

\$8.9 Million for a New Research Network at Dalhousie University

Ocean and atmospheric science integrated for a better understanding of climate change

(Halifax, Nova Scotia) – The Honourable Robert Thibault, Minister of State for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, on behalf of Minister Brian Tobin, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Honourable Herb Dhaliwal, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, and the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences (CFCAS) today announced major investments in the Canadian Surface Ocean Lower Atmosphere Study (SOLAS).

NSERC and CFCAS will contribute almost \$9 million directly to the new research network, with Fisheries and Oceans matching this support (and that of other partners) through the contribution of almost 90 days of ship time, the expertise of several scientists and the use of research facilities and equipment.

The Research Network will study the key interactions between the atmosphere and oceans as they relate to climate change.

"The research carried out by SOLAS scientists is essential because it will allow us to better understand the diverse phenomena that are linked to climate change. The insatiable curiosity of these researchers together with their innovative approaches will help make Canada a world leader in the field of climate studies," said Mr. Thibault.

"As the major marine research organization in Canada, my department is deeply committed to advancing scientific understanding through collaborative partnerships with other organizations," Mr. Herb Dhaliwal said. "The SOLAS initiative is an exciting opportunity for my department's scientists to work with other leading researchers in Canada to increase our knowledge of climate change."

Dr. William Miller, professor of Oceanography at Dalhousie University, project leader for SOLAS and member of the the Scientific Steering Committee for the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme's SOLAS initiative, described the research group's basic premise: "We think that quantitative knowledge of the ecological, chemical and physical processes involved in the feedback between the ocean and the atmosphere is essential for understanding and predicting the global impact of future climate change. Examining these critical processes is what SOLAS is about." Dr. Miller and his research team will address these problems during two major expeditions to the Pacific Subarctic and the Northwest Atlantic, where they will gather oceanic and atmospheric samples.

The SOLAS Network involves 43 Canadian researchers in oceanographic and atmospheric science from nine universities and government institutions, as well as international industry partners. SOLAS will also allow 30 graduate students and 15 postdoctoral scientists to further their training in a setting of international collaboration.

Gordon McBean, Chair of the CFCAS Board of Trustees, believes that "the combined knowledge of the internationally-renowned scientists that make up the SOLAS network will inevitably result in more precise predictions about climate change and its impacts on human health and the environment. This meets one of CFCAS's objectives, which is to provide decision makers with the best scientific data possible, as a tool to help curb climate change."

According to André Isabelle, NSERC's Director, Environment and Natural Resources, who spoke on behalf of Council president Tom Brzustowski, "The extent of cooperation between oceanographers and atmospheric chemists in the SOLAS network is extraordinary. Thanks to the integration of research in so many relevant fields, SOLAS should be able to develop far more precise climate models."

Three other environmental research networks were announced last May in Montreal by Dr. Gilbert Normand, Secretary of State for Science, Research and Development.

NSERC is the primary federal agency investing in people, discovery, and innovation. The Council supports both basic research through research grants and project research through partnerships of universities with industry. NSERC also supports the advanced training of highly qualified people in both areas.

The CFCAS is an initiative of the Government of Canada designed to help the country meet its environmental objectives. The CFCAS funds research in the areas of climate system science, climate change, extreme weather, air quality, and marine environmental prediction.

PARTICIPATING ESTABLISHMENTS:

Granting Agencies:

NSERC
The CFCAS

Universities:

Dalhousie University
McGill University
Université du Québec à Montréal
Université du Québec à Rimouski
University of British Columbia
York University
University of Calgary
Memorial University of Newfoundland
University of Victoria

Government agencies:

Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Meteorological Service of Canada (Environment Canada)

Industry:

BDR Research
Ocean Carbon Systems, Inc.

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