

Private Bag X097, Pretoria, 0001 • Tel: + 27 (0) 12 367 6000 • www.weathersa.co.za • USSD: *120*7297#

23 March 2022

World Meteorological Day 2022 Commemorations

Every 23 March, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) commemorates the coming into force of the Convention establishing the World Meteorological Organization in 1950. It showcases the essential contribution of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to the safety and well-being of society and is celebrated with activities around the world.

Under the leadership of the new CEO, Mr Ishaam Abader, the South African Weather Service (SAWS) celebrated this year's World Meteorological Day by hosting a virtual event under the theme: *Early Warning and Early Action*. The theme was informed by the weather, climate and water extremes which are becoming more frequent and intense in many parts of the world as a result of climate change.

The new SAWS Board chairperson, Ms Feziwe Renqe, introduced the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Minister Barbara Creecy, who presented the keynote address which highlighted the implications of climate change, hazardous weather and the steps that are taken around the world and in South Africa to mitigate the effects of severe weather and impending disasters by means of early warning systems.

Head of the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC), Dr Mmaphaka Tau, referred to the ongoing collaboration between SAWS and the NDMC, which are key to disaster risk reduction in South Africa. Dr Tau emphasised the good relationship between the two institutions which has resulted in the frequent interchange of information and updates aimed at protecting lives and livelihoods.

Ms Annette Botha of Vox Weather, a private online weather forecasting service provider, demonstrated how Vox Weather uses the information provided by SAWS to distribute important weather messages as widely as possible.

The South African Weather Service contributed generously to the speakers, as Ms Lauren Smith and Ms Samkelisiwe Thwala from our Cape Town Weather Office presented information on extreme heat and heat waves experienced by the Cape provinces in the past season, as well as the disruption of the Koeberg nuclear power plant due to sea surface temperatures. Dr Christien Engelbrecht, Lead Scientist for Seasonal Forecasts, presented on the accuracy of the seasonal forecast for the past season and provided a peek into what could be expected in the new season. Dr Andries Kruger, Chief Scientist, emphasised the importance of climate information in safeguarding against weather and climate impacts, while Prof Joel

Certified for Excellence

Board Members: Ms Feziwe Renqe (Chairperson), Mr Itani Phaduli (Deputy Chairperson), Ms Sandika Daya, Ms Mmapula Kgari, Ms Nana Magomola, Prof Sylvester Mpandeli, Mr Grant Son, Dr Mmaphaka Tau, Mr Peter Lukey (DFFE Rep), Mr Ishaam Abader (CEO).

Company Secretary: Ms Milicent Fatlane (Interim Company Secretary)

Document Reference: CS-CMS-LETT-003

Botai, a Chief Scientist in SAWS' research department, spoke about the most recent climate change findings of the International Panel on Climate Change.

The central messages focused on the fact that human-induced climate change is directly responsible for more frequent severe weather incidents, and that these incidents must be managed more effectively to save lives and property. As the South African Weather Service has heeded the call by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to collaborate and cooperate on many levels, the country is achieving good success in saving lives and livelihoods. Its collaboration with the NDMC was particularly elevated during the event.

The South African Weather Service would like to thank Minister Creecy, representatives from the National Disaster Management Centre, members of academia and the media and all the attendees for making the 2022 World Meteorological Day commemorations a success.

Compiled by Musiiwa Denga

Edited by Hannelee Doubell

Media enquiries: Ms Hannelee Doubell: Manager, Communications; Tel: (012) 367 6104; Cell: 072 222 6305; E-mail: hannelee.doubell@weathersa.co.za

USSD: Dial *120*7297#; Weather-ready, Climate-smart

Download our WeatherSMART APP free from the App store:

For Apple Smartphones: <https://apps.apple.com/za/app/weathersmart/id1045032640>

For Android Smartphones: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=za.co.afrigis.saws.droid.activity&gl=ZA>