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Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society Article Outlines Twenty-Year Process to Create Meteorological Partnership Between US and Cuba

May 22, 2015 – Boston, MA - Few professions in the world benefit from the sharing of information as much as meteorology. Nearly all countries around the world realize the value of sharing meteorological data across their borders. This information collaboration is vital to scientific understanding of the atmosphere and the oceans, as well as essential for accurate forecasts and timely warnings of hurricanes, typhoons, and other severe weather.

But what about when one country maintains an active embargo with another country?

That question was answered last year, when the United States and Cuba began operating a newly installed Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) system in Camagüey, Cuba, designed to measure the amount of water vapor in the atmosphere above the region. Information collected at the facility is part of a wider Caribbean data collection effort known as COCONet, and is used as input to produce more accurate weather forecasts.

In a forthcoming article in the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society (BAMS)*, authors Dr. Richard Anthes, President Emeritus at University Corporation of Atmospheric Sciences (UCAR) and Dr. Alan Robock, Professor at Rutgers University's School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, describe the two-decade-long process to form an active meteorological partnership with the Meteorological Institute of Cuba (their National Weather Service). They were joined by co-authors Drs. John Braun of UCAR, Oswaldo García of San Francisco State University, and two Cuban colleagues

Juan Carlos Antuña Marrero and René Estevan Arredondo from the Grupo de Óptica Atmosférica de Camagüey.

Anthes, the 2007 AMS President, noted in the article that, "This success story in scientific cooperation has threads that date back over two decades." The article is a fascinating look into the politics, planning, and science behind installing a critically important tool in a country that has severely limited relations with the U.S. It also highlights the tremendous work being done to foster beneficial meteorological relations between the two nations long before recent political talks began.

While the U.S. and Cuba have shared meteorological information and data relating to hurricanes and other tropical storms starting as early as the mid-1800's, this is the first time a partnership of this level has been created; it included the shipping and installation of sensitive GPS monitoring equipment, something that would normally not be allowed by either government.

The article also highlights some of the complex and lengthy process necessary to get various approvals from both the United States and Cuban governments. Sometimes even more complicated were the efforts to bring all the various scientists themselves together in one room to plan for the partnership. At one point, Fidel Castro invited Robock to give a presentation in Cuba, and Castro himself participated, which helped promote a stronger partnership effort.

You can read the full BAMS article here:
http://journals.ametsoc.org/doi/pdf/10.1175/BAMS-D-14-00171.1