



Science On a Sphere®

Q. What is NOAA's Science On a Sphere®?

Seen by millions of people all over the world, Science On a Sphere is a large visualization system that uses computers and video projectors to display animated data onto the outside of a sphere. Said another way, SOS is a globe that shows dynamic, animated images of the atmosphere, oceans, and land of a planet. Many displays are possible, limited only by the imagination.

Q. Where can I see Science On a Sphere?

SOS is currently installed in well over 100 facilities around the world. See sos.noaa.gov/What_is_SOS/sites.php for an up-to-date list of installations, with some photographs. Check back often as new sites are added regularly.

Q. What content is available for Science On a Sphere?

NOAA's Science On a Sphere is capable of displaying any imaginable dataset suitable for projection onto a sphere. As a scientific organization dedicated to understanding and predicting changes in the Earth's environment, NOAA has developed and obtained hundreds of different datasets that are provided with the system. These are organized into the categories of atmosphere, ocean, land, astronomy, models and simulations, and extras. New content is regularly added to the library.

Q. How is Science On a Sphere used at NOAA?

Using NOAA's collective experience and knowledge of the Earth's land, oceans, and atmosphere, NOAA uses Science On a Sphere as an instrument to enhance informal educational programs in science centers, universities, and museums throughout the world. It is a versatile visualization system that can be used for live programs, unfacilitated shows, customized school lessons, and many other formats.

Q. What constitutes a Science On a Sphere system?

The SOS system uses four high resolution video projectors to display images onto a 68" diameter sphere. The projectors are driven by a relatively powerful PC with multi-core processors and high end graphics cards. An audio system is included for recorded presentations. The system runs with proprietary software developed at NOAA's ESRL Global Systems Division.

Q. Where can I find additional information on Science On a Sphere?

The best place to start is our website, sos.noaa.gov. Here you can find introductory videos, a floor plan, teacher materials, a dataset catalog and much more.

Q. Can Science On a Sphere be installed at my museum or science center?

Science On a Sphere is available as an off-the-shelf system, including all required hardware, installation, training, support, and documentation. For more information, contact John Schneider at +1-303-497-4646 or john.p.schneider@noaa.gov.