The Global Ddrought Monitor Portal : The foundation for a Global Drought Early Warning System

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The Drought Interest Group of the World Climate Research Programme encourages regional and international drought activities. Drought monitoring, assessment, response, mitigation, adaptation, and early warning systems have been created in a number of countries around the world, and some regional and continental efforts have been successful. However, an elusive "Grail" for the international drought community, as well as a priority of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), has been the establishment of a Global Drought Early Warning System (GDEWS). A GDEWS incorporates forecasting and research improvements, in addition to monitoring, impact, planning, mitigation and adaptation, and recovery information. At a series of workshops in 2010, the US National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) agreed to take the first step toward a GDEWS, the formation of a Global Drought Monitoring Portal (GDMP). This effort has benefited from coordination with WMO and GEO and currently provides access to drought monitoring information for three continents, North America, Europe, and Africa, as well as global information provided through satellite products and Global Historical Climate Network locations. Other nations have expressed interest in contributing and new regional and continental information should be online shortly. While monitoring considerations are being fleshed out in other parts of the world, the next steps toward a GDEWS will be to link to other aspects of international drought, namely forecasting, research, and impacts. Integrating the GDMP with research information from WCRP, previously discussed in Barcelona, and forecast information is a next logical step forward. This paper will present the capabilities of the GDMP as well as the advantages of using common architecture through GEO to facilitate transfer and interoperability of information whether it be monitoring, forecasting or research.