and provides Canadians with up-to-date weather, water and climate information.

**OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this agreement is to coordinate global activities related to meteorology including air quality, climate and water considerations. These domains do not respect political boundaries and are global in nature requiring seamless real-time sharing of earth observation data to ensure governments have the information they need to make decisions in the face of changing environmental conditions.

**KEY ELEMENTS**

The agreement requires that Governments develop and implement standards for data, data-sharing principles and put in place mechanisms to ensure global coordination of the daily exchange of information. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) also contributes to marshalling efforts and mobilizing resources to build global capacity in the domains of weather, air quality, climate and water.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

This agreement is expected to achieve measurable increases in the quality, accuracy and timeliness of meteorological information that is available to policy and decision makers, and the reduction of disasters related to weather, air quality, climate and water.

## CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

This agreement is important to Canada because without access to global data on a real-time basis we would not be able to predict the weather beyond one or two days. Additionally, participating in WMO activities gives us access to global meteorological research, the benefits of which in terms of improved meteorological services would be prohibitively expensive to achieve on our own.

The means by which this agreement is implemented in Canada is by active participation in the governance and technical activities coordinated by the WMO and cooperative engagement of interested stakeholders and partners including other departments, jurisdictions and the private sector.

## RESULTS / PROGRESS

### *Activities*

At WMO Congress (June 2019) reforms were approved to embrace a more comprehensive Earth system approach to weather, water and climate warnings and predictions, with a stronger focus on water resources and the ocean, more coordinated climate activities and a more concerted effort to translate science into services for society. As a result, WMO governance structure is being streamlined into two Commissions focussed on 1) Infrastructure and 2) Applications and Services. This will enable the WMO to increase integration and tackle mounting challenges such as climate change, extreme weather, environmental degradation and urbanization, while harnessing technological advances from satellites, supercomputing and big data..

At Congress Michel Jean, Director-General of MCS's Canadian Centre for Meteorological and Environmental Prediction Directorate was elected as President of WMO's Infrastructure Commission.

Canadian experts participate in most WMO expert teams in order to share expertise and to gain knowledge from scientific and operational advances around the world.

### *Reports*

Canada is a member of the WMO Executive Council, which meets annually and provides [Reports on Executive Council](#) outcomes.

Canada will continue to participate in the WMO Commissions and supporting bodies during the governance transition.

### *Results*

The World Meteorological Congress approved the establishment of a Global Basic Observing System (GBON), paving the way for a radical overhaul of the international exchange of observational data which underpin all weather, climate and water services and products.

WMO also embraced a new strategy on hydrology and water resources to increase the capacity to monitor and manage this vital resource by giving greater priority to strengthening operational hydrological services and to improve monitoring and forecasting.

Canada's participation helps ensure alignment of WMO future directions with Canada's objectives related to improved governance and integration of weather, water and climate activities, budget alignment with priorities, and enhanced stakeholder relationships.

Canada has contributed to building climate resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction capacity through a contribution of Fast Start Climate funding to WMO to rebuild the weather and climate warning system in Haiti, with opening of the new weather service building taking place in May 2017.

ECCC is also contributing \$10M to WMO over five years to support the improvement of early warning systems in some of the world's most vulnerable communities. This project is part of the Climate Risk Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative led by France, which will strengthen risk information and early warning systems to reduce human and economic losses associated with meteorological, hydrological and climate-related hazards and to leverage financing to protect populations exposed to extreme climate events.