

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR AWI CMAS

**A first draft proposal of how these should be shaped up
for 2010 and beyond**

26 January 2010

1. Introduction

As we move into active work for 2010 I thought we should take a good hard look at our expectations for CMAS over the next year or two. We have had **significant successes over the last year, which include:**

- **Greatly improved recognition of our work** (by international bodies such as the Asian Development Bank, UNESCAP, the World Bank, the United Nations University, the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (PECC), and national organisations such as Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia (CSIRO), AUSAID).
- **Delivery of outcomes** – most notably, the highly successful and well attended regional training workshop on hydrological modelling, conducted by Prof Azizan (U Malaya) in collaboration with Dr Illya Zaslavsky (UC at San Diego), which was organised in July 2009 in Kuala Lumpur; and also our CMAS model approach to understanding the integrated water cycle under climate stress and its cultural dimensions - including water governance, and the pioneering of thinking about emissions modelling.
- **Our pioneering approach of engaging stakeholders** with our research in our case study cities, which is increasingly seen as important.
- **A range of ‘spin-off’ grants and opportunities** for funded projects for collaborations developed in the context of CMAS, which have gained from the collaboration, even if they do not involve all players.
- **Continued growth of the CMAS collaboration** (including new university research groups - at Tsinghua and Peking Universities, the University of Southern California, UC at Santa Barbara and the Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand). Also, the University of Indonesia has joined CMAS and will host our next workshops in March.

But the world is also changing around us. This means that it is an important moment to take stock, and shape our directions once more. Here are some considerations (which draw also on a recent CMAS facilitating group teleconference):

- There is a growing recognition of the central importance of studying water systems in interaction with human community under the stress of climate change. We are not alone in this, but have unique capacities and a strong unifying focus on our region.
- Our ambition over the last year for a large grant to sustain a big research effort across the CMAS programme has been confounded, in part, by the global financial crisis. For example, the Asian Development Bank had undertaken, in principle, to provide some funding to CMAS, but we have been informed that the ADB is unable to find funds for CMAS now, in part, because ADB member countries have reduced their 2009 contributions to the bank.
- CMAS has proved a potentially very effective vehicle for inspiring and assisting raising grants and collaborations around ‘CMAS Enabling Projects’ which involve some, rather than, all members.
- We are also finding ourselves working with other initiatives. “The Global Water Initiative” from UCSD and Cambridge University is one. Another is the “Pacific Cities Sustainability Initiative” which has recently been the subject of a recent email from Dick Drobnick .
- A key theme that is developing internationally, and to which we have made a significant contribution, is the need for a cross-flow of information and knowledge, at the level of affected community, about the implications of climate change – notably in relation to water. This is necessary if they are both to adapt successfully, and contribute to mitigation. In collaboration with the Global Water Initiative, CMAS is contributing to an agenda for facilitating such “knowledge-action” engagement.

2. Evolving Aims of CMAS

Following discussions with various members of AWI CMAS, it seems to me that the evolving role of CMAS could now be considered to include building an international collaboration focussed on water, human settlement and climate change, which from an integrated water system perspective:

- Collectively and progressively maps the field, and finds agreement on the critical problems that need to be addressed, and fruitful approaches to addressing them.** Examples include our creation of the integrated CMAS model and the work we have done in some of the thrust areas – not the least in the areas of hydrological modeling, water community cultural requirements, governance of water systems, and energy and emissions in water systems.
- Where practical, sets up relevant pilot projects using collaboration across some or all of our teams to maximize capability.** Once again, the hydrological modeling is our best example. These pilot projects become exemplars of what we can do, and focal points for developing applications for funding – whether or not the projects involve all, or just some, of the CMAS players. Collaborations in these pilot projects may also be extended to non-CMAS players where necessary.

- c. **Similarly, strategically build collaboration with other cognate partner research-action networks around our chosen theme** (such as the Global Water Initiative and the Pacific Cities Sustainability Initiative).
- d. **Use our CMAS meetings to facilitate us to collaboratively share relevant work taking part in the member universities, to raise opportunities for collaboration, and to shape that with a view to raising funding in our theme, whether or not it involves all or just some of CMAS.** Examples include current possibilities for funding from the Australia-India Fund (which involves a partnership between CMAS, the Global Water Initiative, and The Energy and Resources Institute of India), a potential CSIRO-China study on water resources supported by the Chinese government, opportunities under the Australia-China Environmental Development Fund, and many similar research opportunities involving other countries and funds.
- e. **Utilise our greater presence, weight and legitimacy, to assist our members to seek and achieve funding for related collaborations.** At the same time continue to develop the case for, and seek, funding for the core research of CMAS as a whole.
- f. **Maximise impact from the work we do on the policy and governance process, especially in our case-study communities.** Here, we could:
 - (i) deliberately tackle the central issue of facilitating two-way information and knowledge flow between communities and researchers,
 - (ii) formulate the most suitable approach to address problems, using international collaboration to shape one experience against another, and
 - (iii) provide weight to create pressure for enhanced government and business attention to best practice approaches to meet the challenges of water and climate change.
- g. **Create our own contributions to the scholarly literature, both in terms of the actual research outputs, and reflecting on the CMAS process.** Here, a book could be worked on around the problem set. Prof Rajib Shaw (Kyoto U) has offered to assist in the editorial process, and I believe others would be interested in this as well. And so can participation in conferences and other activities where we present on CMAS projects and outputs.

3. A tentative workplan for action in 2010 and beyond.

- **CMAS International Team meetings** - A minimum of one per year (of the style of the 2010 and 2009 March meetings). **Required actions:** specify work to be done by each team, and thrust leaders in the next two weeks.
- **Finalise next meeting** (at Kyoto University? – already discussed with Rajib Shaw), either in October 2010 or else in early 2011. **Required actions:** finalise role of such a meeting (could be around publication – see below), and finalise host.

- **Thrust Research Areas** – Develop project concepts sufficiently to prepare for funding, or where it would be received, move forward research: **Required actions:** Thrust Leaders to consider what is viable for 2010, what are reasonable outputs to achieve, what are prospects worth collaborating to explore and achieve? (Currently at one stage or another, Thrust Area Leaders have been suggested or been cajoled as follows):
 1. Climate Systems – David Pierce, Scripps Inst, UC San Diego
 2. Hydrologic Systems – Azizan, U Malaya
 3. Society and Governance
 - Rajib Shaw, Kyoto U
 - Danai Thaitakoo, Chulalongkorn U
 - Jim Falk, U Melbourne
 4. User Communities – Lisa Shaffer, UC San Diego
 5. Water Use – Emissions and Energy – Robert Wilkinson, UC Santa Barbara
 6. Water Use – Technologies – Ong Choon Nam, National U of Singapore (or nominee).

We need to review these thrust areas to make sure the areas are relevant. CMAS members mentioned have actually agreed and are still available (!) to lead these activities (and finalise.)

- **A publication** – possibly supported by a series of working papers, to be ready for submission by the end of the year. **Required actions:** agree on theme, broad structure, editor(s), review process, contributors, timetable for production.
- **Improve our internal communication.** Newsletter? (How often - every 12 weeks?). Facilitating group teleconferences (how often - every six weeks?) Steering group teleconferences (the larger group – how often – every 16 weeks?) Should we develop the use of our website further? Do we need a blog capacity or Wiki capacity for discussing the thrust areas? Can the secretariat help the process of communication and thrust area development?

4. Shaping the March meeting to Reflect the Above Issues

In general, the March meeting of CMAS represents our opportunity both to refine the above ideas, but also to ensure that their implementation is facilitated over the next year.

4.1 Two days will be devoted to the case-study host country – Indonesia, and we will use our best collective capacities to engage with the key climate issues, including those of water and cities, confronting Indonesia. There is the opportunity here to assist the University of Indonesia (UI) to press forward a case for the Indonesian government to establish an enhanced research capability for

developing its climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and policies. UI's goal is to develop a new Centre for Climate Change, perhaps in conjunction with a UN University Initiative being developed at the same time. UI anticipates that senior members of the Indonesian government and senior business leaders will participate in the workshop. UI is already attracting financial assistance for the workshop from domestic and international corporations (e.g., Coca Cola), as well as from aid agencies (e.g., USAID).

NOTE: It will be important to identify in advance the capacity we can bring to the table in assisting Indonesia, and to integrate these CMAS experts into the two day workshop. To ensure this happens we will need to check with each CMAS team on who is coming, and what their skills are, not only in relation to the CMAS process, but also in relation to the aspects of the Indonesia workshop.

4.2 Two days will be devoted to carrying the CMAS agenda forward.

Therefore we need opportunities to be created for:

- a. **Reports on relevant progress in member teams.** This should be an important session in which each team reports on relevant work in their member university and outlines potentials for collaborative developments/opportunities which CMAS could facilitate.
- b. **Further developing our concept of the field.** Perhaps we could do this with the theme leaders leading off – in hydrological modeling, emissions, governance, knowledge flow and culture, and then a structured discussion building on the CMAS model?
- c. **Setting up relevant pilot projects.** We need reports on our existing thrust areas, where projects are in play. But I would suggest each of these presentations should propose where research could go next on a collaborative basis, with the assistance of any collaboration, or funding, and if so, what funding we might help in achieving. Where we have identified a new pilot project – e.g. around energy, emissions and the water cycle, then the theme leader (Robert Wilkinson) can assist us in shaping what is required.

Prof Rajib Shaw has suggested a pilot project, using methodologies he has applied in some cities, to map vulnerability and adaptive opportunities in relation to water and climate change. This may be a low effort task that could be applied in a number of our case study cities, and which could form part of the basis for a collectively produced book.

- d. **Reports from cognate research programmes** – e.g., the Global Water Initiative and the Pacific Cities Sustainability Initiative, including reflections on what they are trying to achieve, how that fits with CMAS capacities, and how CMAS and these initiatives can optimize opportunities over the next year.
- e. **Identify priority collaborations within CMAS and funding opportunities to be exploited.** Agree on leaders, collaborators in relevant

teams, and where possible timetables. This may involve breakout groups.

- f. **Consider whether we should make any specific contribution to Singapore Water Week in 2010.** If so: what, who, when, and how.
- g. **Prepare for the two day case study meeting on Indonesia.** This may involve some allocation of roles and discussion on how best to get maximum use of talent present and best likely outcomes.
- h. **Consider whether a book or other publication should be produced over the year.** Allocate tasks, and set a timetable.
- i. **Agree on any organisational requirements for CMAS, including future meetings, and communication processes.** Identify what is to be done and by whom, and on what timetable.

This memo is only a first attempt to spell out what CMAS might be expected to achieve and how we might set that in motion. I now look forward to your feedback on how to improve this picture and thus make our meeting in March the great success it deserves to be. Given the dynamism and effectiveness of our previous meetings, I have great optimism we can make a significant and ground-breaking step forward for our work in March.

All the best,

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