

BOOK REVIEW

Global Change. By T. F. Malone and J. G. Roederer. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985. 512 pp. + xxviii, \$59.50.

This is one of the first books published by the newly formed ICSU Press (International Council of Scientific Unions). It comprises the proceedings of an ICSU Symposium held in Ottawa in September 1984. The symposium addressed the question: "Is the time ripe to launch a cooperative, interdisciplinary, international program to illuminate the complex and synergistic physical, chemical, and biological processes in the Sun-Earth system that determine its changes?" Not surprisingly, all of the authors who address this question reach an affirmative conclusion. The proposed program is called the International Geosphere-Biosphere Program (IGBP). My present goal is to review this book and not the proposed program.

The book contains some 40 papers, with an average length of 13 pages, in which almost 40 different opinions are expressed concerning the content and organization of an IGBP. In production quality and appearance the book is disappointing. There is no uniformity of typeface, and indeed in a number of instances corrections have been made within the text of a paper in a typeface different from that originally used. Some papers are right justified while others have ragged-right margins. Different papers use different formats for references. In some papers the figures appear in a group at the end, while other papers incorporate figures into the text. Some papers have abstracts and others do

not. There is wide variability in the use and style of subheadings. It is very easy to avoid these minor production problems and to achieve a product with an appearance of much higher quality. I urge ICSU Press to establish a "house style" and to see that its authors know what it is.

The papers are effectively arranged. The collection opens with a handful of overview papers and concludes with a summary. In between there are approximately equal numbers of papers on atmosphere and hydrosphere, life systems, solid Earth, Sun and space, tools and technology, and human activity. Some of the papers are very interesting. Many of them are quite boring. Almost none are scientific papers presenting scientific results. Overall, the subject and style of this collection resembles a National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council Report, but this book is of course much longer and it lacks the organizational coherence and focus of the typical NAS-NRC Report. Moreover, there is no evidence here of the rigorous review to which Academy Reports are subjected.

I would characterize this volume as a planning document made generally available. You might want to look at it if you enjoy reading about people talking about doing science.

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