PRESS RELEASE

From December 9 to 11th, 2020, the XXIX meeting of the Regional Scientific Committee of the Regional Study of the El Niño Phenomenon (CCR-ERFEN in Spanish) program of the South Pacific Permanent Commission was held, composed by the States of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile. The meeting discussed the oceanographic, meteorological, biological-fishing and socioeconomic conditions associated with La Niña in the Southeast Pacific; in addition, results of the XXIII Joint Regional Oceanographic Research Cruise in the Southeast Pacific, carried out between September and November 2020 and the projections for the first quarter of 2021 were analyzed, leading to the following conclusions:

a. Since August 2020, the global oceanic and atmospheric indicators used in the study of ocean-atmosphere processes show values associated with the cold phase of ENSO, La Niña. However, in the Niño 1+2 region, adjacent to the coasts of Ecuador and Peru, the maximum monthly negative SST anomaly was recorded in July 2020 and exhibit a trend to decrease gradually afterwards.

b. The results of the XXIII Joint Regional Oceanographic Research Cruise of the Southeast Pacific indicated, on average, cold conditions in the surface layer, associated with the development of La Niña 2020-2021 in the equatorial Pacific and to the intensification of the south and south-easterly winds.

c. For the first quarter of 2021, off the South American coast from Colombia to Ecuador, the Sea Surface Temperature will present within its normal ranges; but slightly cold to neutral conditions would remain between Peru and Chile. In the central Pacific, La Niña is expected to continue with a moderate to weak intensity.

d. In the presence of La Niña; in Peru, by supreme decree, an emergency was declared due to the imminent hazard in the northern coast, due to a lack of rainfall and in the southern highlands (Andes), due to excess of precipitations. In the case of Colombia, notices have been issued with national contingency plans, reporting actions at a
regional and sectoral levels due to the increased probability of floods and landslides. In Chile, mainly in the altiplano region, abundant rains and storms are expected until March, which have put emergency agencies on alert about potential floods in the Andean localities.

e. The ERFEN National Committees of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile will continue the monitoring and evaluation of the indicators associated with the development of La Niña 2020-2021.

Guayaquil, December 11th, 2020