

## The Role of Boundary Organizations in the Dissemination of Climate Information to Support Agricultural Production in Argentina.

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A greater appreciation for the role of climate on many human endeavors and increasing scientific and technological capabilities are providing greater incentives for the provision and use of climate information. We argue that the long-term goal of enhancing “climate literacy” and the ability of decision-makers to use climate information can be accomplished most effectively through boundary organizations (BOs) that perform information translation, connect information providers and users, serve as mediators to enhance trust and credibility and, most importantly, provide a useful alternative to a linear “pipeline” model of transfer and use of scientific information.

We explore the role of two candidate BOs involved in the generation and dissemination of climate information to support agricultural production in the Argentine Pampas, one of the main agricultural regions in the world. The first target institution was the Argentine Meteorological Service (SMN), a governmental agency operationally tasked with producing and communicating weather and climate information. The second institution was the Asociación Argentina de Experimentación Agrícola (AACREA), a non-profit farmers’ association with a strong commitment to dissemination of innovative agricultural technologies.

Our work suggests that neither institution can be fully considered as a BO from the point of view of climate information. Furthermore, preliminary surveys of other candidate institutions in the climate field lead us to believe that it would be difficult to find a single organization with all the attributes of an ideal BO, particularly in the Latin American context. Instead, a more effective approach to effective provision of climate information may be the development of strategic partnerships between existing and complementary institutions and networks. We propose that focus be placed on the specific functions and processes of BOs that are relevant to climate information, and on matching the strengths and weaknesses of potential partner institutions.

To explore the viability of the approach proposed, we are facilitating and monitoring the development of a partnership between our two target institutions. The collaboration is developing through small but tangible steps, such as the implementation of diagnostic climate products useful to farmers, followed by stakeholders’ training and feedback.