

45th Session of the WCRP Joint Scientific Committee (JSC)

27-30 May 2024

Report to the WCRP Joint Scientific Committee

WCRP Academy

1. Highlights for Joint Scientific Committee (including high-level publications, new achievements/products, and capacity building activities – in particular anything you feel should go into a WCRP annual achievement report or brochure)

1.1 Launching of WCRP Academy website at OSC 2023

The WCRP Academy successfully launched its website during the 2023 Open Science Conference in Kigali, Rwanda. The lunch session was well attended, with more than 60 participants from different parts of the world, including one quarter from Africa. The website, which features an online catalogue of high-quality climate science training opportunities, was well received, with the majority of attendees stating that they preferred to receive information on climate science training via websites, wikis, and web portals. In addition to launching the website, we also ran an interactive survey of participants. Participants expressed support for the WCRP Academy, as well as keen interest in the online training catalogue, which was viewed as a promising means to increase the availability and accessibility of climate science training, especially for aspiring climate scientists from the Global South. A survey of the attendees found that the majority had data analysis, modelling, and communication on their climate training wishlist. The main obstacles to accessing climate science training in their home country were financial, training being limited to formal academic education, and lack of local expertise. All obstacles that a global online training catalogue, like that of the Academy, can help to overcome.

An open question asking for suggestions, feedback, and recommendations, included comments such as:

“language barrier should not be a problem”, “mentorship programmes”, “more training sessions and conferences in the global south”, and “network connections to social scientists working in the climate space”.

Following the launch of the Academy, there are now more than 40 training providers from the Global North and South registered to the website, with the catalogue featuring almost 80 training events (both past and upcoming).



Official launch of the WCRP Academy website at OSC 2023.

1.2 Creation of WCRP Academy Support Unit hosted by Manila Observatory

Beginning April 2024, the Manila Observatory will host the Support Unit of the WCRP Academy. Based in the Philippines, the Manila Observatory is a research institution that conducts science to empower vulnerable communities to take up the urgent challenges of sustainable development and climate resilience. The WCRP Academy Support Unit is the first of its kind located in the Global South.

The primary function of the WCRP Academy Support Unit is to provide overall support to meet the objectives outlined in the WCRP Academy Plan and to ensure appropriate coordination and communication with WCRP and external bodies that are conducting training activities of relevance to the Academy. As such, the Academy Support Unit will:

- a) Organize and run Academy meetings and events, including regular meetings of the Academy Steering Group, working closely with the WCRP Secretariat.
- b) Curate and populate the Academy training catalogue with training opportunities.
- c) Liaise with the climate science community within and outside the WCRP to understand climate science training opportunities and gaps, keeping the WCRP Secretariat informed as necessary.
- d) Assist the Academy Steering Group in developing relationships with potential funding organisations.
- e) Maintain and develop the Academy website functionality and its catalogue.
- f) Deliver communication and dissemination of training events, in partnership with WCRP International Project Offices and the WCRP Secretariat.

1.3 Journal paper on global stocktake outcomes (draft available)

The WCRP Academy is currently preparing a journal paper that summarizes the findings of the global stocktake surveys conducted from 2021 to 2023, which captured the landscape of training opportunities and needs from the perspective of both training providers and prospective trainees. The paper is an important contribution to our understanding of the current practices and remaining gaps in climate

training. It also explores the potential role that climate training can play in addressing the problem of lack of diversity in climate science, especially when high-quality training opportunities are also made available and more accessible early career, women, Global South and other underrepresented scientists. The WCRP Academy is planning to publish the paper on Global Sustainability, a reputable open-access journal: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/global-sustainability/information>

2. Planned science initiatives and major events (over next 1- 5 years)

- To be known globally as a well-established, overarching activity of WCRP, providing a robust service to the community by coordinating and promoting in-house training opportunities and best practices.
- To be a curator and long-term repository of such opportunities, thus increasing WCRP visibility.
- To partner with WCRP sponsors and key organisations delivering climate science education and training
- To undertake stocktaking on a regular basis, to acquire information about climate science training opportunities offered globally with the purpose of guiding the development of the Academy.
- The Academy is a flagship activity for WCRP's mission: "to develop, share, and apply climate knowledge that contributes to societal well-being".

Initiative

In 2025, the WCRP Academy is proposing to organize a "Workshop on WCRP Approaches to Mentoring and Leadership Development" within the Global South. The workshop aims to bring together a select group of participants from across WCRP activities alongside members from outside organisations to brainstorm novel methods to mentor and develop the leadership potential of their members. The workshop will explore important questions such as "What does an ideal mentor look like?", "Do traditional mentoring programs work?", and "How to best incorporate mentoring into the WCRP?". The workshop will also strive to shine a light on the unique challenges faced by women, early career, Global South, and other underrepresented scientists in accessing and making the most out of available mentoring opportunities inside and outside WCRP.

Based on the results of the "Workshop on WCRP Approaches to Mentoring and Leadership Development," the WCRP Academy will write a **scoping report** summarising the current state of mentoring/ leadership development in the community, alongside a **proposal** for how the WCRP, via the Academy, could incorporate mentoring into their activities. Potential follow-up activities that can arise from the workshop include the creation of a *community of practice on knowledge sharing* within WCRP to be hosted by the Academy, and/or the design of a *WCRP Academy Mentoring Program* which can become a flagship activity that can help increase its visibility. The Academy envisions that creating opportunities to have face-to-face / direct interactions with the community will complement its online presence well, encouraging more meaningful engagement with its online training catalogue.

3. Planned Products, high-level assessments or other key outputs/publications

- *Highlight any strategic products that you wish to make the JSC aware of*

WCRP Academy Support Unit

With the establishment of the Support Unit, the WCRP Academy expects to be able to more actively promote its activities within the climate science community. The Support Unit plans to run **social media campaigns** to encourage new event submissions to the WCRP Academy online training catalogue, particularly on areas where training gaps have been identified via previous stocktakes (e.g. need for more women-led, ILK-focused, non-English training opportunities). The Support Unit also plans to publish **newsletters** regularly to raise the visibility of upcoming events and funding opportunities, thus providing value to prospective training recipients.

With the help of the Support Unit, the WCRP Academy will also work to ensure that key insights derived from **global stocktakes** it has previously conducted are appropriately applied to the curation of its online training catalogue:

- While training recipients from the Global South felt that the climate training opportunities currently available are inadequate and expressed interest in accessing additional training, there are relatively fewer training providers from the Global South as local experts, studies, and datasets are also limited in the region. Thus the WCRP Academy can focus more on Global South training providers in future stocktakes to have a more in-depth understanding of training availability within the region, and to *identify opportunities for South-South collaboration*.
- Offering training in languages other than English would make training more accessible for non-English speakers. *The WCRP Academy will thus encourage partner training providers to offer training in more languages if possible.*
- As women are shown to prefer online modes of learning, the WCRP Academy will also encourage training providers to organize training led by women scientists and to offer flexibility in the schedule and format of training, especially for women participants. Future stocktakes should also further *assess the needs of women scientists and how to better address them, and explore any gender-specific barriers to accessing climate science training.*
- There is great interest in topics such as climate impacts, climate extremes, adaptation, risk, and mitigation, among training recipients, especially from the Global South. Training recipients also call for more inclusion of indigenous and local knowledge in the training. Serving as a marketplace for climate training, *the WCRP Academy will work to curate its online training catalogue to not only match training providers with training recipients but also align opportunities available with training needed.*
- Offering training for free or providing funding opportunities for training that come with a cost are essential to overcoming the main barrier to accessing training identified by respondents of the first stocktake survey: lack of funding. *The WCRP Academy will encourage training providers to continue offering opportunities (notably those online) for free, and disseminate information about relevant funding opportunities.*

The WCRP Academy is currently considering various approaches towards conducting future stocktakes, in order to continue monitoring the landscape of climate training opportunities and emerging challenges. The WCRP Academy plans to publish **reports** (including journal papers) to disseminate the outcomes of global stocktakes and share key learnings on the most effective approaches towards promoting capacity development and knowledge sharing within the climate science community.

4. Linkages with other Core Projects, Lighthouse Activities, Academy etc.

The WCRP Academy has been encouraging Core Projects and Lighthouse Activities to register as training providers and add their training events to the online catalogue. The following have signed up so far:

- CMIP
- GEWEX
- CORDEX
- CLIVAR
- MCR: Ateneo de Manila Regional Hub

The Academy will continue reaching out to Core Projects and Lighthouse Activities, especially as new groups (e.g. ESMO, RiFS, CliC) and International Project Offices become more established. Various CORDEX and MCR hubs are also encouraged to sign-up separately. Furthermore, the Academy co-chairs are attending JSC-45 in person to link with Core Projects and Lighthouse Activity co-chairs present, participate in the ANDEX annual meeting activities to connect with various communities in this project, and meet with

climate education groups in Lima including Universities and NGOs to learn how the Academy may be relevant in these contexts.

CliC

The WCRP Academy has recently contributed to a project proposal led by CliC. CliC is seeking funding that aims to award grants to graduate students to attend CliC-related seasonal school programs. Once approved, the WCRP Academy can help with outreach, disseminating and highlighting this funding opportunity among early career researchers, especially from the Global South. The Academy and CliC also have a joint abstract submitted to the Scientific Committee of Antarctic Research (SCAR) Conference in Chile in August 2024.

5. Partnerships with entities outside of WCRP

Along with WCRP's efforts to add a new feature to its website called EMCR Hub, the WCRP Academy is seeking to build partnerships with existing Early Career Networks from the Global North and South. The Academy has started reaching out to networks offering to enhance their visibility by listing them as community partners on our website, where early career scientists and training providers can learn more about them. As community partners, we ask Early Career Networks to:

- Social Media: Share information to highlight the benefits of joining the Academy on their organization's social media channels.
- Mailing List: Include a mention of the WCRP Academy in their organization's newsletters or mailers. Encourage their subscribers to subscribe to the Academy's mailing list to stay informed about upcoming training opportunities and events.
- Website: Add a section or banner on their website promoting the WCRP Academy. Include a link to the Academy's website and a brief description of the benefits it offers to early career climate scientists.

This is an on-going effort by the WCRP Secretariat and the WCRP Academy.

6. Suggestions, issues or challenges, for example:

- *Suggestions for new topics/activities*
- *Recommendations or proposals, including any proposed changes to the science directions or structure of the Core Project*
- *Potentially a suggestion for a Global Fellowship focus for a 2025 call to be considered by the JSC: could be a broad topic of interest where science should be reinforced, or a region to be targeted for the fellowship.*
- *Advice you require from, or questions/comments that you have for, the JSC*