INTRODUCTION

Since 1980, the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) has undertaken efforts to prioritize, support, coordinate and facilitate the research activities of the global climatic, atmospheric and oceanographic communities in order to address the many climate-related challenges facing society. A recent survey of WCRP stakeholders indicates that sponsors, funding agencies and researchers continue to see WCRP as an invaluable facilitator for international coordination of climate research. WCRP gets high marks for its objectivity, impartiality and the quality of the research that is generated as a result of its coordination efforts.

Key roles for WCRP are seen to be helping scientists from around the world to formulate new research agendas and to leverage scientific know-how among researchers, across disciplines and between developed and less developed countries.

OBJECTIVES

WCRP is sponsored by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Council for Science (ICSU), and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and has two objectives: to determine the predictability of climate and to determine the effect of human activities on climate.

WCRP pursues its research objectives through observations and modelling with an emphasis on practical results of regional and global importance that require international commitment, coordination and collaboration. A significant milestone occurred in September 2005 with the publication of the WCRP's 10-year Strategic Framework. The central focus of the WCRP Strategic Framework for the years 2005-2015 is to convert

achievements in fundamental understanding of climate processes into a range of products, predictions and projections of high societal value for a broad range of users.

OPERATING AS A NETWORK

In order to achieve its primary objectives, WCRP is composed of a network of cross-cutting initiatives, core and co-sponsored projects, and working groups, and works in a collaborative partnership with its three partner global environmental change programmes.

Cross-cutting initiatives
WCRP engages in a number of joint and cross-cutting initiatives through the implementation of task forces and working groups in areas such as seasonal prediction, anthropogenic climate change, monsoons, chemistry and climate, extremes and risks, and sea-level rise. Cross-cutting activities bring together scientists with other key stakeholders such as policy makers, development agencies and private industry specialists in order to address specific problems or research questions.

Core projects
The current core projects of WCRP are:

1. Climate Variability and Predictability (CLIVAR): CLIVAR's mission is to observe, simulate, and predict the Earth's climate system with a focus on ocean-atmosphere interactions in order to better understand climate variability, predictability and change for the benefit of society and the environment in which we live.
   http://www.clivar.org

2. Global Energy and Water Cycle EXperiment (GEWEX): GEWEX focuses on scientific research of atmospheric and thermodynamic processes that determine the global hydrological cycle and water budget and their involvement in global changes such as increases in greenhouse gases.
   http://www.gewex.org

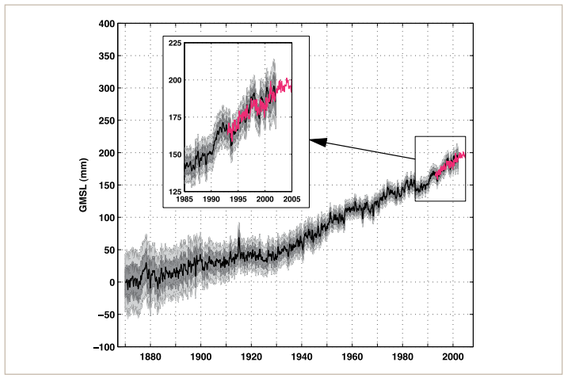
3. Stratospheric Processes And their Role in Climate (SPARC): Apart from leading the research on the stratosphere, SPARC currently concentrates on the interaction between chemistry and climate.
   http://www.atmosp.physics.utoronto.ca/SPARC

4. Climate and Cryosphere (CliC): The principal goal of CliC is to assess and quantify the impacts of climatic variability and change on components of the cryosphere and their consequences for the climate system and to determine the stability of the global cryosphere.
   http://clic.npolar.no

Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP)
WCRP is an active participant in the Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP) jointly with IGBP (International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme), IHDP (International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change), and DIVERSITAS (an international programme of biodiversity science). Through the implementation of joint projects, integrated regional studies, capacity building in developing nations and open science conferences, ESSP aims to deliver research outputs of value to users seeking information regarding changes that are occurring to the Earth System and the implications of these changes for global sustainability.

CREATING AND DELIVERING VALUE

The fundamental unifying and integrating theme in the WCRP is research underpinning a comprehensive observing, analysis and modelling capability of the full climate system. Recent delivery of value to end-users of our research includes: a statement on reducing sea-level rise uncertainty (http://wcrp.wmo.int/AP_SeaLevel.html); the CMIP3 archive containing all the climate change projections undertaken by modelling groups around the world for the fourth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (http://www-pcmdi.llnl.gov) and a DVD that highlights current Climate Change Research (http://wcrp.wmo.int/PG_CDsDVDs.html).



J. CHURCH

Reconstructed sea levels from 1870 to 2000 indicate an increase in the rate of global mean sea-level (GMSL) rise

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WMO IOC ICSU International Council for Science

WHETHER YOU ARE A SCIENTIST, POLICY-MAKER, INFORMATION END-USER OR SPONSOR, LEARN HOW YOU CAN BE PART OF THE WCRP NETWORK AT HTTP://WCRP.WMO.INT.

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