

INTERNATIONAL PRECIPITATION WORKING GROUP

(Submitted by the WMO)

Summary and purpose of document

This document contains a recommendation to form an International Precipitation Working Group.

ACTION PROPOSED:

CGMS may wish to comment on the recommendation to form an International Precipitation Working Group.

DISCUSSION

1. The second session of the CBS OPAG-IOS Expert Team on Satellite Systems Utilization and Products met in Melbourne, Australia, 25-29 October 1999. That session was unanimous in the need for WMO to foster further development of other related science groups. The second session discussed possible mechanisms for the formation of such science working groups that could improve satellite systems utilization. The success of both the International TOVS Working Group (ITWG) and the CGMS International Wind Workshop (IWW) in focusing the scientific community on a specific application area's issues and problems, strongly suggested similar benefits could be gained by development of science teams and workshops that could deal with application areas of satellite meteorology such as quantitative precipitation estimates, NWP and ocean and land surface properties. The current existence of many scientific groups operating in these areas could make this an easier task than otherwise anticipated. For example, in the area of quantitative precipitation estimation, groups of scientists were currently involved in the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) and in particular the Global Precipitation Climatology Project (GPCP) and had already exchanged information on data requirements and algorithm development. The second session also noted similar regional initiatives such as the Estimation of Precipitation by Satellites (EPSAT 2000) in Africa. As a result, the session suggested that these groups could form a nucleus, around which a working group could be based in order to encourage effective and widespread satellite data utilization for this application. Similar groups could also be identified for the other application areas cited.
2. The second session thus suggested that the OPAG IOS Chairman inform the Commission for Basic Systems (CBS) and its Advisory Working Group (AWG) and in other appropriate venues of the benefits of science teams and workshops to improve the utilization of data in satellite meteorology in such applications areas as NWP, quantitative precipitation estimates and ocean and land surface properties. It further strongly suggested that WMO, through the Chairman of OPAG IOS, act as a catalyst in the development of such focused science groups.
3. In working through the President of CBS, the Chairman OPAG IOS prepared a briefing for the WMO Executive Council Panel for Education and Training. In particular, the Panel was briefed on activities related to the Virtual Laboratory in Satellite Meteorology including the benefits of involving relevant science groups. The Panel felt that such involvement was beneficial and forwarded a recommendation to the WMO Executive Council.
4. The third session of the CBS OPAG-IOS Expert Team on Satellite Systems Utilization and Products met in Lannion, France, 3-7 July 2000. The third session was pleased to note the progress to date in the area related to science groups in that the fifty-second session of the WMO Executive Council had recommended involving relevant science groups in a systematic manner and the positive indication from the Global Precipitation Climatology Project (GPCP) for WCRP's GEWEX to serve as a nucleus for such a working group. Thus, the third session strongly encouraged the formation of an International Precipitation Working Group with active participation by WMO and GPCP within the framework of CGMS.