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INTERNATIONAL SCIENTISTS MEET AT NCAR TO PONDER WINTER WEATHER DIFFERENCES

BOULDER--A select group of scientists from throughout the world is meeting at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) here this week to sort out information beamed earthward from satellites which should shed light on what caused the vast differences in winter weather the past four years.

Meteorologists from Oxford, Princeton, the University of Washington, NASA, NOAA, and NCAR, which is sponsored by the National Science Foundation, will exchange opinions on how to compare and best interpret a variety of satellite data with scientists from Berlin, Germany; Bracknell, England; Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan; and LeBuisson, France.

"Several observing systems have collected data during the Northern Hemisphere winters of 1978 through 1982," says Dr. John Gille of NCAR, one of the conveners of the international workshop. "These include meteorological satellite instruments on Nimbus 7 and the polar-orbiting TIROS-N series as well as conventional radiosondes and rockets."

The satellite data, some of which are just becoming available, says Gille, are expected to provide a much more detailed look at the winter weather in the stratosphere, including the sudden warming periods when the temperature can increase by 90 degrees Fahrenheit within a few days.

As such, they will guide the evolution of theoretical concepts and further the development of computerized climate models and future observational programs.

"These measuring systems and their data differ in the amount of vertical and horizontal detail they provide on temperature and winds," Gille explains. "It is imperative that the results be intercompared to understand the differences among them and the way in which these differences may affect the heat and momentum transports which bring about the warmings. These warming episodes seem to be associated with severe weather at the earth's surface, and they vigorously transport trace gases such as ozone from the tropics to the high latitudes."

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The international workshop is being held at this time so that a wider group of scientists have an opportunity to become aware of the data and any unique characteristics, in order to better understand their uses and limitations.

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Joan Vandiver Frisch
Information Officer
National Center for Atmospheric Research
P O Box 3000
Boulder, CO 80307
(303) 494-5151, Ext. 261

NOTE TO EDITORS: For further information or interviews, please contact
Joan Frisch.