As an outcome of the Second World Climate Conference, the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) was established in 1992 to ensure that the observations and information needed to address climate-related issues are obtained and made available to all potential users.

The goal of GCOS is to provide comprehensive information on the total climate system, involving a multidisciplinary range of physical, chemical, and biological properties and atmospheric, oceanic, hydrologic, cryospheric and terrestrial processes.

Climate observations must be enhanced and sustained in order to enable users to:

- Detect further climate change and determine its causes
- Model and predict the climate system
- Assess impacts of climate variability and change
- Monitor the effectiveness of policies for mitigating climate change
- Support adaptation to climate change
- Develop climate information services
- Promote sustainable national economic development
- Meet other requirements of the UNFCCC and other international conventions and agreements

GCOS is strongly supported by the international science community and thus the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) co-sponsors three expert panels for atmospheric, oceanic and terrestrial observations. These panels gather experts from the climate research community and utilize their specific expertise to generate output benefitting the climate observation community.

For more information, please go to: http://gcos.wmo.int