# Precipitation links (PrecipLinks) - a prototype directory for precipitation information

**E. Stocker** (1), B. Velauthapillia (2)

(1) NASA/GSFC Code 610.2, (2) George Mason University

This poster describes a web directory of research oriented precipitation links. In this era of sophisticated search engines and web agents, it might seem counterproductive to establish such a directory of links. However, entering precipitation into a search engine like google will yield over one million hits. To further exacerbate this situation many of the returned links are dead, duplicates of other links, incomplete, or only marginally related to research precipitation or even the broader precipitation area. Sometimes connecting the linked URL causes the browser to lose context and not be able to get back to the original page. Even using more sophisticated search engines query parameters or agents while reducing the overall return doesn't eliminate all of the other issues listed. Yet, this is also a time in which many useful sites containing precipitation information should be made visible to a broad community.

As part of the development of the measurement-based Precipitation Processing System (PPS) that will support the Global Precipitation Measurement (GPM) mission, a precipitation links (PrecipLinks) web facility is being developed. PrecipLinks is intended to share locations of other sites that contain information or data pertaining to precipitation research. Potential contributors can log-on to the PrecipLinks website and register their site for inclusion in the directory. The price for inclusion is the requirement to place a link back to PrecipLinks on the webpage that is registered. This ensures that users will be able to easily get back to PrecipLinks regardless of any context issues that browsers might have. Perhaps more importantly users while visiting one site that they know can be referred to a location that has many others sites with which they might not be familiar. It is important to state that the purpose of PrecipLinks is to advertise useful precipitation web location not to contain or maintain precipitation information.

PrecipLinks is designed with a very flat categorization structure. This poster summarizes these categories (information, data, software & tools, support) and the reasons for their selection. Providers may register multiple pages to which they wish to direct users. However, each page may be attached to only one of these categories. Each page to which they refer users will also have a return link to PrecipLinks.

The poster describes the operation of the system both the automated and the human processes. It also provides images for the various steps in the registration and use.