

Research Focus Areas

Compilation of workshop suggestions
from Breakaway Teams

23 April 2008

1. Understanding a complex regional system

Explanation:

The region is inherently characterized by the complexity of internal couplings and interactions in the context of a global dynamical system, subject to feedbacks and both internal and external forcings (both bio-physical and socio-economic).

Motivation:

8. The coupling and internal responses between the ocean, land and atmosphere are poorly understood, and of both regional and global relevance.
9. The uncertain inter-dependencies and associated risks between social and biophysical systems are critical to support a sustained future livelihood.
10. The geographical location and socio-economic context is unique in the global system, and provides an exceptional advantage for advancing the understanding of the linkages between the earth and social system for societal benefit.

2. Adaptive responses within a complex regional system

Explanation:

Adaptive responses within the unique regional context is dependent on effective application of existing and new knowledge, to ensure the resilience of the coupled system for societal benefit.

Motivation:

8. To enable relevant linkages between the human outcomes and the science
9. To contribute to the development and deployment of innovative technologies
10. To fulfill our inherent responsibility to the global community to achieve sustainable development
11. It is requisite in order to capitalize on the emerging opportunities within the changing global community.

Proposal

Could be reduced to 3 focal areas:

- Fundamental understanding (ESS, SES)
- Planning [applied understanding] (SES, AC)
- Selling (urgent)
 - Poor man's version of Al Gore, but done by people that South Africans identify with and at that scale
 - More than Science <-> policy, must emphasise Science <-> society
 - Alignment of other research funding (Social, governance)

Group 2

THEMES
IN BLUE

FOCUS AREAS

LPO

OPA

LPA

PEOPLE

SCIENCE POLICY INTERFACE

ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

SYSTEM RESILIENCE

EARTH SYSTEM SCIENCE

ATMOSPHERE

LAND

PRIORITY

Proportional

To volume

OCEAN

