

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910965569303321
Titolo	Capacity of U.S. climate modeling to support climate change assessment activities / / Climate Research Committee, Board on Atmospheric Sciences and Climate, Commission on Geosciences, Environment, and Resources, National Research Council
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, D.C., : National Academy Press, 1998
ISBN	9786610186129 9780309173438 0309173434 9781280186127 1280186127 9780309592796 0309592798 9780585144542 0585144540
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (77 p.)
Collana	The compass series
Disciplina	551.6/01/13
Soggetti	Climatic changes - Mathematical models Climatic changes - Research - United States
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references.
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Sommario/riassunto

The U.S. government has pending before it the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, an agreement to limit the emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), which is largely based on the threat GHGs pose to the global climate. Such an agreement would have significant economic and national security implications, and therefore any national policy decisions regarding this issue should rely in part on the best possible suite of scenarios from climate models. The U.S. climate modeling research community is a world leader in intermediate and smaller climate modeling efforts-research that has been instrumental in improving the understanding of specific components of the climate system. Somewhat in contrast, the United States has been less prominent in producing high-end climate modeling results, which have been featured in recent international assessments of the impacts of climate change. The fact that U.S. contributions of these state-of-the-art results have been relatively sparse has prompted a number of prominent climate researchers to question the current organization and support of climate modeling research in the United States, and has led ultimately to this report.
