

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION(WMO)

Recent policy statements

The Second WMO Conference on Women in Meteorology and Hydrology was held at the Headquarters of the WMO Secretariat in Geneva from 24 to 27 March 2003. The main objectives of the Conference were: to review the current situation as regards the participation of women in meteorology and hydrology, especially since the WMO Bangkok Meeting on the Participation of Women in Meteorology and Hydrology in 1997 and develop benchmarks to measure future progress, and to develop strategies to increase the participation of women in the activities of WMO and in the work of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs). The Conference also considered the gender sensitive aspects of the activities of NMHSs such as the application of climate information by rural women and the special roles women play in water management and disaster reduction.

The Conference made recommendations that addressed issues such as education and training, career and promotion opportunities, the participation of women in the work of WMO, and the representation of women in the WMO Secretariat. The recommendations were directed at women meteorologists and hydrologists, at the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, Technical Commissions, Regional Associations and at the WMO Secretariat.

The WMO Congress at its 14th session in May 2003 endorsed the Conference report and approved the recommendations that resulted from it.

Operational activities

In the response to the recommendations of the Conference and hence Congress, the WMO secretariat is now beginning to consider how to implement various activities, including

- Establishment of a WMO gender expert position to monitor progress, analyse gender issues within WMO, develop gender sensitivity training modules for use at the WMO Secretariat and in NMHSs, and assist in the implementation of other actions recommended by the conference.
- Establishment of an advisory panel to the Executive Council on gender issues, which would be composed of the WMO gender expert and gender focal points from Regional Associations and Technical Commissions. The panel would be tasked amongst other things, to consider what mechanisms might be needed in the future to advance gender equality
- Collection of gender-disaggregated statistics on a regular basis from Members.

NMHSs have been asked to identify national gender focal points who would work within their own services and with the WMO secretariat on gender issues and to implement the Conference recommendations.

Other activities

The Report of the 2001 Global Survey on the Participation of Women and Men in the Activities of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO/TD no. 1120)

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includes statistics gathered by means of a questionnaire sent to Members and can be compared with data collected during a similar survey in 1997. The key conclusion of the report is that, although there have been some small incremental increases in the percentages of women participating in some WMO activities since 1997, there has been no significant change in the overall participation. Participation in technical commissions, regional associations and the Executive Council, as well as employment in NMHSs in most countries and in the WMO Secretariat, continue to be overwhelmingly male-dominated.

The Report of the Second WMO Conference on Women in Meteorology and Hydrology, as well as a poster created specially for the Conference, are available on request.

Volume 52, no. 2 of the *World Meteorological Organization Bulletin* (April 2003) featured women's role in the work of WMO. ■