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About the Global Change Research Information Office (GCRIO)

**U.S. GLOBAL CHANGE
RESEARCH
INFORMATION OFFICE**

Updated 6 February, 2004

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The US Global Change Research Information Office (GCRIO) provides access to data and information on climate change research, adaptation/mitigation strategies and technologies, and global change-related educational resources on behalf of the various US Federal Agencies that are involved in the [US Global Change Research Program](#) (USGCRP). GCRIO offers the following products and services to its users:

- GCRIO acts as a clearinghouse for selected key documents and reports that are either generated or sponsored by the US Government or by specific Federal Agencies. Links to other relevant documents and [bibliographic systems](#) are also maintained. GCRIO can respond to requests for copies of these documents either directly or indirectly by forwarding the request or the user to the proper Government/ Agency contact. Selected documents are available on-line in their entirety (see [library](#)).
- GCRIO provides high-level User Services for the interagency [Global Change Data and Information System](#) (GCDIS). The function is designed to complement the existing User Support functions already in place at the various Federal Agencies. Requests for data and information from GCDIS are processed by GCRIO User Services staff and forwarded to the appropriate Agency contact, as appropriate.

- GCRIO performs outreach services to both domestic (Federal, state, and local) and international target audiences (including governments, institutions, researchers, educators, students, and the general public) in an effort to showcase relevant activities and results of the US Global Change Research Program and to help increase the awareness of the availability of data and information resources of the participating Federal Agencies.
- The [GCRIO Web site](http://www.gcrio.org) (<http://www.gcrio.org>) provides access to selected bibliographic data bases; web sites at the participating Federal Agencies; relevant environmental data, catalog, and library systems; and a section that deals with environmental education.

History of GCRIO

In 1990, Congress passed and the President signed Public Law 101-606, [The Global Change Research Act of 1990](#).

The purpose of the legislation was:

. . . to require the establishment of a United States Global Change Research Program aimed at understanding and responding to global change, including the cumulative effects of human activities and natural processes on the environment, to promote discussions towards international protocols in global change research, and for other purposes.

Under Title II (International Cooperation in Global Change Research) of the Act, Section 204 requires that a Global Change Research Information Office (GCRIO) be established. The stated purpose of the GCRIO is:

. . . to disseminate to foreign governments, businesses, and institutions, as well as

citizens of foreign countries, scientific research information available in the United States which would be useful in preventing, mitigating, or adapting to the effects of global change.

In June 1991, the Working Group on Global Change (WGGC) of the Committee on Earth and Environmental Sciences (CEES) [now the Subcommittee on Global Change Research (SGCR) of the Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources (CENR)] convened a Task Group representing several Federal agencies to analyze the requirements of the Law and to establish GCRIO. In November 1991, the Task Group produced a report of its recommendations including direction to expand the target audience of GCRIO to include US citizens and organizations. In May 1992, the SGCR designated that GCRIO be implemented within the Consortium for International Earth Science Information Network [now the Center for International Earth Science Information Network ([CIESIN](#)) at Columbia University] under the direction of a GCRIO Oversight Panel established within the SGCR. The initial GCRIO Implementation Plan was submitted to the SGCR in November 1992. A formal Statement of Work for GCRIO was approved by the GCRIO Oversight Panel in early 1993 and GCRIO began formal operation in May 1993.

A decade later, in February 2004, operational responsibility for GCRIO shifted to the [U.S. Climate Change Science Program](#).

[US Global Change Research Program \(USGCRP\)](#)

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