reef recovery program that combines education with more careful management. But "climate change is a tragedy not of our making," says Sarwono Kusmaatmadsa, Indonesia's Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, calling on the industrialized world to shoulder more responsibility for the causes of global warming. Although potentially costly to industrialized nations, such efforts would be good for local economies, conferees noted. Indeed, coral reefs provide the basis for an estimated $400 billion fishing and tourism industry around the world. That figure provides another—and for some more compelling—reason to protect coral ecosystems.

–DENNIS NORMILE

2001 BUDGET

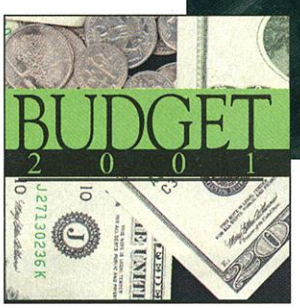
NSF and NASA Score Last-Minute Victories

Moved to generosity by the impending elections and a big budget surplus, Congress last week gave both NASA and the National Science Foundation (NSF) significant hikes for 2001. After traveling a rocky road to reach this point, legislators gave NSF $4.42 billion, a $522 million boost over this year that nearly matched NSF's 17% request. NASA received $14.3 billion, nearly twice the White House's request for a 3% boost—but with hundreds of millions of dollars in earmarks added on.

When the House and Senate differ on funding, they usually produce a final budget by splitting the difference. But this year leaders "compromised" on a total for both NSF and NASA that exceeded the earlier levels set by either body. "I really like Congress's math this year," quipped NSF director Rita Colwell. "I'm thrilled with the outcome." Leaders greased the legislative process by adding in numerous last-minute increases requested by such key members of the Appropriations Committee as Senators Barbara Mikulski (D–MD), Robert Byrd (D–WV), and Ted Stevens (R–AK).

The Senate had been considering a NASA bill nearly $200 million below the Administration's request, which would have required the space agency to scale back many programs (*Science*, 22 September, p. 2018). The House version was lower, at a whopping $377 million less than the request and just slightly above the 2000 level. The final bill, however, leaves space science with a $2.5 billion budget—$100 million more than requested and well above the $2.2 billion spent in 2000.

Ed Weiler, NASA's space science chief, cautions that the boost won't give him much wiggle room to cope with inflation in planetary missions, several of which are likely to cost more than promised. The flexibility disappeared because much of the new money will go to pork-barrel projects, such as $10.5 million for education centers on Mauna Kea in Hawaii, $4 million for a visitor center at the Green Bank Radio Astronomy Observatory in West Virginia, and $2 million for equipment at the South Carolina State Museum's observatory, planetarium, and theater in Columbia. But Weiler is trying to borrow funds from a planned mission to Jupiter's moon Europa to keep one project—a flight to Pluto—from a lengthy delay. Weiler, who aims to rule on the Pluto mission by the end of November, acknowledges its scientific merit but notes that "Europa is clearly the priority of the White House."



In contrast to the small increase NASA requested, NSF asked for a record $675 million boost in 2001, or 17%. In June the House voted for a rise of just 4%, and last month the Senate approved a 10% hike, so the final 13.3% boost made NSF officials very happy. Even so, Congress failed to fully support several key initiatives. The bill provides $215 million of a $327 million request for information technology research, $150 million of the $217 million sought for nanotechnology, and $75 million of the $136 million planned for biocomplexity.

But Congress responded with enthusiasm to projects that promised tangible benefits for local institutions and had strong backing from influential sectors of the scientific community. Although legislators avoided earmarks to individual institutions, they shelled out more than the Administration had requested for programs that support smaller states, graduate fellowships, and informal science education. They also rejected NSF's request for $29 million to begin two ground-based research networks, substituting $12.5 million to continue work on a high-altitude research plane that had fallen off NSF's list of priorities for 2001. And they added $15 million for badly needed upgrades and repairs to radio telescopes in West Virginia, New Mexico, and Puerto Rico.

One big winner is the agency's 20-year-old program to bolster the 20 states that traditionally receive the fewest federal research dollars. Long a congressional favorite, the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) this year received a 56% boost, to $75 million.

"Everybody's delighted," says Joe Danek, head of the nonprofit EPSCoR Foundation that represents the eligible states. The money will help NSF fund a competition now under way that will award up to $3 million a year to build research capacity in EPSCoR states and assist researchers applying for funding through regular channels.

Center of attention. Spending bill includes money for a visitor center at the Green Bank radio telescope *(above)* and repairs to other radio-wavelength observatories.

President Bill Clinton is expected shortly to sign the bill, which was bundled with a $24 billion measure to fund the Department of Energy and various water and conservation projects.

–ANDREW LAWLER AND JEFFREY MERVIS

ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

Institute Goes to Court To Remove Researcher

The Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Princeton, New Jersey, has served for 70 years as a peaceful haven for scholars, including Albert Einstein. But this fall it is embroiled in an uncharacteristically tense—and public—fight to remove one of its tenured professors.

The persona non grata is Piet Hut, a 47-year-old astrophysicist who was hired at the

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