

Minutes of First Telecon of the WCRP Working Group on Regional Climate (draft)

Friday 23 November 2012 16:30-18:00 CET

Participants:

Ghassem Asrar, director WCRP, Switzerland
David Behar, S. Francisco Public Utilities Commission, USA
Roberta Boscolo, WCRP secretariat, Switzerland
Tony Busalacchi, ESSIC, Uni. Maryland, USA
Timothy Carter, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), Finland
Seita Emori, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan
Filippo Giorgi, ICTP, Italy
Clare Goodess (co-chair), Uni. East Anglia, UK
Kendra Gotangco, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines
Bruce Hewitson (co-chair), Uni. Cape Town, South Africa
Simon Mason, IRI, USA
Jan Polcher, CNRS, France
Annette Rinke, AWI, Germany
Igor Shkolnik, Voeikov Geophysical Observatory, Russia
Fernanda Zermoglio, World Bank, USA

Apologies:

Sam Dean, NIWA, New Zealand
Willem Landman, Uni. Pretoria, South Africa

1. Context and expectations of the WGRC from the WCRP/JSC perspective

The Chair of Joint Scientific Committee (JSC) opened the telecon by providing a quick overview of the deliberations by the JSC and senior leadership of the WCRP that led to the development of this working group and its terms of reference. He stated that the current terms of reference (ToR) should be considered as a draft working document and he invited the working group to send their suggested changes to the JSC for approval. The Director of WCRP stated that considering the newness of this working group we may suggest to keep the ToR as a living document for some period and refine it based on lessons learned and experience gained from your activities.

One specific question to the JSC Chair was on the relationship between CORDEX and this working group. He stated that CORDEX should be viewed as a major activity of this working group and because of the CORDEX importance to WGRC, its co-chairs (Filippo Giorgi and Colin Jones) are invited to serve as *ex-officio* members.

The next question was on the relationship between this working group and the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). The WCRP Chair and Director stated that this working group is expected to develop the WCRP plan and approach to an effective interface with GFCS. Specifically, given the GFCS pillars (i.e. observations, research, information, user interface and capacity development), and the recognition of WCRP major strengths in observations, research and prediction, how far down the continuum from research and users and decision makers should WCRP extend its reach to ensure that its research findings and results will benefit decision making (e.g. through GFCS information system and user interface pillars)?.

They stated that WCRP will explore all existing and available programs and partnerships to fulfill the objectives that the working group identifies, and WCRP is also prepared to establish new mechanisms and activities that are required to fulfill such objectives.

2. Participants' introductions

The working group spent some time on self-introduction of its members and their areas of expertise and interest. The WCRP Director stated that he and Dr. Roberta Boscolo, WCRP communication officer, will be supporting the working group activities from the secretariat.

3. WGRC mandate and Terms of Reference (ToR)

The co-chairs opened the discussion on the ToR and invited the members to comment during the telecon and/or provide their comments to the co-chairs in writing by 7 December. One question was a lack of emphasis on regional observations/observing systems. Is this a part of the mandate of this working group? What role can this working group play in highlighting this very important topic? We can clearly work with the rest of the WCRP network (e.g. Core Projects, WGs and Councils) and sister programs such as GCOS and Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP) in addressing any topics that transcend boundaries beyond this working group's mandate.

ACTION: The working group members are requested to send their comments and feedback on ToR to the co-chairs by 7 December 2012. The suggested changes to the ToR will be communicated to the JSC Chair by the co-chairs for approval.

Another question was on the process leading to the current near-term priorities (i.e. climate and water, health, food security and disaster risk). The chairs responded by stating that these are near-term priorities emerging from considerable deliberations during the development of the GFCS implementation plan in the past two years. WCRP is expected to contribute to implementation of these priorities in the near- to mid-term while identifying exciting new products and services based on its research coordination activities, especially through this working group and the work that its four major projects and CORDEX are supporting. The co-chairs proposed to establish a small task team from the

working group members to develop a short scoping document that will identify such activities for review and deliberation by the entire working group. Some suggested names for this task team are the co-chairs, Anette, Simon, Filippo, David and other interested working group members who should express their interest to the co-chairs in short order.

ACTION: A task team of the working group will develop the scope of activities to be coordinated and promoted by WCRP for review and discussion by the entire working group. This should also encompass mechanisms for interactions with the decision-making community (see question on Item 1).

4. Mechanisms for carrying out WGRC business and the role of members; WGRC web site

The co-chairs requested a brief introduction to available resources and support by WCRP to the working group for carrying out its mandate. The WCRP Director reported on available resources to the working group for its annual meetings, interim telecons and task team(s) activities, reporting and communication. There was a brief discussion of the proposed working group web site and the co-chairs offered to help define the preliminary content of the site while Dr. Boscolo will help with its development. A decision will be made where to host the web site, either in Geneva or in Paris after consulting the current CORDEX web host in Paris.

ACTION: Co-chairs will define the content of a web site and Dr. Boscolo will assist in developing the site to be hosted either in Geneva or Paris. Ideally a first version of the web site will be available by 25 December 2012.

5. Date, focus and venue for the first face-to-face meeting

The next topic of discussion was the date and venue for the first face-to-face meeting of the working group. Co-chairs suggested the next European Geophysical Union (EGU) assembly on 7-12 April 2013 in Vienna, Austria as one such opportunity. Some discussion on the exact date for the meeting resulted in an action to develop a doodle poll to identify the date with greatest availability of working group members.

ACTION: Develop and share a doodle poll to identify the date and venue for the first meeting of WG.

ACTION:WCRP secretariat to share a list of all upcoming and major WCRP activities during 2013 with the working group, and to explore availability of venue and logistics for the first meeting of the working group.

ACTION: Working group members are invited to identify/offer possible venues and options for future meetings.

6. Potential WGRC future activities

The next topic of discussion was the WCRP grand science challenges and how this working group can contribute to their implementation. Dr. Filippo Giorgi, co-chair of CORDEX and a JSC member briefly described the WCRP six grand challenges, and elaborated on the one on “provision of regional climate information” that closely aligns with the mandate of this working group. He cited a position paper that he developed with his co-authors and invited the working group to help further develop the implementation plan for this grand challenge.

ACTION:WCRP secretariat will send a copy of the grand science challenge paper on regional climate to the working group members for their review and comment, including suggestion of topics and activities for implementation plan, to the co-chairs for consolidation and feedback to Filippo by mid-December.

The final topic of discussion was the next CORDEX International Conference to be held during first week of November 2013 in Brussels, Belgium under the co-sponsorship of European Commission (EC) and in partnership with the IPCC. The Conference will be in two segments: the first day will be devoted to reporting of the findings of the IPCC Working Group I in their Fifth Assessment during the morning of the first day, followed by a dialogue with stakeholders and decision makers under the auspices of the EC in the afternoon of the same day. The CORDEX science conference will follow during the subsequent three days, with active participation by the IPCC Working Group II and other WCRP partners. There was some limited discussion on the role of this working group during the first day, specifically in the stakeholder session. The WCRP Director suggested exploring this option through several working group members who are also serving on organizing committee of the conference.

ACTION:WCRP secretariat will send a copy of the draft conference announcement to the working group members for their information in advance of its public release.

Detailed discussions on other potential working group activities (publication of reports and workshops) will take place during the first working group meeting.

The teleconference closed with the co-chairs thanking all for their participation and welcoming additional comments, proposals, questions on working group activities from members by email.

Version 1: 28 November 2012

Version 2: 19 December 2012

Version 3: 20 January 2013