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OPERATIONAL CLIMATE SERVICES: A DIALOGUE ON PRACTICAL ACTION



ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM)

Iman Babaeian, Ebrahim Fattahi, Majid Habibi, Sina Samadi, Leili Khazanedari, Azadeh Mohammadian, Shahzad Ghandhari, Raheleh Modirian, Maryam Karimian, Mansureh Kuhl, Fatemeh Zabol Abbasi,

ibabaeian@yahoo.com

I. R. of Iran National Centre for Climatology

ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of natural disasters (ECO-RCRM)
Mashad, I.R. of Iran, P.O. Box: 91735-676, Tel: 0511-3822203, Fax: 0511-3822311

Abstract

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is an intergovernmental regional organization established in 1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey for the purpose of promoting economic, technical and cultural cooperation among the Member State. In 1992, Organization was expanded to include seven new members, namely: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan.

For the purpose of management of natural disasters, the ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and the ECO Council of Ministers decided to establish ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM) in Mashhad hosted by I. R. of Iran National Center for Climatology, on 4th September 2007. Some main activities of the Center are: Holding two regional workshop on drought early warning and risk management and climate modeling and natural disasters in ECO region and Issuing seasonal precipitation and temperature over ECO region using multiple weighting system of 4 dynamical seasonal forecasts receiving from international GPC centers. For 2013, ECO-RCRM is planning to hold a workshop on dynamical flood forecast over ECO region and launch drought forecasting and early warning using statistical post-processing of dynamical seasonal forecast systems.

Introduction

ECO is full of bright trading prospects. Despite its young age, ECO has developed into a thriving regional organization. Its international stature is growing. Nevertheless, the organization faces daunting challenges with respect to realization of its objectives and goals. Most of importantly, the region is lacking in appropriate infrastructure and institutions which the Organization is seeking to develop, on priority basis, to make full use of the available resources in the region. In this regard, Upon the relevant decisions of the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture (Tehran, March 07, 2007) and 17th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM) (Herat, Afghanistan, October 20, 2007) and signed the Memorandum of Understanding the ECO Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM) was established in Mashhad, on 4th September 2007.

In line with the agreement reached in the 17th Regional planning council (RPC), February 2007, and the 3rd ECO Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture, March 2007, the Islamic Republic of Iran Meteorological organization of the has suggested to host the 1st ECO Meeting of the Heads of Meteorological organizations in September 3-4, 2007, in Tehran. Following the above meeting, the inauguration ceremony of the Regional Center for Risk Management of Natural Disasters will be held in September 5, 2007, Mashad, Iran.



Figure 1. Opening Ceremony of ECO-Regional Centre for Risk Management of Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM) in September 2007, Mashhad-Iran, National Center for Climatology.

The second meeting of ECO Heads of Hydro-meteorological Organizations was held in Turkey on 18-19 October, 2010 with the participation of Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan Republic, representative of UNDP(as an observer) and the ECO Secretariat.



Figure 2. Second meeting of the ECO heads of Hydro-meteorological services, Turkey, Antalya, October 18-19, 2010.

According to the proposal of Azerbaijan during the second meeting of the ECO Heads Hydro meteorological Organizations, The third meeting will be held on Azerbaijan.,

Objective

The objectives of the ECO-RCRM shall be “to promote cooperation among member states for effective risk management of natural disasters especially in the fields of meteorology, climatology, hydrology and climatic disasters”.

Functions

In order to achieve objectives, the Center shall, inter alia, have the following functions and responsibilities:

- To promote regional disasters surveillance through:
 - Providing seasonal and long-term climate forecasting and modeling
 - Facilitating exchange of climate knowledge and forecasting
 - Establishing regional standards and protocols for data quality control and assurance
- To strengthen national capacities through holding appropriate training courses
- Providing member states with technical assistance in research, applying new technologies, especially using satellite and radar for meteorological purposes and applying community-based approaches
- Exchange of information, knowledge and best practices as well experts, instructors and trainers. Facilitating policy dialogue
- To develop international cooperation by seeking their financial and technical assistance

Activities

According to the objective and functions defined in above, the main activities of the Center are: 1- Holding workshop on “drought risk management”, 2007, 2- Holding workshop on “climate modeling and natural disasters in ECO region”, 2012. 3-Conducting training courses, 4-Issuing monthly seasonal forecast over ECO region and west Asia using weighting system of GPCs of dynamical seasonal forecast models including MRI-CGCM, CFS, ECMWF, 5-Providing monthly newsletter mainly on the seasonal forecast and drought early warning and updating the ECO-RCRM website (www.eco-rcrm.ir)

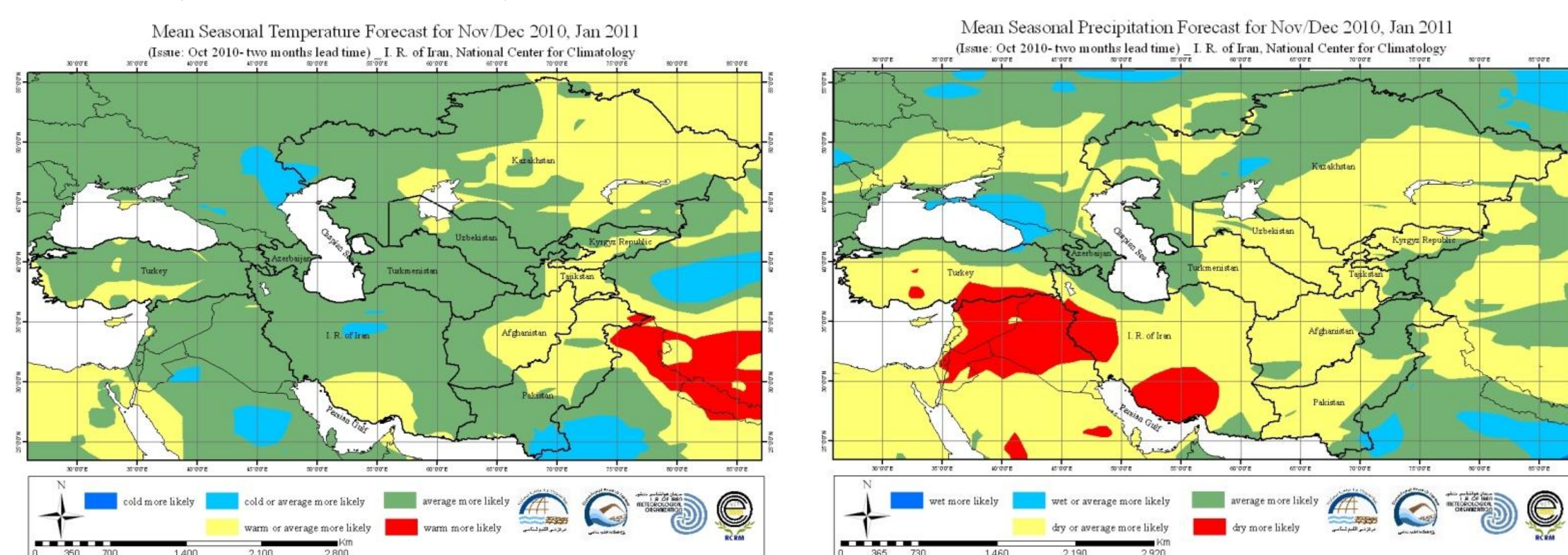


Figure 3. Seasonal precipitation and temperature forecast over ECO region and West Asia using weighting system of GPCs received from dynamical seasonal forecast.

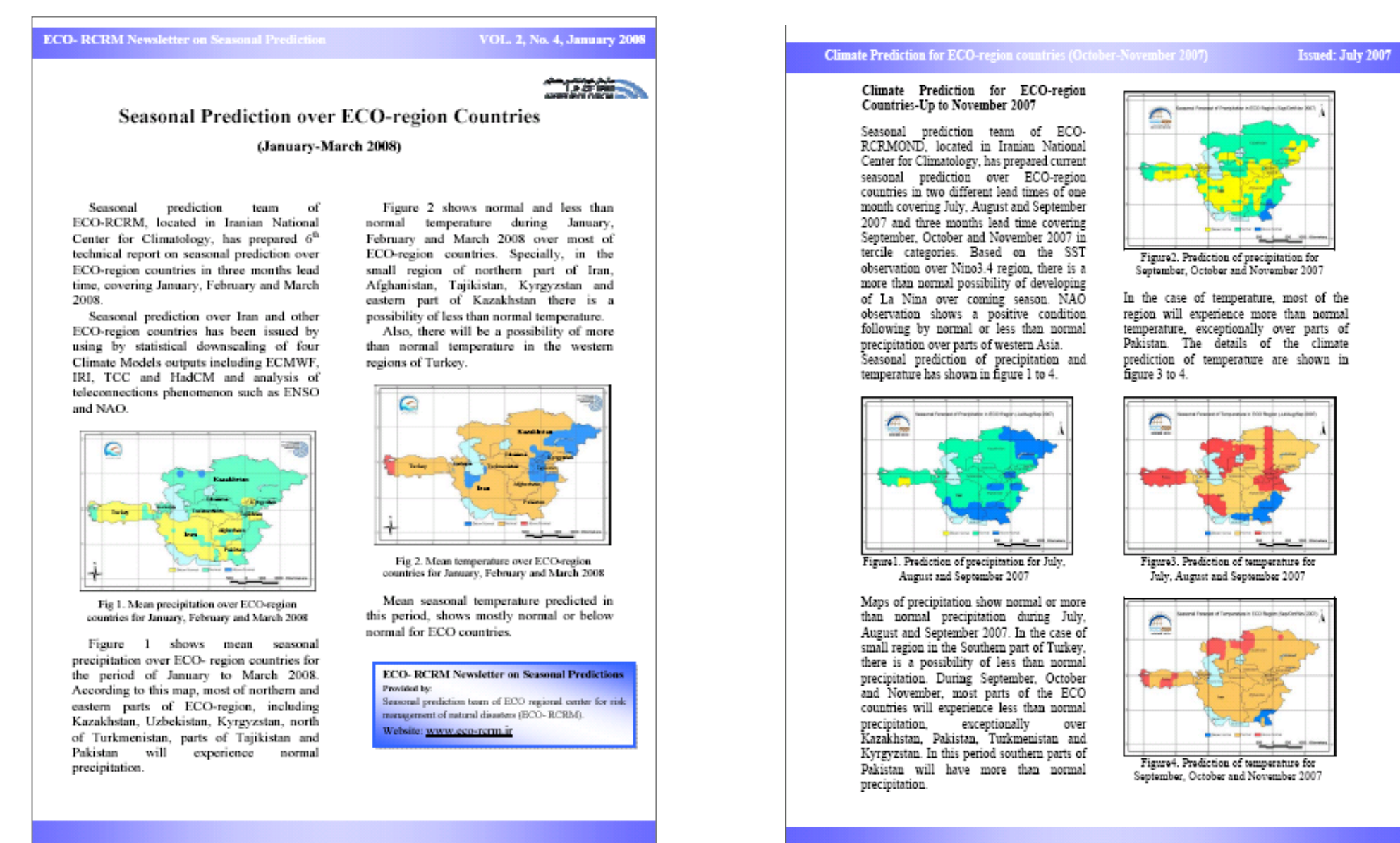


Figure 4. A two page monthly ECO-RCRM newsletter on seasonal forecasts of precipitation and temperature and other activities of the Center.

Summary

The general objective of the establishment of the ECO-RCRM focused on management of natural disasters and risk management approach and threat of natural disasters, aggravated by the impacts of climate change, in particular droughts and floods to the human life, economy and food security of the member states. Regarding to the objectives and functions, ECO-RCRM emphasizes on: Establishing an efficient information management system, Short and Long Term Forecasting/Predictions, Disaster Risk Assessment/Analysis, Disaster Monitoring and Early Warning System and Capacity Building (Education and Training, ...).

All of ECO-RCRM main functions are in line with GFCs five pillars, in this regard, the Center can be act as one of a regional body of the GFCs in the Central and West Asia in the area of Climate Services Information System (CSIS) and Capacity building.

References

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