The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has launched a new climate research programme. DEKLIM, the German climate research programme pursues the following objectives.

• To improve understanding of the climate system and possible human influences on it.
• To reduce uncertainties in analysis and forecasting.
• To derive strategies for dealing with climate change (adaptation and mitigation).

DEKLIM’s major aims are to increase integration of German research in the international assessment of climate development and to provide basic knowledge and guidance in the field of practical climate protection measures. DEKLIM research activities started in 2001 with a runtime of up to 5 years. More than 100 individual projects co-operate in 37 joint projects, forming 4 major areas of research. DEKLIM projects are also providing important contributions towards the final evaluation phase of the Baltic Sea Experiment (BALTEX), a sub-programme of the WCRP.

3. Paleoclimate Research
The principal objectives of DEKLIM paleoclimate research are:
• understanding how and why climate and ecosystems have varied in the past;
• assessing how climate change and variability have affected natural ecosystems and human society in the past;
• providing a basis both for developing and testing climate models that are needed to forecast climate change in the future.

For these reasons it is understandable that the DEKLIM projects in this area are closely linked to the IGBP program PAGES. For example the project EEM (climate change at the very end of a warm stage) is using high resolution geo-archives allowing annual time resolution. Eolian dust, pollen or stable isotope data serve as indicators of past atmospheric temperature and precipitation. Time series from the geo-archives are compared with modeled insolation forced climate time series. The synthesis of all nine research groups results will provide perspective on likely climate variability during the end of the ongoing warm stage. Finally, both the paleoclimate and the modelling groups should be able to predict when our ongoing Holocene interglacial is likely to come to its natural end. The strong interconnection between model studies and data analyses is one of DEKLIM’s principal aims.

4. Climate Impact Research
This area comprises the interaction between climate change, natural systems, and socio-economic systems. The aim is to provide a scientific basis for concrete measures to adapt to climate change and - in the long term - to control human influence on the climate system.

Further information about DEKLIM may be found at: www.deklim.de

Fig. 1: The DEKLIM research structure.