

Overview of the CCSP Strategic Plan

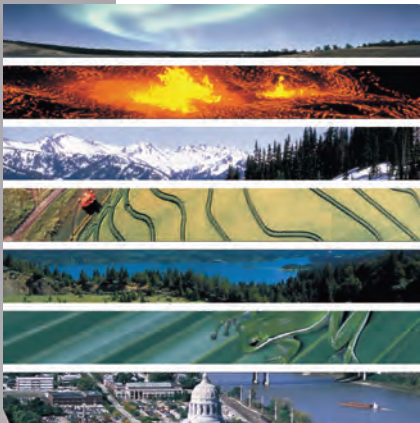


The *Strategic Plan for the Climate Change Science Program* was released in July 2003. The document is the first comprehensive update of a national plan for climate and global change research since the original U.S. Global Change Research Program strategy was issued at the inception of the program in 1989.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

In July 2002, the CCSP undertook a year-long process to prepare a new 10-year strategic plan for the program. The planning process was designed to ensure a comprehensive examination of research and observation needs, transparent review by the national and international scientific and stakeholder communities, and establishment of defined goals for research on climate and global change.

Scientists and research program managers from the 13 participating agencies and the Climate Change Science Program Office drafted the *Strategic Plan*. The Administration released a *CCSP Discussion Draft Strategic Plan* for public review in November 2002. A Climate Change Science Program Workshop, held in December 2002 in Washington, DC, was designed to facilitate extensive discussion and comments on the draft plan. The workshop was attended by 1,300 scientists and other participants, including individuals from 47 states and 36 nations.



Written comments on the *Discussion Draft Strategic Plan* were submitted during a public review period ending in January 2003. The comments amounted to nearly 900 pages of input from hundreds of scientists, representatives of interest groups, and interested members of the lay public.

In addition, a special committee of the National Academy of Sciences' National Research Council (NRC) reviewed the discussion draft plan at the request of the CCSP and reported its recommendations in February 2003.

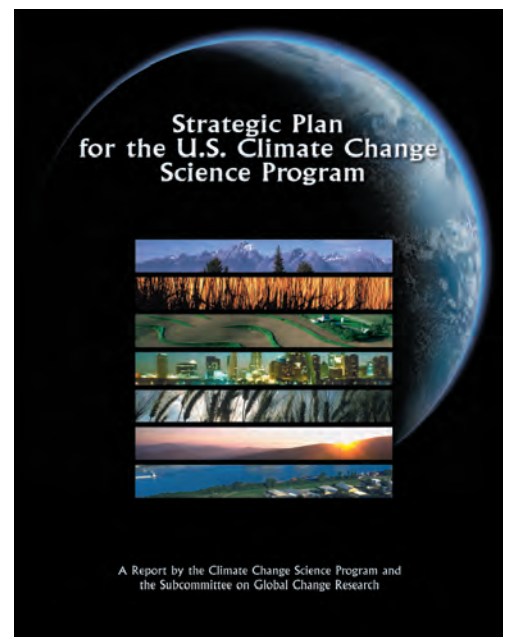
The *Strategic Plan for the U.S. Climate Change Science Program* was released in July 2003 after consideration of all of the workshop discussions, the full range of written public review comments, and the NRC review of the

discussion draft plan, as well as an extensive internal U.S. Government review process.

The *CCSP Strategic Plan* will guide research activities sponsored or conducted by the U.S. Government. It will be modified as warranted by the emergence of key findings and important new scientific questions of public interest.

GOALS OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE PROGRAM

The CCSP adds significant integrative value to the individual Earth and climate science missions of its 13 participating agencies and departments, and their national and international partners. A critical role of the interagency program is to coordinate research and



A Report by the Climate Change Science Program and the Subcommittee on Global Change Research



CCSP GOALS

- Goal 1:** Improve knowledge of the Earth's past and present climate and environment, including its natural variability, and improve understanding of the causes of observed variability and change.
- Goal 2:** Improve quantification of the forces bringing about changes in the Earth's climate and related systems.
- Goal 3:** Reduce uncertainty in projections of how the Earth's climate and related systems may change in the future.
- Goal 4:** Understand the sensitivity and adaptability of different natural and managed ecosystems and human systems to climate and related global changes.
- Goal 5:** Explore the uses and identify the limits of evolving knowledge to manage risks and opportunities related to climate variability and change.

integrate and synthesize information to achieve results that no single agency, or small group of agencies, could attain.

In its *Strategic Plan*, the CCSP adopted five overarching scientific goals. By developing information responsive to these goals, the program will ensure that it addresses the most important climate-related issues.

CORE APPROACHES

The CCSP employs four core approaches in working toward its goals. Each of these components of the program is discussed in greater detail in the *CCSP Strategic Plan*.

CCSP CORE APPROACHES

- Scientific Research:** Plan, sponsor, and conduct research on changes in climate and related systems.
- Observations:** Enhance observations and data management systems to generate a comprehensive set of variables needed for climate-related research.
- Decision Support:** Develop improved science-based resources to aid decision making.
- Communications:** Communicate results to domestic and international scientific and stakeholder communities, stressing openness and transparency.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

In February 2004, the NRC review committee issued a second public report, *Implementing Climate and Global Change Research: A Review of the Final U.S. Climate Change Science Program Strategic Plan*, expressing the committee's conclusions on the content, objectivity, quality, and comprehensiveness of the updated *Strategic Plan*, on the process used to produce it, and on the proposed process for developing subsequent findings to be reported by the CCSP. The report made a number of recommendations on implementing the *Strategic Plan*. The NRC review concluded:

"The Strategic Plan for the U.S. Climate Change Science Program articulates a guiding vision, is appropriately ambitious, and is broad in scope. ...Advancing science on all fronts identified by the program will be of vital importance to the nation."

The CCSP is now engaged in implementing the *Strategic Plan*.

Full text can be found at <http://www.climate-science.gov>.



This fact sheet was generated by the Climate Change Science Program Office in collaboration with an interagency working group composed of representatives of the 13 Federal agencies participating in the U.S. Climate Change Science Program.

For further information, see www.climate-science.gov.