

Climate Research Frontiers for Regional Decision Contexts

First Pan-RIfS Workshop

Nanjing, China, and online / June 8-12, 2026

The Regional Information for Society (RIfS) Core Project of the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) has been active since 2023. This meeting will bring together the rapidly growing community of participants in our activities, and key partners, to chart a way forward on priority challenges and cross-cutting themes, discuss science questions on important knowledge frontiers, and begin the planning of the next phase of RIfS.

This action builds out from the foundations of the 2024 RIfS international Expert meeting¹, the previous and coming CORDEX regional workshops², the Working Group on Robust Information workshop, and the recent RIfS/CORDEX partnership for Africa on Regional Information for Adaptation, with the subsequent momentum triggered from strong interest across the research and donor communities³.

We will bring together the expanding community of experts already working across RIfS, CORDEX and the GEP, to engage in strategic planning for coordinated development of research and analyses on our frontier science foci. Invitations will also be extended to members of other region-scale activities in WCRP⁴, and to other relevant key actors outside the research community and engage with actors in the region where the meeting will take place.

The RIfS' Science Plan guides the development of our scientific activities, identifies broad research frontiers and seeks to facilitate and catalyze new targeted research related to the provision of actionable information about climate variability and

¹ <https://www.wcrp-rifs.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/flyer-workshop-Robustness.pdf>

² <https://cordex.org/news-events/meetings>

³ The outcomes from the 2024 meeting now includes a new RIfS working group, has contributed to two new RIfS task teams, and led to a funded pan-Africa project under RIfS oversight.

⁴ eg GEWEX Regional Hydroclimatology Projects (RHPs), My Climate Risk (MCR) Hubs, regional CLIVAR panels, etc

change in support of adaptation and mitigation that draws on the best available science. To better integrate context and science, we identify three co-dependent and overarching **research challenges**:

- **Understand what is driving regional climate change:** Identify, assess, and model the climate processes that are primary drivers of climate change impact at scales most important for managing society's climate risk.
- **Enhance methods to construct and contextualize defensible information for society:** Develop good practices and methods for integrating multiple lines of evidence from all accessible sources, based on the best available understanding of the regional contexts, to create responsible, defensible, and actionable climate information.
- **Develop and enhance good practices for communities of collaboration:** Recognize and understand the equal importance of multiple knowledges to develop approaches that best incorporate context dependent perceptions, values and priorities. Design and test enhanced approaches that enable sustainable peer partnerships among the web of actors for the development and adoption of climate information in actions with societal consequence.

Current activities within RIfS aim to address various research questions that have emerged from these science challenges and deemed most urgent. However, some questions as well as pre-identified and new research frontiers -this is, some of the boundaries and the forward-looking, innovative directions of current knowledge- require a coming together of all the experts in our community to reflect on the appropriate resources, modalities, and methods required to better address them.

The global RIfS community seeks to actively enhance the added value of incorporating climate science knowledge into policy and decision-making processes -with the aim of supporting adaptation and mitigation actions- while ensuring that decision-making communities' knowledges inform the development of science. RIfS achieves this by facilitating the development of disciplinary and trans-disciplinary understanding in actions.

In this workshop we will place a special focus on two major cross-cutting themes: the role of climate literacy, and of ethics and values. Literacy means whether any two collaborating communities among the web of actors comprehend enough about each others lived experience and operational contexts to avoid ambiguity of understanding and enable productive collaboration. Ethics and values, meanwhile,

are not homogeneous across communities, yet fundamentally and unconsciously bias and frame our decisions and priorities. Our starting point to address these issues is to recognize the multiplicity of knowledges and the need for mutual learning across the web of actors. From this, the workshop will suggest ways forward to build the requisite learning⁵.

Additional foci of note in the workshop will include strategic redevelopment of the framing science plan for RIfS, and the challenges in how best to develop meaningful guidance and support for the inclusion of climate information in decision making and policy, which inherently incorporates the issues of literacy and ethics. This workshop will provide a forum for the members of RIfS' bodies to share ideas and strategize together, and to contribute to the development of the next Science Plan to best identify our community priorities.

With the coordination responsibilities and leadership of RIfS, CORDEX, and GEP it is imperative to extend the dialogue with the international donor, research, impacts, adaptation and resilience and climate services communities. This first pan-RIfS workshop aims to be a key moment in deepening our intellectual foundations to develop concrete strategic and collaborative actions best aligned to the regional and global interests.

Format:

Hybrid workshop to consist of a mixture of plenary panels and discussions on key science challenges and research frontiers, together with dedicated time for strategic planning sessions and discussions in smaller groups, and some formal meetings in parallel of the SSG, working groups, and task teams.

Expected Outcomes:

- Share lessons learned and identify transferable strategies across regions.
- Catalyze discussions and generate new ideas to innovate our approaches to regional climate change information for policy and decision-making, with a summary article to synthesize key takeaways.

⁵ For example: what does the global climate modeling community need to better understand about decision contexts which draw on their data, or how do climate services better understand how to work across culture and value systems.

- Plan new coordinated efforts to address key science questions and develop a strategy for resourcing these.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration across RifS with CORDEX, GEP, and the newer bodies working on complementary themes, as well as our partners inside and outside WCRP doing related work.
- Launch a process of consultations for the next round of organizational strategic planning.