

Princeton Researchers and GFDL Scientists Share in Nobel Honors

Princeton Researchers and Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL) scientists were among the ranks of distinguished scientists, who played lead roles in the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which was recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize with former U.S. Vice President Al Gore. The prize was awarded to the former Vice President and the IPCC "for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change."

A total of 19 Princeton/GFDL affiliated scientists contributed to the Fourth Assessment Report released earlier this year, several of whom were lead authors, including Venkatachalam Ramaswamy, GFDL's Acting Director and Lecturer in the AOS program, was a Coordinating Lead Author of a chapter covering "Changes in Atmospheric Constituents and in Radiative Forcing. Isaac Held, a GFDL Senior Scientist and also a Lecturer in the AOS Program, was a Lead Author of a chapter on "Regional Climate Projections"; and Ron Stouffer, a Senior Research Meteorologist at GFDL, was a Lead Author of Chapter 8, "Climate Models and Their Evaluation". In addition, Ramaswamy and Stouffer were among the Lead Authors of the Technical Summary for the Working Group 1 report. Over 20 others contributed to panel reports, since the First Assessment Report was published in 1990, as lead authors, contributing authors, review editors, and/or reviewers. Among them are AOS scientists: Kirk Bryan, a senior scientist in atmospheric and oceanic sciences, Leo Donner, a lecturer with a rank of associate professor in atmospheric and oceanic sciences and geosciences, Anand Gnanadesikan, a lecturer in atmospheric and oceanic sciences and geosciences, Isaac Held, a lecturer in atmospheric and oceanic sciences, Gabriel Lau, a lecturer with the rank of professor in atmospheric and oceanic sciences and geosciences, Suki Manabe, a senior scientist in atmospheric and oceanic sciences, Venkatachalam Ramaswamy, a lecturer with the rank of professor in atmospheric and oceanic sciences and geosciences, Jorge Sarmiento, a professor of geosciences and the Director of the Program in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, and Rick Slater, a member of the professional technical staff in atmospheric and oceanic Sciences. In addition to Ramaswamy, Held, and Stouffer, Donner, Gnanadesikan, and Lau are also affiliated with GFDL.

The IPCC was created by the U.N. General Assembly in 1988 to provide objective policy advice in response to the growing concern about the risk of climate change. Thousands of scientists and diplomats from more than 100 nations have collaborated on IPCC reports over the past two decades. World-wide, more than 1,200 scientists worked on the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report for nearly 6 years. GFDL was one of about a dozen international modeling centers participating in the IPCC, contributing 2 of the models used for climate assessments in the latest report (CM2.0 and CM2.1).

IPCC assessments are based on peer-reviewed scientific and technical literature. The reports are written by teams of authors from all over the world who are recognized experts in their field. They represent relevant disciplines as well as differing scientific perspectives. Through the scientific reports it has issued over the past two decades, the IPCC has created an ever-broader informed consensus about the connection between human activities and global warming.