

First Inter-Governmental Meeting

1996, Chiang Mai

The First Inter-Governmental Meeting was held on March 25-26, 1996 in Chiang Mai, Thailand and it was attended by representatives from 12 countries. Observers were present from the [IGBP](#), the International [START](#) Secretariat, [SASCOM](#), [TEACOM](#) and [WCRP](#).

The Meeting noted that during its deliberations it had agreed on a program of activities, and established mechanisms for their timely and effective implementation. It was agreed that another Inter-Governmental Meeting should be held preferably in March 1997.

Some of the important outcomes of this meeting were:

- agreement that the general policy-making and decision-making role for APN should be vested in the annual Inter-Governmental meeting;
- APN should organize itself as set out below for an initial period of two years, during which the APN will develop general guidelines and procedures for its long-term operation;
- establishment of a Steering Group and Scientific Planning Group;
- that the Steering Group, the Scientific Planning Group or the Interim Secretariat could invite relevant experts to contribute to APN scientific activities;
- establishment of priority research topics and activities; and
- acceptance that member arrangements would continue to evolve.

Proposed Scientific Program

The Chair of the First Meeting of the Scientific Planning Committee meeting held on 25-26 January 1996 in Tokyo reported on the conclusions from that meeting and from a Satellite Meeting on Asian Monsoon-ENSO issues held on 24 January 1996, and on the APN project development cycle. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to those involved for the successful effort they had made in translating previously agreed general APN priorities and directions into concrete program possibilities.

Inventory

Inventory activities were discussed under item 6 below.

Priority Topics and Activities

- *Monsoon*
The Meeting agreed with the proposed limited APN support for the AAN (Asian AWS Network) component of [GAME](#) (GEWEX Asian Monsoon Experiment), a WCRP project.
- *ENSO*
The WCRP representative advised the Meeting of a proposal being developed with the aim of improving climate prediction availability and usefulness for users, with particular reference to the ENSO phenomenon. A report was presented involving a proposed International Research Institute (IRI) dealing with similar issues. It was agreed that these proposals had the potential to facilitate action on the priority climate issues already identified in APN discussions. It was agreed that these proposals could be further developed by a small group with participation from APN, IGBP, [IHDP](#), NOAA, START, WCRP, and WMO. This group could be responsible for
 - making arrangements for undertaking preliminary or demonstration studies;
 - planning a workshop; and
 - generating involvement of other interested organizations, covering subject matter interest and funding support possibilities.

It was noted that the group should set the process in motion as soon as possible.

A representative of the United States Country Studies Program made a presentation outlining the support for Country Studies to Address Climate Change. The Meeting noted that this work contributed to regional knowledge which would be relevant for climate prediction work.

- *Regional Climate Modeling*
The Meeting noted the advice from the Interim Secretariat that it would be able to provide some support to initial action by TEACOM, with the intention that when practicable it could be expanded on a regional basis.
- *Human Dimensions Study*
The Meeting endorsed the proposed action by a small group including APN, IHDP, SASCOM, and START representatives to plan a joint APN-START workshop to be hosted by SASCOM in November 1996 on the broader Human Dimensions topic for the APN region. It was noted that the human dimensions study being pursued by the Interim Secretariat was nearly complete, and that it confirmed the desirability of such a workshop. It was also noted that there was an opportunity for this workshop to be a joint activity with the Global Change and Terrestrial Ecosystem core project of the IGBP.
- *LUCC Study*
The Meeting endorsed the limited support for LUCC activities proposed by the Interim Secretariat, noting that a proposed satellite workshop in Kyoto, Japan in November 1996 would provide an opportunity to bring together the LUCC methodologies within the APN region, and to explore compatible approaches for research development.

- *Other Priorities*

The Interim Secretariat confirmed that further exploratory work could be arranged on freshwater problems and on regional activity on aerosols and acid deposition issues. It was noted that the developments on climate prediction would, if successful, deal with some elements of freshwater problems. The greenhouse gas issue could be kept under review.

The Meeting also agreed that global change-related integrated assessment models such as AIM (Asian Pacific Integrated Model) should be encouraged where possible in the course of APN activities.

The Meeting noted with appreciation the communication developments being undertaken by the Interim Secretariat, involving an APN mailing list system using e-mail, an APN Home Page on the World Wide Web, an APN file transfer protocol to be set up at the Interim Secretariat, and the installation of a server to facilitate these developments.