



BRIGHT START REPORTED FOR THE SECOND STAGE OF IOCI'S CLIMATE PROGRAM

Indian Ocean Climate Initiative



Success, opportunity as Stage Two begins

On Dec 1& 2 the IOCI Panel held its 17th meeting in Perth. The meeting included:

- discussion of partners' needs and roles in communication.
- a workshop with Dept. of Agriculture staff; and
- reporting of early progress on Stage 2 research;

The discussions revealed exciting collaborative and program opportunities built on:

- IOCI's Stage 1 developments;
- current activities in IOCI, and linked initiatives;
- improved communication.



Communication Strategy underscores vital role of partners

A key element of IOCIP 17 was to progress the communication strategy adopted in principle in August at IOCIP 16.

The strategy supports IOCI's mission to

Assist adaptive decision-making by developing and communicating knowledge of regional climate variability and change.

Key principles in the strategy relating to roles in communication are -

1. **Partners have a primary role, individually and collectively**
2. **IOCI has a core of strategic knowledge for central communication to all sectors**
3. **IOCIP is a State forum for information sharing and collaboration**
4. **IOCI seeks application of available science- not only its own**

IOCIP agreed a course to complete the strategy and supported immediate action plans including action on bulletins and web-site.



Partners sketch communication plans

At its previous meeting IOCIP emphasised the primary role of partners in communication with their sectors [Principle 1]. IOCIP decided to prepare templates for members to submit simple plans of their agency roles.

At IOCIP 17, members tabled draft partner statements on templates made after IOCIP16.

IOCIP 18 Meeting

Information will continue as a theme of the IOCIP 18 meeting in March 2004 where IOCIP will focus inwardly on practical interpretation of science affecting partners' interests'.

The meeting will explore topics where there may be new insights and where partners are looking for interpretive knowledge to better assess and manage risk.

IOCI partners and their sectors are at different stages in climate issues [see article on sectoral profiles]. The Panel decided, therefore, that these plans must be kept simple.

The drafts provide inputs to IOCI on where to focus its activity on communications and support to partners.

The plans showed across the board interest in multi-decadal issues and strong breadth of interest in inter-seasonal projections.

Proposals were generally cautious with emphasis on simple awareness, including internal agency awareness. Improved access to information, through the web, bulletins and briefings, was a key issue.

IOCIP, the Communication Sub-Committee and partners will now establish processes to edit, maintain, and collate the drafts including -

1. relevant incorporation into an IOCIP/ IOCI Central action plan
2. simple processes for rolling forward by partners and IOCI
3. simple processes for ongoing use in IOCI accountability
4. reporting to IOCIP on any issues/challenges/opportunities arising from the drafts and needing consideration and resolution
5. checks to ensure that consequent action plans are within capacity of partners and IOCI to fulfil
6. dialogue with research partners to establish complementary plans for their part in communication.



Visitors to recent meetings:

IOCIP welcomes recent visits by:
Awadhesh Prasad (MDBC)
Jo Mummery (AGO)
Roger Stone (DPI Old)
Andrew Robertson (IRI New York)

IOCI workshop with Dept. of Agriculture

Department and Panel strike a rich lode of opportunity.

On December 1st a joint workshop was held at the Department of Agriculture. The workshop's aim was to identify needs and opportunities to coordinate and enhance climate activities and share information within the wider network of IOCI associates.

The workshop was highly successful. It clarified needs and activities of the Department and IOCI researchers, and generated a mutual desire and momentum for partnership.

After drilling down into research within IOCI and the Department, several highly complementary activities were identified, such as -

- downscaling climate regimes and projections for CSIRO's Healthy Country flagship program;
- a water catchment project funded by the AGO to WRC; and
- an impact of climate change project funded by GRDC to DAWA.

Opportunities emerged to:

- temporarily host staff in other organisations;
- collaborate in using extensive datasets and model runs to probe underlying mechanisms;
- investigate forecasts for integrated parameters of value to agriculture, eg related to date of sowing; and
- analyse climate risks for agriculture within the south west's altered climate regime.



Our Web Site

www.ioci.org.au

- is being upgraded.

Please watch the site for news and updates on IOCI activity.

Future Bulletins

IOCI plans regular bulletins, at least quarterly in Stage 2. 

Thumbs up for start of Stage2 research

IOCIP 17 welcomed research partners good start on IOCI's second five year research strategy and reports of strong early progress.

Study of current climate regimes, in particular, is moving on several fronts including: synoptic studies; statistics of downscaling; and study of large scale circulation patterns in GCM experiments.

Evidence continues to mount in support of an opinion that the shift to a drier rainfall regime in the South-West is linked primarily with large scale changes in the global circulation.

These large scale linkages add to prospects for ultimate attribution of cause. They also place natural multi-decadal variability, global warming, and ozone depletion most squarely in the frame for further study and imply that local land-use changes, or air pollution are most likely only secondary causes. Land use change will, nonetheless, be pursued further.

Progress on the themes of short-term climate prediction and climate change is on schedule.



Satisfying take-up in other initiatives

IOCIP 17, the workshop with the Dept. Agriculture, and other events have demonstrated that IOCI's strategic research program is proving valuable as a platform and catalyst for other initiatives.

IOCIP 17 was pleased to observe the extent to which IOCI's projects, such as downscaling, are spawning new and valuable studies through other funders.

IOCIP also noted that wide national recognition of IOCI and South-West climate issues in a variety of forums is stimulating helpful scientific and policy interest in other jurisdictions.



Differing sectoral profiles of climate sensitivity and risk explain markedly differing response priorities

Priorities in sectoral responses to regional climate variability and change differ strongly due to widely differing climate sensitivities and thresholds for their basic functions. For some sectors the main impacts/opportunities may relate to climatic norms and basic production, for others they may relate to damage from

extreme events or to altered demand for services. For a few sectors the issues are manifold.

In the South-West the differences in sectoral sensitivities to the observed climate changes have proven quite dramatic.

"Profiles" of the key sensitivities of sectoral enterprises point to basic priorities for adaptive response activities including research and communication.

Supply/Demand processes potentially relevant to impact on sectoral enterprise



Sensitivities of Sectoral Outcomes

[consider climate norms, variability, breaks, extremes]

Multi-Decadal Time Scales (Sustainability)

Priorities depend on longer term enterprise sensitivity to - risks from current decisions and plans for -

processes and operations affected by change and multi-decadal variability.

Seasonal Time Scales (Operational)

Priorities depend on operational sensitivity to -

risks from short term decisions for -

sectoral activities and processes affected by seasonal outcomes for climate variables which have some useful predictability.

