## Introducing the Informed Guide to Climate Datasets, a new web-based community resource to facilitate the discussion and selection of appropriate datasets for Earth system model evaluation

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When comparing model output to observations, researchers are often faced with a bewildering array of choices. There are at least half a dozen different reanalysis products, NASA Team or Bootstrap versions of sea ice concentrations, HadISST or NOAA ERSST sea surface temperatures, and CMAP or GPCP precipitation, to name but a few of the different products available for commonly analyzed climate variables. Efforts to synthesize disparate data streams into new Climate Data Records will only contribute to the proliferation of data products to consider. On the flip side, as comprehensive ESMs represent more and more processes, sometimes no suitable observations can be identified. While there is scattered information relevant to the selection process on the web and in the literature, a comprehensive and systematic guide to climate data does not exist. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that individual researchers often base their selections on non-scientific criteria--either the data are in a convenient format that the user is comfortable with, a co-worker has the data handy on her local server, or a mentor discourages or recommends the use of particular products for legacy or other non-objective reasons. These issues inspired a recently funded NSF proposal that supports the establishment of a web-based Informed Guide with the specific goals to (1) Evaluate and assess selected climate datasets and (2) Provide "expert user" guidance on the strengths and limitations of selected climate datasets. The Informed Guide is based at NCAR's Climate and Global Dynamics Division. Here we will demonstrate the preliminary version of the Informed Guide, enlist experts to make future contributions, and entertain questions and feedback related to this effort. The vision of the Informed Guide is to provide an interactive and updatable resource that grows with the participation of the community. As such, we welcome comments and suggestions for meeting our goal of engaging a broad cross-section of the climate science community.