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CICOR: About CICOR

The Cooperative Institute for Climate and Ocean Research (CICOR) is a NOAA Cooperative Institute sponsored by NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), a private not-for-profit research institution. CICOR provides a framework at WHOI for coordinating NOAA-funded research, for building ties between WHOI investigators and colleagues at NOAA laboratories, and for developing cooperative NOAA-funded research at academic institutions in the northeastern United States. At the same time CICOR provides NOAA investigators with access to WHOI facilities, including 4 ships and 2 submersibles, (one manned and one operated remotely), and the Northeast National Ion Microprobe Facility. In collaboration with WHOI's Academic Programs Office, CICOR supports graduate education through a joint program with MIT as well as postdoctoral scholars and summer student fellowships for undergraduates. CICOR is also involved in outreach activities to enhance regional collaboration and explain and publicize NOAA research.

CICOR has a small staff, its Director and an Administrator, with further staff support contributed by WHOI. CICOR supports the scientific and technical staff of WHOI in carrying out NOAA-funded research in three thematic areas: 1) the coastal ocean and nearshore processes, 2) the ocean's participation in climate and climate variability, and 3) marine ecosystem processes analyses.

The coastal-ocean and near-shore processes theme includes scientific research on fundamental processes of biology, physical oceanography, and sediment and sand transport, as well as the effects of contaminants and the changing environment upon ecosystems and habitats for marine mammals, fish, and humans.

The climate theme recognizes the critical role of (sub-basin-scale) oceanographic processes in the dynamics of the overall climate system. The time scales on which these processes operate and interact range from seasonal to millennial and beyond. Sustained observational studies and process experiments are essential to providing important information about these (relatively high frequency) processes.

The marine ecosystem processes analysis theme encompasses a wide range of community and ecosystem level studies. Many of these investigations concern the interaction of biological composition and structure with physical, chemical, or geological characteristics of the environment. Research on the species composition, trophic structure, and evolutionary history of a variety of marine ecosystems has long been a central strength of WHOI.

Enlarge Image

WHOI senior engineering assistant Jeff Lord keeps an eye on the gear while guiding winch operators as they recover the STRATUS VI moored buoy in October 2006 off of the coast of Chile. The bottom of the buoy is covered in gooseneck barnacles. The Stratus experiment is supported through the Cooperative Institute for Climate and Ocean Research (CICOR), a partnership between the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. (Photo by Sean Whelan, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution)

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CICOR has fostered collaborative research between NOAA scientists and university scientists and students since its inception in 1999. Research and planning activities have been carried out in partnership with NOAA's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory (AOML), Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory (PMEL), Environmental Technology Laboratory (ETL), and Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC). In addition to OAR, the following NOAA line offices and programs offices provide support for and collaboration with CICOR research: Arctic, NESDIS, NMFS, NOS, and NWS. From inception to January 1, 2007, CICOR research activities have resulted in over 256 scientific publications.

CICOR receives NOAA funding through a five-year cooperative agreement. Since the beginning of the current cooperative agreement in 2001, CICOR has funded over $37.75 million in projects.

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