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U.S. scientists look to expand study of climate change

Brian Roewe | Jan. 5, 2012 Eco Catholic

Scientists with the U.S. Global Change Research Program want to broaden their research to include "climate-related global changes" in addition to climate change, according to a draft for a 10-year strategic plan.

A committee from the National Research Council, which reviewed the draft, labeled the proposed broadening as "an important step in the right direction," adding that further expansion could include global changes unrelated to climate.

"It is envisioned that with such an evolution, the Program can both continue to advance basic scientific understanding of global change and can actively support society's efforts to mitigate, adapt and otherwise respond to those changes," the committee stated through a press release.

The Council outlined obstacles existing to the plan, including limited budget resources and unclear boundaries for the expansion proposal. It also underscored the importance of researching change factors outside of climate, such as the stresses urbanization, industrialization and irrigation systems place on the global hydrological cycle.

"On scientific grounds alone, a broadly-focused global change research program that fully meets the mandate of the GCRA is more appropriate than a research program focused more narrowly on climate change alone."

The USGCRP - begun in 1989 as an initiative by President George H. W. Bush - coordinates and integrates federal research on changes in climate and the global environment and their implications for society, according to its website.

To read the full press release, click here [1].

In other environmental news:

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson is in Miami today to tour the Brownsville Transit Village [2] (set to open in March), an environmentally sustainable building project using water- and energy-saving mechanisms. [Epa.gov]

In its final entry of a five part series on the facts about clean energy [3], the Climate Reality Project explains how smarter energy usage - not necessarily less - can result in additional dollars in your pocket. [Climaterealityproject.org]

At the Huffington Post, Michael Nelson opines since American youths are awakening to a moral obligation to act on climate change, it's time for their elders to join them [4]. [Huffingtonpost.com]

Climate and water expert Peter Gleick offered its second-annual "Climate B.S.* [Bad Science] of the Year" awards [5], grouping the GOP presidential candidates as its first-place recipients. [Forbes.com]

In Nigeria, a consultant for the Federal Ministry of Water Resources has advised homeowners and companies to insure their properties against climate change effects [6]. [Leadership.ng]

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