

## Morley Thomas attends Asian climate conference

Morley Thomas, director general of the Canadian Climate Centre participated in the Technical Conference on Climate for Asia and the Western Pacific in Guanzhou, China, December 15-20 and presented a paper on "The Nature and Scope of Climate Applications" on behalf of the WMO Technical Commission for Climatology and Applications of Meteorology.

Mr. Thomas reports that some 100 delegates attended, 22 from China and 70 more from 19 other countries, the World Meteorological Organization Secretariat and technical commissions and other international bodies. Over the five days some 35 papers were presented and the main subjects dealt with were climate applications, climate change history and climate modelling. In addition, panel discussions led to reports on data, applications including water and energy, food, socio-economic impacts and modelling. Comments Mr. Thomas, "Information in the reports is not new, but it is hoped that it will serve as guideline material for the national weather services of Asia, especially in developing their climate programs."

Mr. Thomas also reported that a draft statement, agreed in part that "Since climate is a major factor in food production, water availability and the effective use of energy resources, this influence becomes more apparent as the demand for food, water and energy approaches the limit of availability."

A number of national "needs" were cited and the conference appealed to governments in Asia and the West Pacific to facilitate close cooperation between meteorologists and other professionals, develop cooperative projects, take advantage of knowledge of climate influences, encourage research and development, inform and educate people, facilitate better data assimilation, improve national training programs and ensure the availability of adequate experience.

The conference also appealed to UN specialized agencies and other international bodies to increase assistance to

governments so that application of climate knowledge be improved.

Special events for delegates included visits to weather stations, communes, universities, a "cultural park", plus banquets and performances by a youth acrobatic group. Commented Mr. Thomas, "As in western countries applied meteorology and climatology have not been given too much attention in past decades in Asia, but there are signs that this is changing." He added, "I found the Chinese to be extremely friendly and courteous." □



Meeting with Morley Thomas at the conference are Zhu Rui-Zhao, an applied climatologist (centre) and Cheng Chun-Shu, deputy director, both of the Chinese central Meteorological Bureau Peking. In the background is G.F. Popov of the Food and Agriculture organization in Rome.