



July 2008

Members of Congress:

We are pleased to transmit a copy of *Our Changing Planet: The U.S. Climate Change Science Program for Fiscal Year 2009*. The report describes the activities and plans of the Climate Change Science Program (CCSP), which incorporates the U.S. Global Change Research Program established under the Global Change Research Act of 1990, and the Climate Change Research Initiative that was established by the President in 2001. CCSP coordinates and integrates scientific research on climate and global change supported by 13 participating departments and agencies of the U.S. Government.

This Fiscal Year 2009 edition of *Our Changing Planet* highlights recent advances and progress supported by CCSP-participating agencies in each of the program's research and observational elements, as called for in the *Strategic Plan for the U.S. Climate Change Science Program* released in July 2003, and later modified in the 2008 *CCSP Revised Research Plan*.

The document describes a wide range of activities including examples of CCSP's contribution to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as well as significant progress in understanding Earth system components of the global climate system, how these components interact, and the processes and forces bringing about changes to the Earth system. It provides details on progress towards understanding the ongoing and projected effects of climate change on nature and society, such as the relationship between climate change and shifts in storm tracks and how this may affect water availability in the southwestern United States. The document also describes how observational and predictive capabilities are being improved and used to create tools to support decisionmaking at local, regional, and national scales to cope with environmental variability and change. The report also describes the program's 21 scientific synthesis and assessment products and its recently completed *Scientific Assessment of the Effects of Global Change on the United States*. To date, eight of the synthesis and assessment products have been completed and the remaining products will be completed in the coming months. These products are being widely disseminated and briefed to stakeholders, including Congress. They are also providing important input to CCSP's ongoing strategic planning.

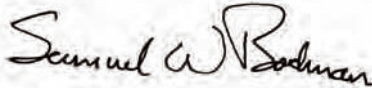
CCSP is committed to its mission to facilitate the creation and application of knowledge of the Earth's global environment through research, observations, decision support, and communication. We thank the CCSP-participating agencies for their close cooperation, and we look forward to working with Congress in the continued development of this important program.



Carlos M. Gutierrez

Secretary of Commerce

Chair, Committee on Climate
Change Science and
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Samuel W. Bodman

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