



18TH PANEL MEETING SETS AGENDA TO BROADEN DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Indian Ocean Climate Initiative



New Partner, Office of Science & Innovation throws a challenge to IOCI

The Premier's Office of Science and Innovation has joined IOCI as a major contributing partner. The Chief Scientist Dr. Bruce Hobbs was welcomed as new Panel Member at IOCI18.

Dr. Hobbs noted the criticality of climate issues to the State's future and threw a well received challenge to IOCI.

His challenge was to look at options beyond the Stage 2 program and the full range of need and opportunities. Despite the strengths of IOCI, its structure is fragile, its membership is not complete, and the communications task is formidable. How might the IOCI partnership evolve to a more sustainable operational structure? What needs to happen to effectively connect with the full range of evolving impacts and interests.



IOCI 19 Meeting

- Perth, August 2 and 3

The next IOCI meeting will include a workshop on the research outcomes of Phase 1 of IOCI's current program.

The workshop activity will be open. Because of its technical nature it will only be advertised for peer input from partners and the science community.

IOCI 19 will also hear feedback on support needs relating to impacts of climate change and variability on coastal management and on fire. ☼

IOCI 18 meeting – a focus on information exchange, support gaps and communication initiatives.

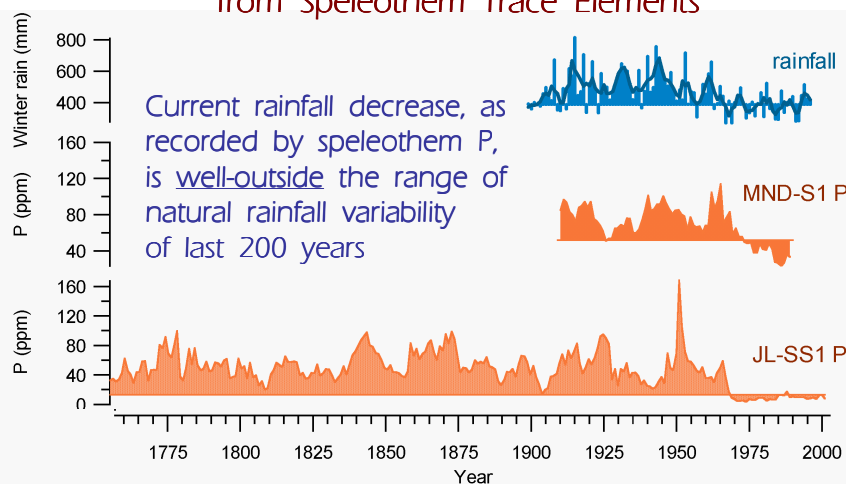
The 18th Panel Meeting was conducted as a small seminar on selected issues related to climate change and adaptation.

Topics included public awareness, extreme events, fire, climate history from cave deposits, sea-level rise and coastal management, early recognition of climate change.

IOCI 18 also set up some specific communication initiatives including:

- a series of bulletins on how regional climate has changed
- a national workshop on water and climate change in southern Australia ☼

Paleo-rainfall Record for SWA from Speleothem Trace Elements



Studies of Limestone Caves show promise in reconstructing past rainfall

Existing instrumental records for SWA are insufficient to determine how the post-1965 rainfall decrease compares within the natural climate history of the south west.

Speleothem trace elements provide opportunity to extend the existing rainfall record at least several hundred years.

Preliminary studies of caves on the Leeuwin – Naturaliste ridge by Dr. Treble of UCLA, suggest that recent rainfall in that area is well outside the range of the last two centuries.

IOCI 18 initiated action for these, presently limited studies, to be extended over the next three years. ☼

Fremantle Tide Gauges give longest record of Sea Level Rise in Southern Hemisphere

Prof. Charitha Pattiaratchi of UWA speaking to IOCIP on coastal management in WA said Fremantle tidal records give one of the country's best records of sea level rise and show an average rise of 1.54 mm per year.

Prof. Pattiaratchi told IOCIP that the rise in sea levels on our coast, at the lower end of global trends, has been dampened by the influence of increasing El Niños.

The sea-level rise of approx. 15 cm over the last century contrasts with:

- a tidal fluctuation of 50 cm,
- storm surges of 50 to 80 cm
- inter-annual means varying about 20 cm from El Niños to La Niñas.

Under this trend the frequency of extreme sea levels has increased and is physically impacting on the western coast-line.

IOCIP 18 noted that neither IOCI's program nor that of SRFME has given attention to coastal management issues. IOCIP 18 formed a small sub-committee to report on whether the State has unmet support needs in climate issues of coastal management.

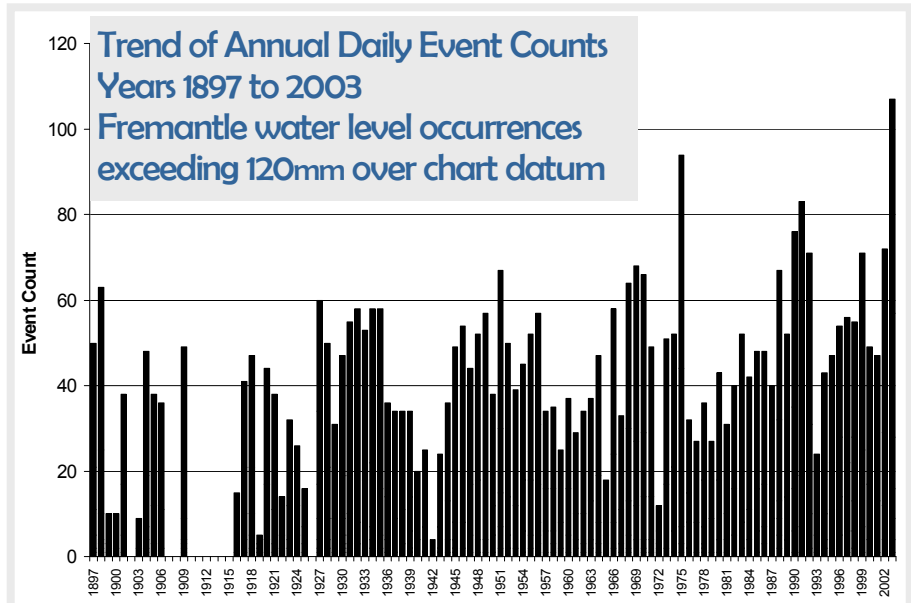


Our Web Site 
www.ioci.org.au

IOCI to produce a series of bulletins on established climate changes in WA

At IOCIP 18 a proposal was adopted for producing a series of bulletins on how our climate has changed in recent decades.

The series will be complete by May 2005 and published on the IOCI web-site in down-loadable format.



Challenges to water management of changing climate in southern Australia

IOCIP 18 endorsed an agreement for IOCI, AGO, ATSE & OSI to convene a National Water Seminar and Workshop in Perth for mid 2005

Water resources are climatically vulnerable in southern Australia and changes evident in water regimes are also a surrogate for other areas of environmental stress.

Australia's south west is a front-line region in these respects where severe impacts have been experienced from a climate shift over the last quarter century.

The seminar and workshop will examine scientific and decision-making challenges, needs and opportunities for southern Australia through the experiences of the south-west and the more recent experiences of other winter rainfall regions of Australia.

Tentatively the program will include -

- Defining the problem – historical, physical, strategic insights**
- Reviewing the Science – present and future**
- New decision paradigms and perspectives**
- Proposing strategies for “informed adaptation”**



The series will include bulletins on –

- How has our rainfall changed?*
- How has our temperature changed?*
- How have our sea-levels changed?*
- How has our groundwater changed?*
- How have our river flows changed?*
- How has the Leeuwin Current changed?*
- How has atmospheric circulation changed?*

The intention of the bulletins is general awareness and education.

IOCIP is concerned that, despite the impact of established changes of climate in south-western Australia particularly, there remains a wide tendency to see climate change as an issue that may, or may not come to pass in thirty or forty years time.

