

UMD and Chinese partner to track and predict world climate change

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Scientists from the University of Maryland and Beijing Normal University are partnering to track and predict the impact of climate change internationally.

When fully developed, the project will provide monitoring and predictive tools that can help, for example, predict crop failure and changes in [commodity prices](#), and aid in preparations for shortages, organizers say.

At the University of Maryland today, officials from both institutions and representatives from the [Chinese government](#) officially launched the new Joint Center on [Global Change](#) and Earth System Science, which will conduct the research.

Creation of an international [remote sensing](#) database will be one of the new center's first projects, and the interdisciplinary work will take place in both countries. In addition to monitoring agriculture, it will also track land use and land cover.

When coupled with predictive modeling techniques, the remote sensing database can produce a range of useful tools to assist in planning for climate changes, the project organizers emphasize.

"International cooperation is the path forward on global-scale challenges such as climate change," says University of Maryland President Wallace Loh, who secured support for the new center when he visited China last

year with Governor Martin O'Malley.

"The combination of our joint expertise and resources in this new center will allow us to address these important challenges with much greater sophistication and impact," Loh adds. "These scientists have worked together for years now, and this new collaboration represents the maturing of that relationship. I'm confident their work will benefit our state, both nations and the international community."

The new center directly results from Loh's visit to China last year when he met with top government figures in science and academia.

At Beijing Normal, the center's research will be coordinated by the College of Global Change and [Earth System Science](#).

In Maryland, the center brings together expertise from across campus, including the fields of remote sensing, satellite imaging, data modeling and projections, atmospheric and oceanic science, and [climate change](#). The effort will be coordinated by UMD's College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS).

See examples of UMD remote sensing images: <http://ter.ps/fg>

"Maryland has long experience in the use of satellite imaging to measure land cover and other aspects of global change, wide expertise in aggregating this data, and expertise in how these changes ripple through the various parts of the environment," explains Maryland's BSOS Dean John Townshend.

"Beijing Normal's expertise serves as an excellent complement to our strengths, as evidenced by our successful collaborations over the past several years," he adds.

Scientists in Maryland and China will collect and analyze data. The two institutions estimate the work will take several years.

C.D. Mote, Jr., Loh's predecessor as UMD president, opened the research collaboration with BNU in 2006. The agreement to create the new center was finalized last December.

Provided by University of Maryland

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