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Creating A Strategy for Integrated Global Carbon Observations (IGCO)

R. Dargaville (1), P. Ciais (2) and B. Moore III (3)

(1) Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNESCO, France (r.dargaville@unesco.org), (2) Laboratoire des Sciences du Climat et de l'Environment, France (3) University of New Hampshire, USA

An understanding of the processes driving the variability in the global carbon cycle at the regional scale will require data from many different sources, both in situ and remotely sensed from the atmospheric, terrestrial and oceanic domains. It will include data from both operational and research based systems. It is important that the data will be readily available to the global community, and that the observationalists receive feedback from the data users to be able to improve the products. Also, the data sets must be of sufficient frequency and length to understand the system and monitor changes. To achieve these goals within a reasonable timeframe will require a clear roadmap. The Integrated Global Carbon Observations (IGCO) theme is working to build the strategy to achieve these goals.

IGCO is represented by a core group of some 50 scientific experts and agency representatives that are working together to identify the current observing systems, the key gaps and shortfalls in the current networks, and to identify the future steps required to create the carbon observing system necessary to understand the global carbon cycle. We will present the key components of the IGCO strategy and discuss the links between the networks, important issues such as data management and the modelling efforts required to make full use of the data sets.