

VAMOS Planning Meeting at the 78th meeting of the American Meteorological Society

The group held an initial planning meeting at the 78th meeting of the American Meteorological Society.

Summary:

The session was opened by the chairman of the CLIVAR - VAMOS panel, Prof. C. R. Mechoso. 15 participants were able to attend this planning meeting.

The purpose of this meeting was to review the progress since the CONAM (Conference on American Monsoons) conference held in March 1997 and to prepare the future panel meetings and a workshop to be held by this group. In particular this meeting should:

- Review the VAMOS panel objectives and their place in CLIVAR;
- Discuss the way in which programme components will participate in the overall structure of CLIVAR;
- Develop plans for future activities.

Prof. Mechoso recalled the draft terms of reference given by the CLIVAR SSG for the CLIVAR VAMOS panel:

- To be responsible to the CLIVAR SSG for the formation of a detailed scientific plan and conceptual design of an international project to investigate the variability and predictability of the American monsoon systems (VAMOS) in the context of global climate variability and predictability.
- To develop an implementation plan for a VAMOS project for consideration by the CLIVAR SSG.
- To co-ordinate and promote interactions amongst meteorologists, oceanographers and hydrologists from interested nations to work on VAMOS problems.
- To oversee the implementation of a VAMOS project.
- To advise the CLIVAR numerical experimentation groups on modelling investigations which need to be carried out to meet VAMOS objectives.
- To work closely and co-ordinate with other national, regional and international projects and organizations interested in this area of research, e.g. the Inter-American Institute, the International Research Institute for Seasonal to Interannual Prediction, PACS, GEWEX and START.

Prof. Mechoso emphasised the importance of this programme especially for the South American countries. He reported from a tour he made in December taking him to Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile to promote the VAMOS programme in South America. The initiative was very well received at funding agencies, universities and meteorological services. Prof. Mechoso recommended that work on this programme should start as soon as possible. In the following there was a comprehensive discussion about the programmes participating in VAMOS. Dr. Victor Magaña, one of the panel vice-chairs, was encouraged to soon make a similar tour within Central America.

In the discussion about the framework that VAMOS will provide, a number of participants

stated that programmes like PACS, LBA, GCIP will certainly support the needs of VAMOS and VAMOS may build on the outcome of those programme. On the other hand those programmes are independent projects from VAMOS, i.e. VAMOS cannot set the directions of those programmes but can contribute to the closer co-operation between these projects and to the identification and remedy of gaps in their science plans.

The representative of the CLIVAR Project Office, Dr. A. Villwock, reported about the progress made with the Initial CLIVAR Implementation Plan and the plans for the International CLIVAR conference. As all other CLIVAR groups, the VAMOS panel should prepare a presentation of the project at the Conference. Thereafter, the co-chair of the CLIVAR SSG, Dr. K. Trenberth presented some guidelines how the CLIVAR core projects should work out their specific implementation plans with special emphasis on readiness, feasibility and prioritization.

In the following, the planned VAMOS/PACS Workshop on Field Programmes and the first session on the VAMOS panel were discussed in depth. The original plan to have the workshop in March and a full panel meeting the following September was revised. First it was argued that there were issues of programme definition that required the panel to meet as early as possible. One example of this is the extent which VAMOS would like to achieve beyond the goals of PACS, LBA, etc. Second, it was considered that those issues had to be clarified in preparation to the VAMOS presentation at the CLIVAR SSG meeting in late April. It was decided that the workshop be held in conjunction with the first panel session in late March 1998. A general discussion about the principal scientific goals of VAMOS will be included as the first part of the workshop. The meeting should then review the existing observing system and the field programmes, identify the gaps and then develop plans to achieve the scientific goals of VAMOS. On the last day the VAMOS panel will meet to sum up the results achieved in the workshop, and to prepare for future activities.

The venue for the meeting will be São Paulo, Brazil. It was felt that a location in South America would set a positive sign on CLIVAR commitment for the countries involved in this project. About 30-40 people will be invited. NOAA/OGP and the CLIVAR will jointly fund and organise this meeting with local support. Prof. Edmo Campos (Univ. of São Paulo)

would be asked to chair the local organizing committee.

A. Villwock and C.R. Mechoso