

Opening Statement
Rep. Bob Inglis (R-SC), Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Environment
House Committee on Science and Technology
Expanding Climate Services at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
(NOAA): Developing the National Climate Service
May 5, 2009

Good morning and thank you for holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman.

While Congress continues to debate the right way to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and limit future anthropogenic changes to our climate, farmers, water managers, land use planners, and other decision makers are trying to plan for the impacts of climate change that we can expect over the next few decades. We have a lot of work to do to provide them with the information they need.

NOAA has done a good job of identifying existing capabilities and launching the process of constructing a National Climate Service at the federal level. In addition, the Science Advisory Board's report, *Options for Developing a National Climate Service*, highlights the challenge of coordinating the unique roles of several federal agencies. I'm interested in learning more about how we can marry federal services with research universities and state climatology offices to keep the focus on local users.

Existing climate information services aim to provide tools for seasonal and yearly planning. In South Carolina, we use this information to decide what crops to plant, how to manage our water supply, and whether we can expect forest fires like the one that raged on the coast last month. Mr. Fleming, your testimony highlights the critical importance of this information. The challenge is to expand these services and provide accurate information to a wide variety of users for both short- and long-term decision making.

We also need to have a serious discussion about resources at NOAA. Existing observation and monitoring networks need to be updated, computing capabilities are insufficient for local modeling, and information delivery needs to be improved to get the right information to the right people. These efforts won't be inexpensive and we need to identify those needs now.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the witnesses. I look forward to learning about our progress to a National Climate Service and what obstacles remain.