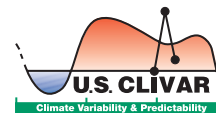


U.S. CLIVAR Working Groups

July 2010



The purpose of this document is to describe the aims and successes of the U.S. CLIVAR Working Group program, specify how Working Groups are established and governed, and invite US CLIVAR Panels to develop prospectuses for new U.S. CLIVAR Working Groups.

Aims

In order to address focused research needs, the U.S. CLIVAR program will establish small limited-lifetime action-oriented Working Groups (hereafter WGs) of scientists (typically ~8-12 persons) to implement and coordinate focused activities for the benefit of the scientific community. A major aim of the WGs is to expedite planning and/or implementation of specific scientific activities, for example coordinating development of new products and capabilities, leading community-wide analysis projects, and/or developing scientific and implementation recommendations on specific subjects for further consideration by U.S. CLIVAR panels and supporting agencies. Furthermore, WGs should foster wider support of, and participation in, activities addressing critical scientific challenges and/or CLIVAR needs. WGs are also intended to facilitate joint activities between U.S. CLIVAR and other national and/or international programs.

Successes

US CLIVAR initiated six WGs over the past four years:

Decadal Predictability Working Group
High Latitude Surface Flux Working Group (completed)
Western Boundary Current Working Group (completed)
Drought Working Group (completed)
MJO Working Group (completed)
Salinity Working Group (completed)

The U.S. CLIVAR Working Groups have been highly successful by carrying out a variety of productive and remarkably effective activities. For example they:

- Organized a community workshop and developed a concluding report (and published articles) articulating the role of ocean salinity in the global climate system
- Described the prospects for a future upper ocean salinity budget process study that will take advantage of new salinity remote-sensing technology to better understand the governing processes for ocean salinity and how they impact the exchange of freshwater between the ocean and atmosphere, interior ocean circulation, etc.
- Developed simulation metrics/diagnostics for the MJO and engaged the modeling community to adopt and apply these diagnostics in an intercomparison framework resulting in two refereed WG publications
- Designed, coordinated, and carried out community modeling experiments to characterize the sensitivity of climate models to ocean and land-surface forcings in order to assess mechanisms important for regional drought and its prediction
- Planned a major workshop on drought predictability and drought prediction
- Organized a special issue of J Climate on drought mechanisms and drought predictability

- Brought together field experimentalists, modelers, and observationalists investigating the western boundary current regions to identify shortcomings in the atmosphere, ocean, and coupled models that need to be addressed to accurately model western boundary current atmosphere-ocean interaction.
- Organized a special issue of *J Climate* on the dynamics of western boundary current regions and their role in climate

Finally, the impacts of the previous WGs have continued far beyond the conclusion of the formal Working Group. Each produced a *community* of researchers who carry on their work together beyond the lifetime of their formal Working Groups (e.g. the MJO Working Group became an international WCRP activity, the Salinity Working Group is helping organize community workshops and guide the design of a new field experiment). *Thus the scope, aims, types of activities, and organization of the completed WGs should serve as models for potential new WGs.*

Description and Governance

Working Groups are supported, e.g. travel, communications, workshop logistics, and report generation and distribution through the U.S. CLIVAR Office. Working Groups shall

- Be established by one or more U.S. CLIVAR Panels
- Be comprised of ~8-12 people (some international participation may be possible)
- Agree to undertake specific tasks that are both achievable and measurable within a specified lifetime
- Carry out activities over a ~2 year lifetime
- Develop a brief work plan describing expected activities, milestones, support needs, and anticipated benefits to the CLIVAR program and to the climate research community
- Have a reporting plan describing the range of material it will produce for inclusion on CLIVAR web sites, and/or published in journals, newsletters, or as CLIVAR reports
- Publicize and routinely report on WG activities to the U.S. CLIVAR Panels (and to the CLIVAR Inter-Agency Group (IAG) and other groups as appropriate)
- Encourage community-wide participation whenever possible through open workshops, web pages, and email lists

The U.S. CLIVAR Office and Inter-Agency Group (IAG) will consider requests for financial support of WG meetings, teleconferences, and WG reports (copies and distribution). Support of a (small to modest-sized) open scientific workshop organized by the Working Group can also be included (this support includes typical workshop costs, but only very limited travel funds)

WGs may be formed jointly with other national and international programs (e.g. GEWEX, Carbon Cycle). In such cases the U.S. CLIVAR Office should be consulted regarding programmatic cooperation.

WGs should focus on utilizing and maximizing efficient use of existing or expected resources (at this time most agencies are **not** seeking recommendations for activities requiring new agency resources). WGs will not be formed to explicitly develop proposals for consideration by research agencies. WGs are also not intended to be a mechanism to seek support for routine scientific workshops that provide little or no linkage to CLIVAR planning or implementation.

There will be a limit on the collective resources available for WGs, thus resources are not guaranteed. The U.S. CLIVAR Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) reviews and approves (in consultation with the IAG) all requests for new WGs.

The U.S. CLIVAR SSC will determine the membership of the WG. They will consider the suggested membership described in the prospectus, but reserve the option of soliciting and appointing WG members from the broader community.

The U.S. CLIVAR SSC and its Panels will assess progress of WGs on an annual basis.

Call for new Working Groups

Each prospective new Working Group that seeks support must develop a prospectus. The prospectus should be limited to 2-4 pages and address the following:

- Motivation and tasks: What is the motivation for the WG? Why establish a WG now? What are its specific tasks (these must be measurable and attainable), timeline of activities (including appropriate milestones), anticipated outcomes and benefits to CLIVAR (links to appropriate Panel goals, USGCRP goals, and agency programs should also be described)?
- Publications and Outreach: What plans does the WG have for producing and publishing material suitable for CLIVAR web sites, journals, newsletters, or as CLIVAR reports?
- Reporting: How often and to whom will the WG report?
- Leadership: Who will co-chair the WG? What is the suggested membership of the Working Group and what representation from other programs is recommended?
 - NOTE: WGs are great opportunities for junior scientists. Diversity of membership should also be considered.
- Resources: What are the activities for which resources are sought, e.g. travel, communications, and reporting (e.g. the WG will meet once per year for 2.5 days, hold monthly teleconferences, organize a 50-participant workshop, and submit for publication a 15-page manuscript)?

Prospectuses from previous Working Groups are good models for future Working Groups. These can be found online at <http://www.usclivar.org/Organization.php>.

Unless otherwise justified, the start date for new Working Group activities will be January 1, 2011. Working Groups should plan to complete their tasks by December 31, 2012.

Electronic copies of prospectuses (in Word, PDF, or plain text form) for new US CLIVAR Working Groups should be submitted to the US CLIVAR Office (usco@usclivar.org) **no later than October 1, 2010**. The U.S. CLIVAR SSC will then consider the requests; and in consultation with the USCO and the IAG, respond as rapidly as possible to facilitate the initiation of the approved WGs.