

CLIMATE CHANGE: AN INTEGRATED PERSPECTIVE

ADVANCES IN GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH

VOLUME 1

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CLIMATE CHANGE: AN INTEGRATED PERSPECTIVE

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PREFACE

Several years ago the Open University in Heerlen and Maastricht University decided to launch a course on '*Climate and the Environment*', with a diverse team of authors. Both natural and social scientists, from several regions of the world, contributed to this book. Initially, the book was intended as a textbook within this course for students of Environmental Sciences programmes at the Open University and Maastricht University. As the book developed it became clear that it would be an excellent source to anyone professionally engaged in the wide area of the enhance greenhouse effect.

This notion and new developments at the Open University at the time when the first draft was finished, caused a change of plan: the book should not only be written at the student-level, but should also reach the diverse group of policy-makers and scientists. Also the title of the book changed into '*Climate Change: An Integrative Perspective*'. It then took another few years before we could complete the manuscript as it lies in front of you.

This book aims to give you, the reader, a clear understanding of the nature of global climate change. It also makes clear what is known about the problem, and what is unknown or uncertain. It furthermore advocates the need for an integrative perspective to analyse and understand the complexity of the climate phenomenon. We are convinced that an integrated perspective can provide a useful guide to the problem of global climate change, and complement detailed analyses that cover only some parts of this complex problem.

Given the long history, many people contributed directly or indirectly to this book. First of all, we would like to thank the authors, for continuously updating their chapters as the book developed, and for their patience all throughout. Furthermore, we would like to thank all colleagues at the Open University and at the International Centre for Integrative Studies (ICIS) at Maastricht University for their help in finalising this book. Special thanks to Debby Jochems and Janneke Hogervorst for their efforts in proof-reading the final version of this book.

Pim Martens & Jan Rotmans

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