

Inter-Agency Northern Eurasia Earth Science Partnership Initiative and Science Review Meeting, 9-10 December, 2004, Washington DC

Dear Science Program or Agency Manager,

You are cordially invited, and enthusiastically encouraged, to participate in a gathering of research program leaders, much like yourself, from Europe, Eurasia and the U.S that will be held in Washington, D.C. at the Wyndham City Center Hotel during December 9-10, 2004. This meeting will provide a unique forum for considering some critical questions that are represented by some examples below and for exploring opportunities for multi-agency participation in a practical international partnership intended to make critical progress toward a more holistic Earth systems science understanding of Northern Eurasia and its role in the global system. At this meeting, you will be provided information concerning a developing international program of scientific research in Northern Eurasia that should be of considerable interest to your organization and its programs. From some of the international participants who represent other country governments and science organizations, you will also have opportunity to gain insight into some of their current and planned Earth science research projects that they are supporting within Northern Eurasia. There will be opportunity for you to discuss areas of mutual interest regarding your research programs and those of other program managers and science organizations.

Scientific and anecdotal evidences abound throughout Northern Eurasia that strongly suggest that there are significant and rapid changes occurring in the atmosphere, hydrosphere, cryosphere and the land cover of this vast region. What is the full nature of these changes; and how significant and how rapid are these changes occurring? What are the causes? Are these changes the result of natural, evolutionary processes inherent to our planet? We know that human activities are an increasingly important component of the Earth System; and population growth and an associated fragmentation of natural systems coupled with fossil fuel based economies seem to be creating conditions that have an increasing potential to adversely affect the future of our planet. Can it be that humans are exerting a powerful enough influence to be precipitating these changes? Are the changes occurring across Northern Eurasia having global impacts; or are they the result of global and regional changes elsewhere on the Earth?

If you and your research organization have sustainable interests in understanding and addressing these issues, you will surely have a desire to meet with other leaders of national and international research programs that may be able to contribute to the scientific understanding of these Earth system science topics in Northern Eurasia. This region and these issues are of international interest with potential impacts for many governments, as Northern Eurasia may be a global “touchstone” for the state of the life-supporting biosphere of the Earth. The potential for crafting environmentally intelligent government policies will be a function of how clearly we can “see” the past, present, and potential future conditions of the Earth and the consequences of human behaviour for the state of the world.

The principal focus for the upcoming meeting in Washington DC and the attendant discussions will be Northern Eurasia Earth Science Partnership Initiative, or NEESPI. The NEESPI is a strategically evolving program of internationally-supported Earth systems science research, which has as its foci issues in northern Eurasia that are relevant to regional, national and global scientific and decision-making communities. NEESPI is a large scale and long-term,

multidisciplinary program of research on Northern Eurasian terrestrial ecosystems and their interactions with the climate system. The early development of the NEESPI has been supported by NASA in close collaboration with the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS), and has been endorsed through the 12th and 13th meetings of the U.S.-Russia Earth Sciences Joint Working Group. However, the NEESPI aims to become a broadly-supported and truly international research program addressing the scientific and policy issues of direct relevance for the Eurasian region which nominally ranges from Scandinavia to Vladivostok and from 40 degrees north to the Arctic Ocean. You can find additional information on the NEESPI at <http://neespi.gsfc.nasa.gov>. This meeting intends to advance the NEESPI toward these goals.

The NEESPI seeks to operate synergistically with a variety of national and international science programs – particularly those relevant to global change research. NASA has begun to support some research studies focused on Northern Eurasia, but has always recognized that the challenges are too great for one organization or country to support. Many of the scientific issues for this region more appropriately fall within the mandates of other U.S. government agencies and other science organizations or agencies of other countries. Working together, the needed progress is possible. Ultimately, the improved knowledge of the functioning of this region and its influences and feedbacks will be able to be applied to addressing specific concerns that face national and international decision-makers of the partnering institutions and countries. It seems obvious, then, that your participation would thus be most appropriate.

At this meeting we will have research program managers and executives from a variety of US, European and other Eurasian country government and scientific organizations. They, along with you, will be able to examine the NEESPI science and organizational plans, which have been under development for more than two years, and discuss your own relevant research programs and seek to determine areas of synergy and potential collaboration which will bring mutual benefits to each agency, country and/or organization. The structure of the meeting is for presentations and general discussion on the first day, December 9, and then focused, objective-driven discussions on the morning of the second day, December 10. The afternoon of the second day will be devoted to a special meeting for those research program leaders who are interested in developing specific collaborations within the NEESPI organizational framework.

If you will be able to participate in the *“Inter-Agency Northern Eurasia Earth Science Partnership Initiative and Science Review Meeting for the U.S., Europe and Eurasia”* in Washington, D.C. during December 9 and 10, please reply to this invitation as soon as possible (send your reply to ikoval@pop900.gsfc.nasa.gov), and you will be provided with an agenda, logistics details and additional information.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this invitation.

Respectfully,

Donald W. Deering, PhD
NASA-NEESPI Project Manager

