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Distr.
LIMITED

CAP.4/INF.8
3 October 1972

Original: ENGLISH/
FRENCH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Conference of African Planners
Fourth Session
Addis Ababa, 4-13 October 1972

Meteorology and Development Planning

Introduction

1. Following a very successful Seminar on the role of meteorological services in economic development in Africa (Ibadan, October 1969), ECA adopted Resolution 196(IX) entitled "World Weather Watch and Economic Development in Africa". The Commission recognized the importance of weather and climate information for short-term and long-term planning and that the implementation of the World Weather Watch would be beneficial to economic development. The resolution accordingly invites member States to support the implementation of WWW and to establish or strengthen the institutional links between the national meteorological services and the organs responsible for the planning and exploitation of natural resources within the country. A copy of the Resolution is attached.

Purpose of document

2. This document reviews some of the relevant developments since the adoption of Resolution 196(IX) and makes suggestions for possible future action.

Discussion

3. The importance of meteorology in planning and development was stressed in the lectures given during the Ibadan Seminar (full details can be found in the Proceedings of the Seminar, copies of which are obtainable from ECA and WMO). Practical examples were given of how meteorological information can be used to great advantage in the planning of the various branches of the national economy, including agriculture, land transport, air transport, water resources development, industry, building design and tourism.

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4. In one of the Ibadan lectures on the applications of meteorology to agriculture, reference was made to the series of agroclimatological surveys carried out under a joint project of FAO, Unesco and WMO. Since that time the results of the survey the semi-arid area in Africa south of the Sahara have been reviewed at a Technical Conference in Dakar in February 1971; the proceedings of this conference will be published shortly. A Technical Report on the agroclimatology of the highlands of Eastern Africa has also been published and a Technical Conference is now being arranged between the countries concerned.
5. With regard to water resources development, WMO has continued to collaborate closely with ECA. A Conference on the role of hydrology and hydrometeorology in the economic development of Africa was convened by ECA, WMO, FAO and Unesco, with the sponsorship of the Organization for African Unity, in Addis Ababa in September 1971. Important suggestions were made for future activities in this field. The proceedings of the Conference will be published in the near future. A WMO hydrometeorologist has been seconded to ECA to collaborate with the Secretariat on the determination of the needs for hydrological networks for water resources development in Africa.
6. Since the adoption of Resolution 196(IX), the governments of member States have pursued the implementation of the World Weather Watch. Where necessary, WMO has helped to the extent possible by providing equipment and services under the Voluntary Assistance Programme (VAP). Long-term fellowships have also been awarded by WMO to African meteorologists under VAP as well as the WMO Regular Budget. Furthermore, technical assistance has been provided under UNDP in these fields, as well as in the field of applied meteorology to economic development, particularly agriculture and water resources. As a result, there have been considerable improvements in the networks of observing stations and in the meteorological networks in Africa, as well as in the training of African meteorological personnel. These have facilitated the work of the national and regional meteorological centres. As a result, Meteorological Services in many countries are able to improve progressively the services they provide to economic planning and development.
7. These services have been especially improved in the increasing number of member States in which the Meteorological Service is regularly consulted by the national planning authorities. There has also been an increase in the number of member States in which the Meteorological Service is represented on the national co-ordinating committee for agriculture.

8. Since the Ibadan Seminar, the interest of WMO in promoting applications of meteorology for economic development has steadily increased. The WMO Executive Committee has established a special Panel on Meteorology and Economic and Social Development which is now in the process of preparing a technical publication on various aspects of applications of meteorology. The Panel has also suggested, and the Executive Committee has accepted, that cost/benefit studies of meteorological services by special experts and according to a proposed method be pursued in some pilot countries of the world. Two countries in Africa have offered to place facilities at the disposal of WMO for such investigations.

9. Summing up, it can be seen that although much remains to be done, considerable progress has already been achieved in the implementation of Resolution 196(IX).

Action proposed

10. The Conference of African Planners may wish to stress once again the importance of meteorology in development planning and to suggest that member States should renew their efforts to implement Resolution 196(IX).

ANNEX III

Annex to paragraph 11.13 of the General Summary

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA - RESOLUTION 196(IX) -
WORLD WEATHER WATCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

The Economic Commission for Africa,

Recognising that weather and climate information is a pre-requisite for sound short-term and long-term planning for the development of the national economy and for the effective exploitation of natural resources,

Convinced that the implementation of the World Weather Watch Plan as adopted by the Fifth Congress of the World Meteorological Organization will assist in the promotion of the meteorological services in Africa and make a beneficial impact on economic development,

Noting that the recommendations of the ECA Seminar on the role of meteorological services in economic development in Africa presented in document E/CN.14/429 cover adequately all the main areas of economic development requiring the application of meteorological information,

1. Invites member States to support the implementation of the World Weather Watch system in their countries by making adequate provisions in their national plans for strengthening their national meteorological services and providing them with the manpower and facilities necessary to enable them to implement fully that system;
 2. Further invites member States to establish or strengthen the institutional links between the national meteorological services and the organs responsible for the planning and exploitation of natural resources within the country so as to derive full benefits from the World Weather Watch for economic development;
 3. Calls upon member States to give their full support to the implementation of the recommendations of the ECA/WMO Seminar and implement the recommendations of the said Seminar,
 4. Requests the Executive Secretary to continue and to strengthen the co-operation between ECA and WMO for the overall benefit of African development.
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