

Question on Notice
No. 403
Asked on Thursday, 13 March 2008

QUESTION:

MRS REILLY asked the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation (Mr McNamara) - In relation to the global challenge of climate change, will the Minister outline how Queensland is engaging with international organisations to tackle this important issue?

ANSWER:

The science of climate systems and modelling of climate change impacts is extremely complex.

The Office of Climate Change, through the Queensland Climate Change Centre of Excellence will draw on the best knowledge and science about climate change by collaborating with leading national and international organisations. This will maximise the opportunities presented by Queensland's changing climate.

Cooperative research under a Statement of Intent with the United Kingdom (UK) Met Office Hadley Centre for Climate change commenced in July 2007, initially focussing on a strategic three-year project to develop better climate datasets. These datasets will provide new insights into the climate system and how it has changed, particularly due to phenomena such as the El Nino-Southern Oscillation that influences our rainfall and extreme weather events.

Our scientists will also work with researchers from the Walker Institute for Climate System Research at the University of Reading in the UK to understand the impacts of climate change on priority issues for Queensland. This will be achieved by linking outputs from high resolution climate models developed in the UK with models for water resources, agriculture and insurance.

These recent agreements with the UK build on previous international collaborations such as the agreement signed in 2002 with the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) in New York. Through this agreement our scientists have contributed results from Global Climate Models run on the Queensland Government's super computing facility to the IRI consensus climate forecast.

Pacific Island countries are most vulnerable to rising sea levels and to the threat of extreme weather conditions on their subsistence farming and limited water resources. Recognising this need, the Queensland Climate Change Centre of Excellence (QCCCE) in collaboration with the Australia Bureau of Meteorology is playing an important regional role by developing options to

manage the impacts of climate change on agriculture, water resources and public health. These collaborations will boost technology development and scientific research on climate change.

Similarly in collaboration with scientists in South Korea, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, QCCCE scientists are gathering significant information that will improve our understanding of climate systems and address key areas of climate change uncertainty.

Investments in international collaborative climate research such as those described above will enhance the scientific basis of Queensland's knowledge and responses to climate change.