

Environmental Research to get a \$21.7 Million Boost from NSERC

(Montréal, Québec) – The Honourable Gilbert Normand, Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development) announced today an investment of \$21.7 million to launch three new research networks in the field of environmental studies.

The new networks will bring together more than 100 researchers and nearly 200 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in research programs involving 25 universities and various partner organizations from the public and private sectors.

"This significant financial investment in Canada's research capacity is also an investment in its future and in the quality of life of its people," said Dr. Normand. "Research into natural pest control methods, water quality, climate change, and the impact of global warming on the Arctic examines issues that ultimately affect all Canadians", he added. "These networks are part of the government of Canada's strategy to strengthen our capacity to innovate, and to train people for the global knowledge economy."

The three new research networks are:

The Collaborative Mercury Research Network (COMERN), which will improve our general understanding of mercury in ecosystems and the risks for those who eat fish; (NSERC award of \$12.6 million);

The Climate Variability Network (CLIVAR), which will contribute to improved understanding and prediction of climate change (NSERC award of \$2.5 million); and

The Biocontrol Network, which will address the challenge of controlling pests and diseases in greenhouses and tree nurseries by developing new biological agents and novel strategies that are safe and environmentally friendly (NSERC award of \$6.6 million).

These researchers and their partners are developing innovative research and training programs that will help place Canada at the forefront of the field of environmental studies," said Dr. Tom Brzustowski, President of NSERC. "The research is also important because it will help us develop public policies in the field of environmental protection and sustainability of communities – especially in the farming, coastal, and northern regions of Canada."

The networks were selected following a rigorous and independent review process involving external reviewers and experts who forwarded their reports to the Committee –

comprised of researchers and representatives from the public and private sectors. Each proposal was reviewed against the following criteria:

Merit of the research proposal.

Interactions and partnerships.

Training.

Management and budgeting.

Advantages of a network approach.

Tom Brzustowski said that NSERC was pleased to welcome once again the Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Science (CFCAS) as a major partner in the CLIVAR Network. NSERC and the CFCAS are also cooperating to support two other projects through the NSERC Strategic Grants program.

For more information on NSERC, the COMERN, CLIVAR and BIOCONTROL Research Networks, please visit www.nserc.ca or contact :

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