



**REMARKS ON THE OCCASION OF THE WMO 2012  
NORBERT GERBIER-MUMM INTERNATIONAL AWARD CEREMONY**

By

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Good evening. It is an honor to have been invited to speak at this ceremony for the recipients of the Norbert Gerbier-MUMM International Award. I thank the Executive Council of the WMO for the invitation and for reviewing the thirteen nominated papers for the 2012 award.

I wish to express my sincere congratulations to Doctors Chuixiang Yi, Daniel Ricciuto, Runze Li, John Wolbeck, Xiyan Xu, Mats Nilsson and the 145 other contributing authors of the winning paper: "Climate control of terrestrial carbon exchange across biomes and continents."

This award exemplifies the leading role that science plays in international cooperation and integration as evidenced by the number of nominated researchers from a diverse array of countries. Perhaps even more impressive is that scientists who worked on the winning paper originate from 116 academic institutions across six continents! I am impressed that the authors of the paper were able to collect data from 125 sites around the world over the course of 16 years.

I understand that this paper examines the relationships between the climate and the carbon exchange of land-based ecosystems and predicts future levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide – a topic of critical importance to all concerned with global warming. The hard work of the authors represents the kind of commitment and dedication that we need in order to overcome the challenge of climate change. To paraphrase President Obama's Science Advisor Dr. John Holdren, the source of our scientific understanding of climate change is not from international organizations such as the IPCC – those groups are the messengers, which is a valuable role. But the sources of scientific

understanding are the global community of climate scientists and mountains of peer-reviewed research they have produced over decades.<sup>1</sup>

While the science behind anthropogenic climate change is clear, continuing to improve our scientific understanding of the relevant processes, including especially our capacity to measure and monitor them quantitatively on local to regional scales will be valuable in increasing confidence that the performance specified in policy and agreements is indeed being achieved and in developing improved understanding of the options for both mitigation and adaptation.<sup>2</sup> It is the work of tonight's awardees and many of those in the audience that will inform policy makers and negotiators as they craft policies and strategies to help us down the path to tackle climate change. If science is our guide, they are the lamps lighting the trail.

Again, congratulations to this year's award winners and thank you for giving me the opportunity to say a few words. I hope that we can all continue to support researchers like those who are being honored here today. Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. John Holdren, Director OSTP, Kavli Prize Symposium, September 6, 2010

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Holdren, Statement before U.S. Senate July 22, 2009