

Introduction to SAEON & the GSN

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DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH SEMINAR

SAEON-GSN - WITS PRESENTATION

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SAEON – what is it?

SAEON

South African Environmental Observation Network



SAEON is an emerging research facility of the NRF (National Research Foundation) that establishes and maintains nodes (environmental observatories, field stations or sites) linked by an information management network to serve as research and education platforms for long-term studies of ecosystems that should provide for incremental advances in our understanding of ecosystems and our ability to detect, predict and react to environmental change. The core research programme strives to distinguish between anthropogenic and natural change as well as to unravel the relations between social change and ecosystem change.

SAEON – what's the point?

- Three key focus areas:
 - *Observation* science
 - *Information* management
 - *Education* outreach



SAEON – what's the point?

- Observation

- Co-ordinates & supports long-term environmental research
- Political, technical & operational advisory committees
- Respond to environmental issues
- Establish nodes to facilitate activities



SAEON – what's the point?

- Information

- Information management for preservation & dissemination of long-term environmental monitoring data

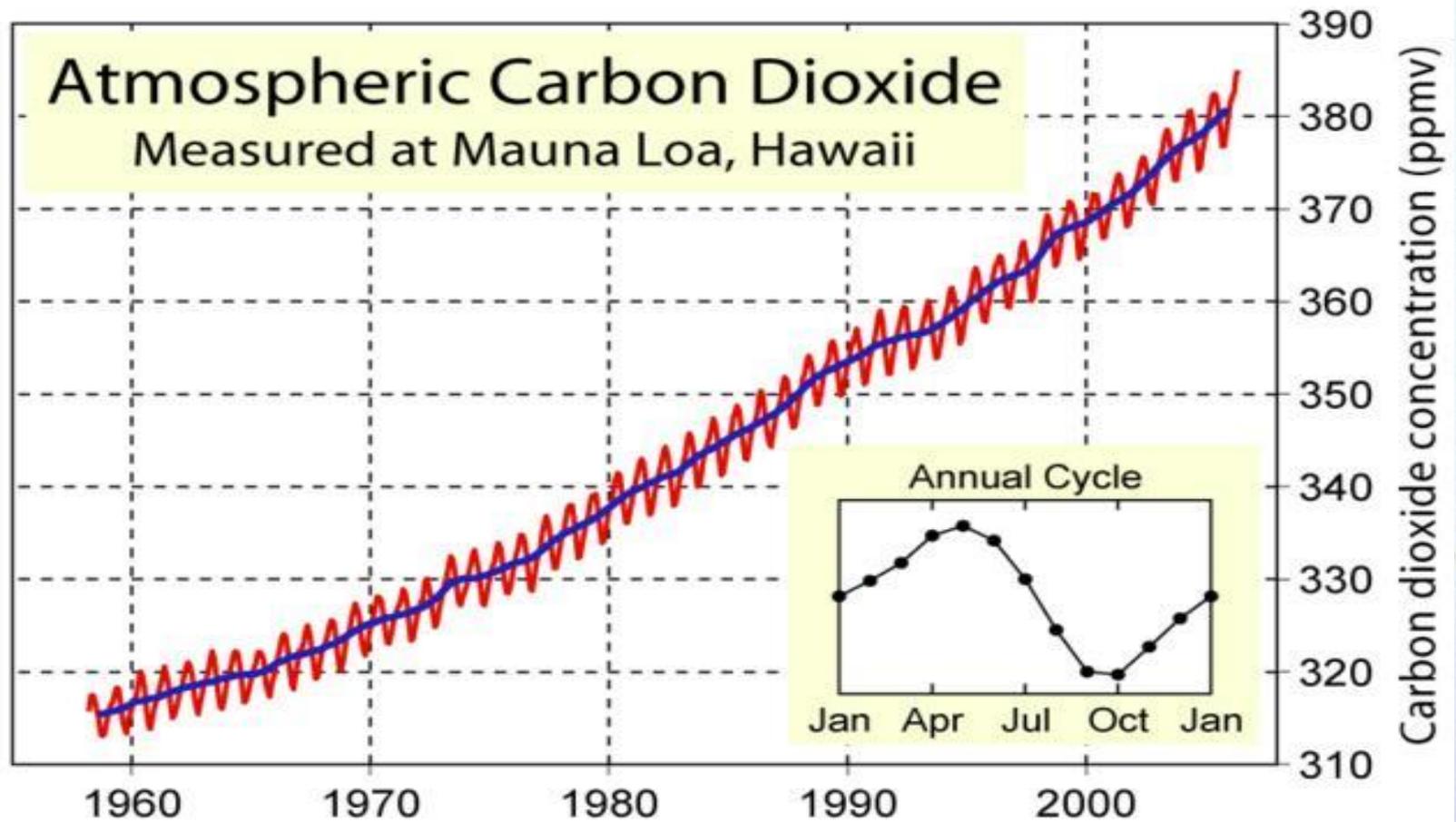
- Provide open access to quality data for research, policy & management

- Education

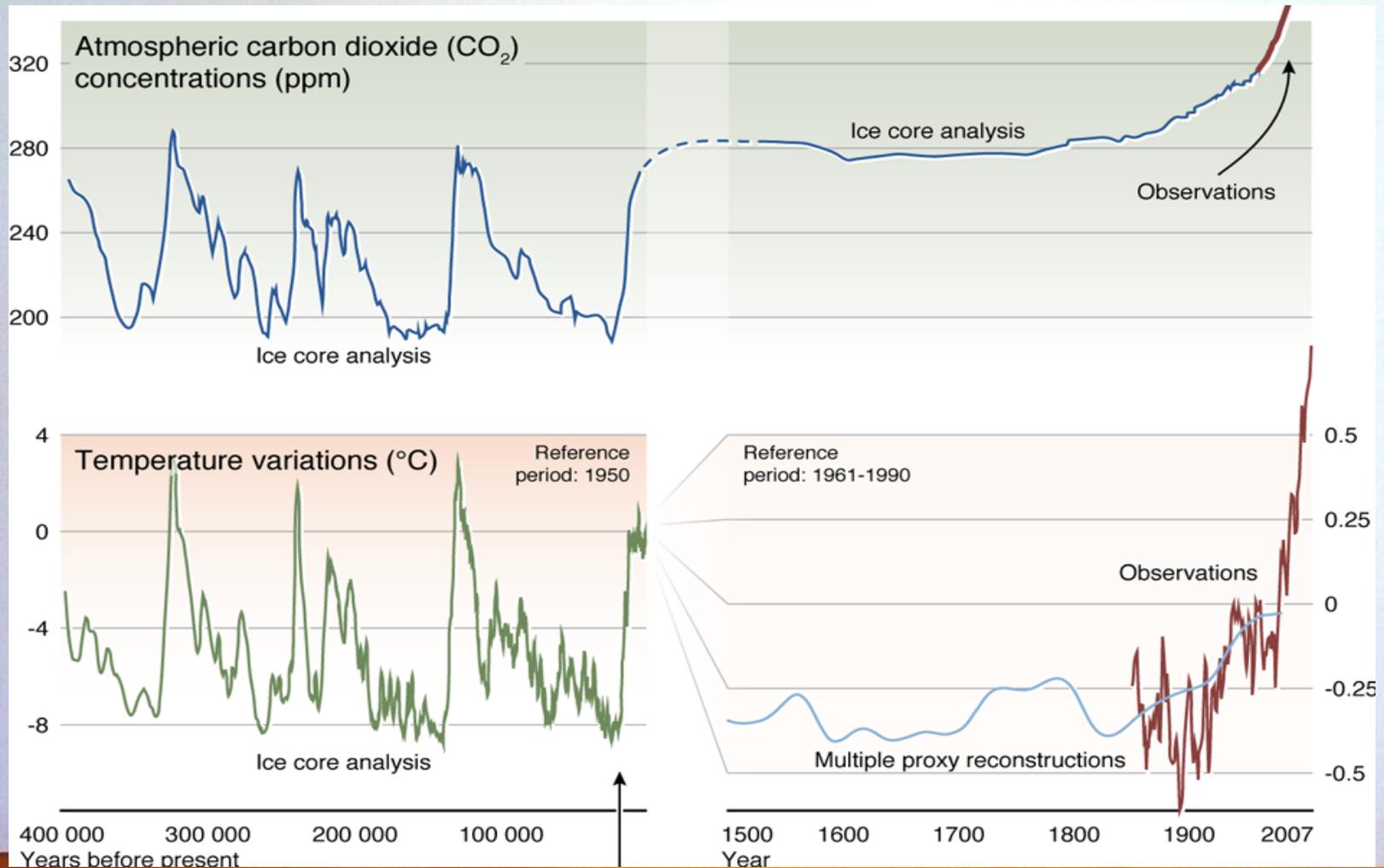
- Platform for science outreach & capacity development



LTER - why?



LTER - why?



SAEON GSN – what is it?

- Graduate
- Student
- Network



GSN – what's the point?

- Familiarise post-grads with SAEON
- Encourage post-grads to align research with SAEON's programmes
- Promote networking between scientists & students
- Provide opportunities for sharing ideas, collaboration & broaden perspectives



GSN – evolutionary history

- April 2005

- Three students (Saras, Glynn & Silvia) funded by SAEON to attend the 1st International LTER Graduate Student Collaborative Research Symposium (Oregon, USA)



GSN – evolutionary history

- Mid-2005
 - These students started setting up a similar network for SA post-grads → the SAEON GSN



GSN – evolutionary history

- 2005-2006
 - A fourth committee member (Bernard) was selected
 - Interim Committee wrote a preliminary constitution
 - GSN was launched at the 1st SAEON Summit & held its first workshop in March 2006



GSN – evolutionary history

- 2007-2008
 - New Co-ordinating Committee (Di, Musa, Nikki, Dirk)
 - 1st GSN Symposium held at UCT in Sept 2007
 - Angela & Lukhay joined CC
 - Decided to change symposium to Indibano held in De Hoop in August 2008



GSN – evolutionary history

- 2009-2010

- Batandwa, Trevor, Shannon & Brian joined Angela & Lukhay on CC
- 2nd Indibano organised in P.E.



- Current GSN Coordinating Committee

- Rachel Cooper - mailing list and memberships
- Ander De Lecea - GSN website
- Shannon Hampton - internal communications
- Brian Mubiwa - public relations and marketing of the GSN
- Dirk Snyman - events coordinator



Advantages & Benefits of being a GSN Member

- Link with SAEON nodes, researchers, projects, funding etc.
 - Facilitation of fieldwork within nodes
 - Access to research projects & opportunities
 - Eligibility to apply for conference/event scholarships abroad



Advantages & Benefits of being a GSN Member

- Interaction & networking with GSN members, colleagues & established scientists
 - Attending GSN workshops & conferences to expand your skills & CV
 - Learn about other branches of research → look for opportunities for collaboration & co-operation
- Advertising of study opportunities, projects, internships, jobs, scholarships & more - **BE THE FIRST TO KNOW!!!**



GSN – my contribution?

- Tell your friends about us!! - they can join by emailing their study details to: gsn@saeon.ac.za
- Ploughing back to society – involvement with the Science Education Outreach Programme
- Focus on Long Term Environmental Studies
- Alert us to any study/work/funding opportunities/etc that you think might be useful for other GSN members to know about - you can send them to: gsn@saeon.ac.za



Science Education Outreach - creating the Next Generation of Scientists

Strategic Objective

To promote environmental sustainability and entrench environmental science in society

Operational objectives

2.2. Graduate Student Network

KPI: Successful integration of Graduate Students and Researchers into the Science Education Outreach Programme

Expected Outcome:

- Quality and relevant school monitoring programme developed and implemented under the guidance of graduates
- Schools exposed to diverse and multi-disciplinary skills
- Assist by facilitating in Workshops and Science camps
- Young scientists provide positive role modeling to learners



GSN – Upcoming Events

- SAEON Summit + Launch event for the Fynbos node during the summit - 4th – 6th September, Cape Town.
- GSN day at the Summit - 7th September, Cape Town.

