



SCOSTEP Launches VarSITI Program to Explore the Origin and Consequences of a Weak Sun

Press Release

For release on Jan. 13, 2014.

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The *Scientific Committee on Solar Terrestrial Physics* (SCOSTEP) is launching its new scientific program **VarSITI** (Variability of the Sun and Its Terrestrial Impact) on January 13, 2014. Solar-terrestrial scientists from all over the world participate in the VarSITI program to understand why the Sun is so weak these days and how it will affect Earth and its space environment. VarSITI is an international interdisciplinary research program that will run for next five years.

SCOSTEP is an Interdisciplinary body of the International Council for Science (ICSU). The ICSU motto is “strengthening international science for the benefit of society”. SCOSTEP focuses on the science of Sun-Earth connection relevant to life and society on Earth. The outcome of VarSITI will contribute to our better understanding of how life and society on Earth is affected by the Sun, e.g., solar effects on Earth’s climate change. This outcome is also used for safe and reliable operation of space vehicles, such as navigation and communication satellites.

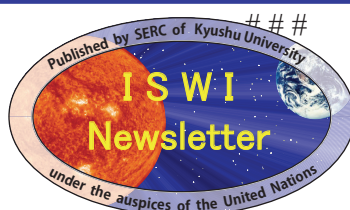
Following a highly successful program known as **CAWSES** (Climate and Weather of the Sun-Earth System) that just ended, the VarSITI program will focus on the declining phase of solar activity, which is already at its lowest level since the dawn of the space age.

The VarSITI program is established after a collective effort by the international scientific community over the past year. It will focus on four major themes: solar magnetism and extreme events, Earth impacting solar transients, magnetospheric changes, and consequences and processes in Earth’s atmosphere. In order to make progress on these themes, four scientific projects headed by international experts have been defined, i.e., Solar Evolution and Extrema (SEE), International Study of Earth-Affecting Solar Transients (ISEST)/MiniMax24, Specification and Prediction of the Coupled Inner-Magnetospheric Environment (SPeCIMEN), and Role Of the Sun and the Middle atmosphere/thermosphere/ionosphere In Climate (ROSMIC).

We look forward to continuing our global cooperation in solar terrestrial research using data, models, and theory developed from all over the world. In particular SCOSTEP will promote involvement of students and scientists from developing countries in the VarSITI projects.

Various working groups are being formed for a thorough scientific investigation under each VarSITI project. Anyone interested in getting involved should contact Katya Georgieva (kgeorg@bas.bg) or Kazuo Shiokawa (shiokawa@stelab.nagoya-u.ac.jp), the two co-chairs of VarSITI.

For more information, please visit www.varsiti.org



This pdf circulated in
Volume 6, Number 006,
on 13 January 2014.