



# United States Global Change Research Program



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## Administration Releases 10-Year Global Change Strategic Plan

The Obama Administration today released a [10-year strategic plan](#) for research related to global change, identifying priorities that will help state and local governments, businesses, and communities prepare for anticipated changes in the global environment, including climate change, in the decades ahead.

The Plan—released by the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), which for more than 20 years has coordinated Federal global change research— was developed collaboratively by more than 100 Federal scientists. It reflects extensive inputs from stakeholders and the general public, as well as a detailed review by the National Research Council, chartered by Congress to provide independent expert advice to the Nation. The Plan will be implemented through the USGCRP and the 13 Federal departments and agencies it represents.

“Human actions are altering the atmosphere, the land, and our oceans, placing new pressures on the Earth’s ecosystems and threatening the health and economic welfare of our Nation and the world,” said Tom Armstrong, Executive Director of the USGCRP. “High-quality and well-coordinated research is essential if we are to better understand and predict future changes, develop strategies to minimize our vulnerabilities, and adapt to changes that can’t be avoided.”

Federal research under the USGCRP has for two decades focused largely on detailed documentation of specific environmental changes by satellite and other Earth-observing technologies and the development of sophisticated computer models of the Earth’s climate system to predict how such changes will manifest in the near-term. In the ten years going forward that emphasis will expand to incorporate the complex dynamics of ecosystems and human social-economic activities and how those factors influence global change. By including these added dimensions, USGCRP-sponsored research will generate information of unprecedented practical use to decision-makers in a wide range of sectors including agriculture, municipal planning, and public works.

“It is no longer enough to study the isolated physical, chemical, and biological factors affecting global change,” Armstrong said. “Advanced computing technologies and methods now allow us to integrate insights from those disciplines and add important information from the ecological, social, and economic sciences. This new capacity will deepen our understanding of global change processes and help planners in realms as diverse as storm water management, agriculture, and natural resources management.”

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The Strategic Plan describes four key goals for the USGCRP during 2012 – 2021:

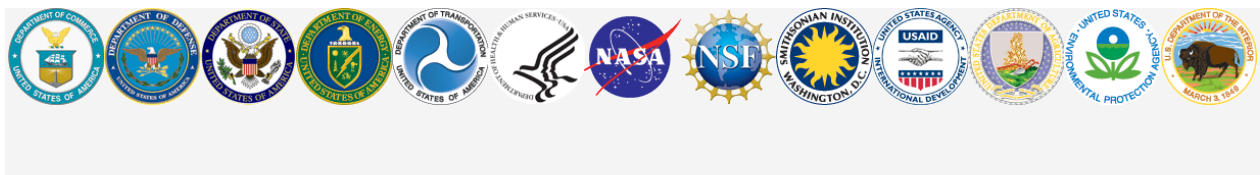
- **Advance Science:** Advance scientific knowledge of the integrated natural and human components of the Earth system, drawing upon physical, chemical, biological, ecological, and behavioral sciences.
- **Inform Decisions:** Provide the scientific basis to inform and enable timely decisions on adaptation to and mitigation of global change.
- **Conduct Sustained Assessments:** Build a sustained assessment capacity that improves the Nation’s ability to understand, anticipate, and respond to global change impacts and vulnerabilities.
- **Communicate and Educate:** Broaden public understanding of global change and support the development of a scientific workforce skilled in Earth-system sciences.

Work towards these goals will help the USGCRP fulfill its Congressional mandate to “assist the Nation and the world to understand, assess, predict, and respond to human-induced and natural processes of global change,” as called for in the Global Change Research Act of 1990. To achieve these goals, USGCRP is developing an implementation strategy that will draw in part upon its expertise in conducting National Climate Assessments—broad assessments of global change impacts across U.S. economic sectors, the latest of which is currently under development.

In combination with USGCRP’s expanding communication and education activities, the new scientific findings and decision-support tools expected to emerge from the Strategic Plan will empower a broad range of stakeholders to make more informed and effective decisions as they prepare for and respond to the many dimensions of global change.

To learn more about the Strategic Plan, please visit: <http://library.globalchange.gov/the-national-global-change-research-plan-2012-2021-factsheet>

To learn more about USGCRP please visit: <http://library.globalchange.gov/us-global-change-research-program-factsheet>



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