U.S. Country Studies Program (USCSP)

Description
The aim of the USCSP (no longer in existence) was to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in meeting their obligations under the UNFCCC. Countries participating in the USCSP focused on assessing the vulnerability of their climate sensitive sectors and resources and, to a lesser extent, opportunities for adaptation. The general approach prescribed by the program involved six steps: (1) define scope of assessment process, (2) select scenarios, (3) conduct biophysical and economic impact assessments, (4) integrate impact results, (5) analyze adaptation policies and programs, and (6) document and present results to decision makers. At the center of this process is the evaluation of biophysical effects.

Appropriate Use
Best employed when an analysis of biophysical impacts of climate change (e.g., change in rainfall or crop yields) is the central goal. Relatively simple methods can still be applied when date quality and availability are limited.

Scope
All regions, coastal resources, agriculture, grasslands/livestock, water resources, forestry, human health, fisheries, and wildlife.

Key Output
Climate change impacts and, to limited extent, adaptation options.

Key Input
Climate change and baseline socioeconomic scenarios.

Key Tools
Quantitative models of climate scenarios (e.g., GISS, GFDL, UKMO), socioeconomic baselines (e.g., IS92a), and biophysical impacts (e.g., CLIRUN, Holdridge Life Zone Classification model, CERES-Maize; see appropriate sectoral summary tools in Chapter 4).

Ease of Use
Depends on specific application.

Training Required
Training is required in the use of certain models.

Training Available
Contact Stratus Consulting, P.O. Box 4059, Boulder CO 80302. Tel: +1.303.381.8000; e-mail: jsmith@stratusconsulting.com.

Computer Requirements
Depends on particular models and sectors examined.

Documentation

Applications
49 countries participated, investigating impacts in one or more of eight sectors: coastal resources, agriculture, grasslands/livestock, water resources, forests, fisheries, wildlife, and health.

Contacts for Framework, Documentation, Technical Assistance
Joel Smith, Stratus Consulting Inc., P.O. Box 4059, Boulder, CO 80302, USA; Tel: +1.303.381.8000; e-mail: jsmith@stratusconsulting.com.

Cost
Depends on breadth of assessment.

References