



REPORT
CORDEX SCIENCE ADVISORY TEAM
MEETING

University of Cantabria, Santander, Spain

and online 9-12 September 2024

Bibliographic Information

This report should be cited as:

Nilsson. L, Lake I, Report CORDEX Science Advisory Team Meeting, 9-12 September 2024, Santander, Spain. WCRP Publication 08/2024. Zenodo DOI:[10.5281/zenodo.14621860](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14621860)

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Authorship and publisher's notice

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1. Executive summary

The Coordinated Regional Climate Downscaling Experiment (CORDEX) Science Advisory Team (SAT) met at the University of Cantabria in Santander, Spain, during 9-12 September 2024. Six SAT members attended in person and four joined online. In addition to the SAT members, representatives from the International Project Office for CORDEX (IPOC) and a representative from the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) Secretariat were also present during the whole meeting. A day and a half of the meeting was open to the broader CORDEX community, to which CORDEX Points of Contact were invited, some present in person and many others attended online. Representatives for other WCRP activities were also invited to attend online for the open part of the meeting to discuss possibilities for future collaborations.

It was deemed important to have an extended CORDEX SAT meeting at this point in time in order to move forward in the restructuring of CORDEX, including selecting new SAT members and defining responsibilities. The open part of the meeting aimed to involve the CORDEX community in the discussions on the newly established Task Forces, new scientific topics, challenges, collaborations with various WCRP activities as well as with non WCRP initiatives and future plans.

The key outcomes from the meeting were 1. the agreement to increase the numbers of SAT members to reinforce transparency and diversity and thus to better meet the needs of the community as well as increase the collaboration with other activities. Additionally, given the relevance of the regional representativeness, the SAT agreed that all CORDEX domains should be represented by a SAT member and also SAT members need to cover the variety of expertises on the various topics tackled within CORDEX; 2. Establish and approve the Task forces to address the main emerging issues; 3. Identify future challenges for CORDEX and related to climate information on regional and local scales.

INTERNAL SAT MEETING 9 September and 11-12 September

The internal discussions were held during Monday afternoon 9 September and from Wednesday lunch -Thursday lunch 11-12 September and are summarized below.

2. Welcome and introduction

Co-chair Silvina Solman welcomed all to the SAT meeting and thanked José Manuel Gutierrez for hosting the meeting at University of Cantabria.

The agenda for the meeting was approved by all attending SAT members.

José Manuel Gutierrez informed about local arrangements for the meeting days.

3. CORDEX structure

The International Conference on Regional Climate in September 2023 (ICRC-CORDEX 2023) showed the importance of CORDEX. During the conference it also became clear that a restructuring of CORDEX was needed to answer to expectations from both within CORDEX and WCRP and outside as well as to reinforce transparency and diversity. Continuing the discussions from previous SAT meetings it was concluded that the CORDEX Science Advisory Team (SAT) henceforth will have three co-chairs instead of two. The aim is also to have at least one SAT-member per domain (14 domains) and if needed additional SAT members with specific expertise. A third co-chair, José Manuel Gutierrez, SAT member from the Instituto de Física de Cantabria (CSIC - University of Cantabria), has already been approved by RIFS co-chairs. His mandate started in September 2024.

The roles and responsibilities of SAT co-chairs, SAT members, Points of Contacts (POCs), Flagship Pilot Study PIs (FPS PIs) and the International Project Office for CORDEX (IPOC) will be clarified and the Terms of Reference adjusted where needed to ensure that all are aware of commitments and expectations related to their role. We envision that the workload and the representation by these changes and clarifications will be more evenly divided.

SAT agreed that input from and engagement of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and mid-career researchers should be better integrated into the new CORDEX structure as well as consultancy of former SAT members. Furthermore, we want to strengthen and more clearly define interactions with other WCRP initiatives and beyond. How these improvements should be implemented in the structure will be further discussed.

In the latest report to WCRP, CORDEX pointed out the lack of direct contact with the WCRP Joint Scientific Committee (JSC). This was acknowledged and a specific liaison between the JSC and CORDEX has been appointed, Lisa Alexander. She attended the Santander-meeting online and introduced herself highlighting the importance of CORDEX and the interaction with the JSC.

4. CORDEX Task forces Terms of References

At the ICRC-CORDEX 2023 the idea of establishing CORDEX Task Forces (TFs) was confirmed and the initiation then commenced. CORDEX SAT now continued to discuss the aim and purpose of this new initiative. Terms of Reference (ToR) for the TFs will be determined and aligned with other CORDEX ToRs. The general objective for the TFs is to propose a strategy to SAT on how CORDEX should approach a specific topic, required actions and recommendations. The strategy should be accompanied by a list of coordinator/s and other members. Furthermore, the TFs should consider how all domains could benefit from and explore potential points of collaboration with other initiatives. The duration of a TF should be no longer than one year and it is recommended that at least one SAT member should be part of each Task Force.

Five cross-cutting challenges have been identified that require coordination within a TF. Initial TF leaders have been appointed to get the Task forces going and all have begun outlining the tasks. During the open part of the SAT meeting the TF leaders presented their current status and plans (See 13.1-13.5) and continuation was approved by SAT. Shortly SAT will share the TF Terms of References.

5. Copernicus C3S plans

Anca Brookshaw and Carlo Buontempo from Copernicus joined online to give an overview of their current work, in particular the Copernicus Climate Change Services (C3S) climate projections activities, operational data access, pre-publication quality control and data tutorials. Web processing services and user statistics and feedback were also presented. The following discussions focused for instance on regional information and CORDEX-CMIP6, highlighting the importance of global coverage. Copernicus and CORDEX SAT agreed that there are many issues on which collaboration would be useful, for instance CORDEX-CORE and data consistency.

6. New SAT members

Before selecting candidates for new SAT members, the terms of the current SAT-members along with their own views were verified which resulted in four members stepping down at the end of 2024, Grigory Nikulin, John Cassano, Fredolin Tangang and Sanjay Jayanarayanan.

In the recent call for SAT membership 25 nominations were received. Throughout the selection process for new SAT members, diversity and expertise were taken into consideration. The candidates selected by SAT are suggested to the Regional Information for Society (RIFS) for approval before finally appointed as SAT members starting in January 2025. For some domains there were unfortunately no nominations meaning that we will not achieve at least one SAT member per domain at this point. It will be considered to issue a new call next year targeting specific domains.

7. New proposals Flagship Pilot Studies

CORDEX received 10 proposals for new Flagship Pilot Studies (FPSs) in this year's call. After an initial review of each proposal, it was agreed that five of them did not fulfil the general requirements and will not be reviewed further. They will be recommended to rewrite their proposal and are welcome to resubmit the proposal in the next FPS call. The five proposals fulfilling the general requirements will be further evaluated by external reviewers as well as by SAT members.

8. CORDEX logo

There was a consensus to keep the characteristic parts of the CORDEX logo although a modernization update and alignment with the new WCRP logo is needed. Melissa Bukovsky prepared a number of possible options and SAT members voted to propose one option to WCRP.



9. Meetings during the rest of the year

Dates for the SAT meetings for the remainder of 2024 were settled with two time slots for every date to accommodate for all time zones.

15 October 11.00-12.30 UTC and 20.00-21.30 UTC

19 November 11.00-12.30 UTC and 20.00-21.30 UTC

12 December 11.00-12.30 UTC and 20.00-21.30 UTC

A meeting will be held to inform new SAT members on expectations and responsibilities. Likewise, there will be a meeting with all POCs to inform about their responsibilities, discuss domain structure and other domain relevant topics.

10. Strategic discussions for the coming years

10.1. White paper (bridging climate science with society)

The White Paper on Bridging climate science with society will most probably be part of the CORDEX 15-year anniversary special issue though further discussion is required.

10.2. Coordination of new smaller domains

To initiate the coordination of new smaller domains identification of regions where smaller domains exist is a good start and this could for instance be done through a workshop with CORDEX Points of Contact and connection with Digital Earths. Furthermore, the Convection permitting Task force may cover this topic partly.

OPEN SAT MEETING 10 September - lunch 11 September

CORDEX Points of Contact, Flagship Pilot Studies PIs, Task Force members and a number of representatives from other WCRP initiatives were invited to attend this part of the meeting.

11. Welcome and introduction open SAT meeting

CORDEX co-chair, Daniela Jacob, welcomed all and outlined the aim of the open part of the SAT meeting, highlighting the importance of CORDEX for society and to revisit structures. The intention was to include how to tackle demands on CORDEX while keeping the CORDEX 'soul' and how to stabilize CORDEX within WCRP/RfS including connections with other WCRP activities, for instance CMIP. The implementation of ongoing activities – CORDEX-CORE and strategy for urgent upcoming activities e.g. the Task forces were also emphasized as important topics for this meeting.

12. Task Forces presentations

The initial TF leaders presented the current status and plans.

12.1. Task Force on global coordination of convection permitting activities

Stefan Sobolowski, the initiator of this Task force, attended online and presented the current status of this TF. A first meeting was held in August and the next steps outlined are to structure the group and find potential connections with other WCRP activities and other initiatives. The mission and the challenges are yet to be fully defined but community effort, collaboration and avoiding patch-work and disparate approaches are essential building stones. The Task Force asked SAT for guidance on expected output from the TF work. This will be defined by SAT in the ToR for Task Forces. It was suggested that this TF should connect with the TF on ocean, sea ice and biochemistry for interaction.

12.2. Task force on ocean, sea ice and biochemistry

The initiators of this Task Force are Samuel Somot representing CORDEX and Angelique Melet representing CLIVAR. Both attended the meeting in person and jointly presented the need of coordinated regional climate projections, their mission to coordinate regional ocean climate projections with standardized protocols, to develop their use, including coastal issues, and the idea to prepare a long-term WCRP initiative. The TF aims at connecting with other activities both within WCRP and outside. The challenges so far are for instance to build trust, join different initiatives already started to find a compromise and to find financial support for involved modelling groups as well as engage with ocean-climate services.

During the discussions it was recognized that this TF has come a long way in their task already.

12.3. Task force on integrating downscaling with artificial intelligence

José Manuel Gutiérrez, initiator of this Task Force, mentioned that the TF had a preparatory meeting at the beginning of September. This TF is needed due to the rapidly growing activities on both global and regional scales and CORDEX could have a key role in the coordination of Machine Learning (ML) downscaling activities and establish a common intercomparison framework. A number of activities were presented, for instance evaluation and benchmarking, intercomparison of existing ESD/ML methods, emulators development and coordination to contribute to CMIP6 downscaling experiment.

12.4. Task force on preparation for CORDEX CMIP7

Grigory Nikulin presented the initial thoughts on the Task force on preparation for CORDEX-CMIP7. For the CORDEX-CMIP6 useful procedures on selections were created including contributions from the CORDEX community. These procedures are applicable and should be followed also for the CORDEX-CMIP7. CMIP is keen to build the collaboration with CORDEX when moving towards CMIP7 and the CMIP7 Data Request; variables for downscaling and experiments are currently ongoing. The tasks that will follow and need to be addressed by this Task force are CORDEX-CMIP7 experiment design, CORDEX-CMIP7 Data Request, CORDEX CMIP7 project in ESGF and also GCM and scenario selection. For these steps different expertise and consultations with the CORDEX community are required and the process needs to be faster than previous cycles so the TF should try to ensure that the CORDEX community is ready when GCM CMIP7 results are available and that challenges, like spread in results, for the climate service community is taken into account in documentation. Since Grigory is stepping down at the end of 2024 someone else must take the lead on this Task force and find members that could commit to the work required.

12.5. Task force on CORDEX CORE

Erika Coppola and Claas Teichmann attended in person and first gave an overview of the main ideas of the CORDEX CORE framework before presenting the future plans and challenges for CORDEX-CORE 2. The next steps are to gather a group, define a timeline, initiate a GCM selection over all domains and try to coordinate with HiResMIP and also try to simplify QC and ESGF-publishing. The role of the machine learning emulators for CMIP6 downscaling also needs to be defined. Transferability should be one of the main scientific points for CORDEX-CORE 2. To produce information for all regions is a great challenge.

13. Domain presentations

13.1. Med-CORDEX presentation

Samuel Somot, one of the Med-CORDEX Points of Contact, presented the domain and their current activities. First and foremost, the Med-CORDEX-CMIP6 baseline runs with the main principles and objectives to focus on coupled RCMs, develop specific modelling frameworks, create coordinated ensembles and serve the needs of the impact community to assess risks. Med-CORDEX-CMIP6 baseline runs has 9 participating modelling groups. Some of the future plans presented are Ocean biogeochemistry modelling and Mediterranean coastal hazards. Challenges are for instance to be ready for IPCC-AR7 deadlines, funding for some modelling groups and the need for new members in the Med-CORDEX Steering Committee.

13.2. EURO-CORDEX presentation

Claas Teichmann, a Point of Contact for EURO-CORDEX, reported that they celebrated the 15-year anniversary of the EURO-CORDEX General Assembly this year. He showcased the simulation strategy and pointed out the need to add AI/ML in the future. Other future challenges for EURO-CORDEX are to develop an inclusive, comprehensive and science-driven approach to CPM and to establish working collaboration/co-design with -other initiatives such as Digital Earth LHA, EVE, among others. EURO-CORDEX would like both dynamical and statistical downscaling to be equally visible and to get added value by combining information from both methods.

14. Digital Earths - CORDEX collaboration

Andrew Gettelmann presented the WCRP Digital Earths LightHouse Activity (LHA) current activities, common issues/focus. The following discussion focused on how CORDEX and Digital Earths could collaborate to accelerate progress and be a regional-global alliance for km-scale modeling (<10 km). LHAs are cross-cutting over WCRP to support integrated interactive digital information systems providing global and regional information, including both natural and human systems. The possibilities for collaboration will be discussed further.

15. New scientific topics

Besides the already presented Task Force topics many equally important topics remain that CORDEX has not yet touched upon. Participants mentioned a number of them:

- Chemistry-climate interactions
- CO₂-sink potential in ocean
- Human intervention on land
- Water pollution

- Effects of intensification of extremes, heatwaves (including marine), tornados/hurricanes. Heatwaves could potentially be lifted to a WCRP level.
- Small islands and coastal areas, mountainous regions
- Bridge with other sectors – for instance water and energy
- Coupled and models with varied resolution

CORDEX should continue to encourage the community to identify emerging issues and SAT should then decide on how to address these issues. All topics cannot be approached at the same time and we need an Earth System perspective to address many of the urgent issues. Priorities will be needed, focusing on a few topics at a time to keep a balance and to be capable of finalizing the tasks.

16. CORDEX 15 years (special issue - domain activities)

SAT has previously discussed publishing a special issue to celebrate the anniversary of CORDEX 15 years. The meeting participants agreed it was a good idea and it was decided that SAT will move forward with the initiative and get back to the community. The discussions lead to a list of topics that could be part of the special issue, for instance an overall history, domains achievements, FPS achievements and future challenges, emerging issues and the white paper on bridging to society. Jason Evans and Tereza Cavazos will lead the initiative and together with all SAT members refine the list of topics.

17. Webinar series

Webinar series can be a way to spread the CORDEX outcomes, to help gather the community and to address different audiences.

Suggestions on topics for webinar series:

- User cases - invite users to present, summarize user cases
- FPS finalized - outcome, challenges how can the result be used in the future
- Domain outcomes, challenges etc.
- CORDEX CMIP6 - How and when can the results be accessed. How to access data from ESGF
- Why is CORDEX-CMIP6 needed? (when there is CORDEX-CMIP5)
- Task forces - Why were these task forces needed? Background and results. Continuation/Implementation
- Information for students
- Create your future/hands-on applications.

The CORDEX SAT agreed to continue with this idea, to find a person to move this forward including to make an implementation plan. The main focus should be on global CORDEX, new development, emerging issues and to connect with other WCRP activities.

18. Technical/Scientific Quality Control of downscaling?

The DKRZ Quality Assurance (QA) Tool was previously recommended by CORDEX for instance to check technical aspects and basic data problems but this is no longer supported. As all CORDEX groups must run a QA tool before publishing on ESGF a new solution is needed. This requires urgent action and should be within the Task Force on preparation for CORDEX-CMIP7 focusing on getting a clear view on the quality control planned amongst the modelling groups. Besides the technical quality control of CMIP6 scientific quality control coordination is needed aiming towards a common, coordinated 'set of opinions' on the quality of CMIP6. A workshop to discuss this with the CORDEX community could be an option. Additionally, more coordination with CMIP would be useful.

19. Publication and liaison with ESGF

The ESGF directory structure is defined in the CORDEX-CMIP6 Archiving Specifications. Current ESGF configuration will be changed to an interim one (ESGF 1.5) before moving to the so-called ESGF-nextgen for CMIP7. CORDEX-CMIP6 will start with ESGF 1.5 and configuration files will be prepared to. This is urgent as there are requests from many projects to access the CORDEX-CMIP6 data. Since Grigory Nikulin is stepping down as SAT member at the end of 2024 it needs to be identified who within CORDEX SAT could take on to lead the technical work.

20. Wrap up of the Open SAT meeting

20.1. Next conference?

The next International Conference on Regional Climate (ICRC) CORDEX was suggested to be held in late 2026 or 2027. Meeting participants underlined that location (accessibility) and hosting (local organization engagement) are important to consider. A specific financial request to WCRP is also needed. The discussion will continue during the forthcoming SAT meetings.

20.2. Thank you

The CORDEX co-chairs thanked all for joining and for contributing to the fruitful discussions.



In the room from the left: Lindha Nilsson, Iréne Lake, Maureen Wanzala, Grigory Nikulin, Tereza Cavazos, Melissa Bukovsky, Silvina Solman, Jason Evans and José Manuel Gutierrez

Online on the screen from the top: Sanjay Jayanarayanan, Fredolin Tangang, Wilfried Pokam and Daniela Jacob.

Apologies: John Cassano and Shuyu Wang

Annex 1: Agenda overview

Time	Topic	Presenter/moderator
Monday 9 September	14.00-14.05	José Manuel Gutierrez
	14.05-15:30	
	Welcome and information	
	Organizational/administrative issue	

<p>14.00-18.00 CEST</p>	<p>CORDEX structure Task forces: Preparation of ToR</p> <p>15:30-16:00 BREAK</p> <p>16:00-16:30 [30'] Copernicus C3S plans</p> <p>16:30-18.00 Discussion on new SAT members</p>	<p>Silvina Solman/Daniela Jacob</p> <p>Anca Brookshaw/Carlo Buontempo Silvina Solman/Daniela Jacob</p>
<p>Tuesday 10 September 09.00-13.00 CEST</p>	<p>Open SAT-meeting: Task Forces</p> <p>09.00-11.15 Block 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [45'] Convection permitting modelling - [45'] Ocean, Sea Ice, Biogeochemistry - [45'] Machine learning <p>11.15-11:45 BREAK</p> <p>11:45-13:00 Block 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [30'] Preparing CORDEX-CMIP7 - [30'] CORDEX-CMIP6 CORE 	<p>Stefan Sobolowski Samuel Somot/ Angelique Melet</p> <p>José Manuel Gutierrez</p> <p>Grigory Nikulin Erika Coppola/Claas Teichmann</p>
<p>13.00-14.00 CEST</p>	<p>Lunch break</p>	
<p>Tuesday 10 September 14.00-18.00 CEST</p> <p>20.00 CEST -</p>	<p>Open SAT meeting: domain activities</p> <p>14:00 - 15:30 Block 1. Domain presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [45'] Med-CORDEX 20 min presentation - [45'] EURO-CORDEX 20 min presentation <p>15:30 - 16:00 BREAK</p> <p>16:00 - 17:00 Digital Earth - CORDEX collaboration</p> <p>17:00 - 18:00 New scientific topics</p> <p>20:00 Dinner</p>	<p>Samuel Somot Claas Teichmann</p> <p>Andrew Gettelman</p> <p>Silvina Solman/Daniela Jacob</p>
<p>Wednesday 11 September 09.00-13.00 CEST</p>	<p>Open SAT meeting: Organizational and technical</p> <p>09.00-10.30 Block 1 Organizational</p> <p>09:00 - 09:45 CORDEX 15 years (special issue - domain activities)</p> <p>09:45 - 10:30 Webinar series</p> <p>10:30 - 11:00 BREAK</p>	<p>Jason Evans/Tereza Cavazos Irène Lake</p>

	11.00-13.00 Block 2 Technical 11:00 - 12:00 Technical/Scientific Quality Control of downscaling? 12:00 - 13:00 Publication and liaison with ESGF	Grigory Nikulin Grigory Nikulin/Jason Evans
13.00-14.00 CEST	Lunch break	
Wednesday 11 September 14.00-18.00 CEST	14:00 - 15:00 New proposals Flagship Pilot Studies - Reviewers - Further development of FPSs 15:00 - 16:00 Task Forces ToR Preparation 16:00 - 16:30 BREAK 16:30 - 17:00 CORDEX logo 17:00 - 18.00 Decisions - SAT members - Task Forces - meetings - decision on FPS reviewers	Silvina Solman/Daniela Jacob José Manuel Gutierrez Silvina Solman/Daniela Jacob Silvina Solman/Daniela Jacob
Thursday 12 September 09.00-13.00 CEST	09:00 - 10:30 Strategic discussions for the coming years - White paper (bridging climate science with society) - Coordination of new smaller domains 10:30 - 11:00 BREAK 11:00 - 13:00 Wrap up	Silvina Solman/Daniela Jacob Silvina Solman/Daniela Jacob

Due to unforeseen circumstances changes in the agenda may occur.

Annex 2: Acronyms and Other Abbreviations

AI Artificial Intelligence

AR7	Seventh Assessment Report
C3S	Copernicus Climate Change Service
CLIVAR	Climate and Ocean – Variability, Predictability and Change (WCRP Core-Project)
CMIP	Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (WCRP)
CORDEX	Coordinated Regional Climate Downscaling Experiment (WCRP)
CORE	Coordinated Output for Regional Evaluation
CPM	Convection Permitting Modelling
DKRZ	Deutsches Klimarechenzentrum
ECR	Early Career Researcher
EURO	European CORDEX domain
ESD	Empirical Statistical Downscaling
ESGF	Earth System Grid Federation
EVE	Earth Virtualization Engines
FPS	Flagship Pilot Study
GCM	Global Climate Model
GEWEX	Global Energy and Water Cycle Exchanges (WCRP Core-Project)
ICRC	International Conference on Regional Climate
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (WMO, UNEP)
IPOC	International Project Office for CORDEX
HiResMIP	High Resolution Model Intercomparison Project

JSC	Joint Scientific Committee (WCRP)
LHA	Lighthouse Activity (WCRP)
Med	Mediterranean CORDEX domain
ML	Machine Learning
POC	Point of Contact
QA	Quality Assurance
RIFS	Regional Information for Society (WCRP Core-Project)
RCM	Regional Climate Model
SAT	Science Advisory Team
TF	Task Force
ToR	Terms of Reference
WCRP	World Climate Research Programme