



## **Positions as professor at SMHI – general guidelines with regard to tasks, roles and conditions**

### *Background*

The Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI) is an expert agency under the Ministry of the Environment and Energy. Through expertise in meteorology, hydrology, oceanography and climatology, SMHI contributes towards greater public welfare, increased safety and a sustainable society. SMHI is tasked to carry out applied research in its expert fields in order to improve and develop the operational activities of the institute and contribute to the overall goals as spelled out by the government, see also [www.smhi.se/en/about-smhi](http://www.smhi.se/en/about-smhi).

SMHI research should reflect high scientific standards in all phases of the research process, from formulating projects and writing applications for grants to publishing research results. Scientific excellence is increasingly important in areas in which the institute collaborates (or sometimes competes with) universities, colleges and other scientific organizations. The ability to carry out high quality scientific work is also a prerequisite for SMHI researchers' participation in international research arenas, particularly in connection with EU-driven and other initiatives to stimulate and support new research approaches and programs that are specifically intended to be carried out in interdisciplinary, transnational teams. In this regard it is crucial that the results of SMHI research are accessible to international audiences, particularly in the form of scientific publications in international peer-reviewed scientific journals.

A new dimension of the SMHI strategy to sustain and strengthen its scientific quality and long-term capacity is the appointment of professors in areas of core relevance for on-going and future research at the institute. As mandated by the Swedish government (SFS 2009:974), SMHI is permitted to appoint one professor in each of the main expert areas meteorology, hydrology, oceanography and climatology.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a general overview of SMHI expectations with regard to the tasks and roles of its professors, as well as to specify some of the pre-requisites for working as a professor at the institute. Rather than a legally binding document, the memo should be viewed as an overall framework that can serve as a starting point in dialogues between SMHI leadership and individual professors concerning the specific direction and content of future work based on the profiles, interests and goals of the individual.

### *SMHI professors – expectations and tasks*

The overall scope and direction of professors' work at SMHI is similar to that of professors at Swedish universities and colleges.<sup>1</sup> More specifically, the tasks of professors are:

- To initiate and carry out high-quality research;  
A professor should initiate and carry out high-quality research within her/his area of expertise and publish the results of this research in peer reviewed scientific journals, books or other scientific forums in line with international publishing praxis. A professor should follow and contribute to state-of-the-art knowledge within her/his area, including participating in peer-review, doctoral evaluative work and other activities within the academic community. A professor is expected to initiate, carry out and lead major national and international research projects and to secure external funding to finance her/his own research and, when relevant, the research of others such as fellow researchers at SMHI and doctoral students.
- To actively contribute to long-term capacity building in relevant research areas;  
A professor is expected to contribute to development and strength of the scientific quality of SMHI work, promote scientific publishing, and support in various ways the work of the institute's researchers as a means of achieving and sustaining excellence in the institute's research. Such work can consist of e.g. initiatives for strengthening the research process, the publication process or the process of writing grant applications. A professor is also expected to contribute to developing new areas of research and building new research capacity in areas with long term relevance for the institute.
- To stimulate cooperation and collaboration with the university sector both in Sweden and internationally;  
A professor is expected to contribute to strengthening the institute's cooperation with relevant research environments at universities in Sweden and internationally through e.g. joint doctoral thesis projects, joint research projects, presentations or other initiatives at scientific workshops or conferences, or other forms of collaboration. A professor should be willing to e.g. serve as an opponent or part of university grading committees for doctoral theses, to be a mentoring resource for SMHI researchers seeking to further their academic careers in cooperation with other resource environments (which might mean identifying teaching opportunities or other means for strengthening pedagogic skills), and to otherwise support and strengthen the institute's collaborations with relevant university environments.

A professor position at SMHI can be linked to a specific university department or faculty, which means that the professor has a particular responsibility to develop SMHI collaborations with this department/faculty. Cost coverage for such activities will be

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<sup>1</sup> A difference is that SMHI professors are not expected to teach to the same extent, due to the fact that SMHI does not have responsibility for any higher educational courses or programs. A limited amount of teaching may, however, be carried out as agreed upon by SMHI and a university department to which a specific professor position is linked.

agreed upon separately and regulated in connection with terms and conditions as outlined in a formal agreement with the relevant university.

- To initiate and develop national and international networks within relevant areas; An important goal of SMHI research activities is to maintain and strengthen the institute's cooperation with internationally recognized research environments, stakeholders and others whose work has strong relevance for SMHI ongoing and future activities. A professor is expected to take initiative to and further develop research networks, contacts and exchanges with relevant national and international groups and stakeholders, as well as develop appropriate contacts with funding bodies and other relevant organizations.

*General terms and conditions: a few words on financing and organization of research*

Research work at SMHI is project-oriented and project-funded, which means that most of the institute's activities are financed through external funds (i.e. through research grants or contracts with other organizations such as research councils, public authorities, industry or other parts of the private sector, and organizations within civil society). Professors at SMHI are therefore financed as follows:

- A professor's own research, as well as the work of co-workers and doctoral students, and supervision of that work, is to be financed primarily through external funding that the professor is responsible for securing;
- Other parts of a professor's work are to be funded either through external funding or, when relevant, through internal funding of special tasks or projects as agreed to by the professor and SMHI. When relevant, such special tasks or projects will be specified in individual agreements between the professor and the SMHI leadership.