



PR#123-24

PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Economic Development through RRB hands over Weather Sensors and Equipment to the National Meteorological Service of Belize for AgroMet Development

Belmopan. August 7, 2024.

The Government of Belize (GOB), through the Ministry of Economic Development (MED), and the Resilient Rural Belize Programme (RRB), with funding from GOB, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), provided weather sensors and equipment to the National Meteorological Service (NMS) of Belize. These tools will assist the AgroMet section in providing real time weather information to rural farmers and households in Belize.

The Resilient Rural Belize Programme via Subcomponent 2.3: “Investment in Territorial Climate Resilient Assets,” is financing the upgrade of the Climate Information system at the National Meteorological Service of Belize at a value of US \$256,300.00.

The funds will be used for the following activities:

Activity 1 - Upgrade National Climate Data Management Platform

Activity 2 - Upgrade Computer Network

Activity 3 - Upgrade and Support the Growth of Observational Network

Activity 4 - Assist in the Development of a Full Agrometeorology Section

Mr. Ronald Gordon, National Chief Meteorologist, thanks the Ministry of Economic Development and its Resilient Rural Belize Programme, stated that the Climate Information System (CIS) will provide farmers with accurate

climate services and weather forecasts to anticipate and prevent seasonal disruptions. It will become the principal mechanism through which information about climate – past, present and future – is archived, analysed, modelled, exchanged and processed.

This upgrade will enhance the NMS's ability to monitor weather and climate variables, maintain its observation network, produce sub-season and seasonal climate forecasts and tailored climate information disseminated to the agriculture and other climate sensitive sectors.

The purpose of the CIS is also to provide farmers and other stakeholders with timely and accurate climate information, allowing them to plan their activities accordingly and minimize climate related losses. The CIS will be able to authenticate and communicate all information regarding climate at a national level.

The above actions are being done in phases and include the development of a fully equipped Agrometeorology Section at the NMS. To date, the Agrometeorological Section has received computer equipment and office furniture as part of its upgrade from MED/RRB.

The handing over today focused on Activity 3: "Upgrade and Support the Growth of Observational Network". This is being accomplished via the provision of sensors that will be used to upgrade 18 meteorological stations to fully automatic agrometeorological status, capable of delivering real-time weather information to the agricultural community.

Equipment being provided, which was procured from Campbell Scientific as part of Activity 3, is valued at US \$93,495.00 and includes the following:

- Twenty (20) Temperature and Humidity Sensors
- Twenty (20) Radiation Shields
- Twenty (20) Wind Monitor (speed & direction)
- Ten (10) Barometer (Atmospheric pressure sensors)
- Twenty (20) Soil Moisture Sensors

- Thirteen (13) Replacement Dual Reed Switch for TB4 Rain Gauge
- Fifteen (15) Solar Radiation Sensors
- Fifteen (15) Solar Radiation Mounting Brace
- Four (4) Replacement Data Loggers

The next phase of this initiative will involve the development of the NMS's first mobile application (APP) that farmers and the public will be able to use to access real-time weather, climate and agrometeorological information and weather and climate early warning alerts provided by the NMS.

Ends

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