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The IPCC-AR4/CMIP-3 Multi-model database: Lessons for the future

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The construction of the CMIP-3 (formerly the IPCC-AR4) climate model output database built on the cumulative experience of international cooperation on model intercomparison begun with AMIP more than a decade earlier. While many recognize the transformational change in climate model analysis enabled by the database, its development was more of an evolution in both science and computing technology. More importantly, the level of personal and institutional collaboration required for the CMIP-3 project would not have been possible without a history of cooperation and team building promoted by the WCRP's Working Group on Coupled Modeling. The talk will discuss some of the scientific and technical problems that were faced in building the CMIP-3 database, and what needs further development to repeat the same level of success for future multi-model databases, including that supporting the probable next IPCC assessment in five to seven years.