

**CHRIS WEAVER | Scientist, US Environmental Protection Agency Office of Research and Development, currently on assignment to the US Global Change Research Program (weaver.chris@epa.gov)**

**Degree: When, where, what, and what in?**

I earned a PhD in oceanography in 1996 from Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO), University of California, San Diego. My dissertation was on clouds over the ocean and their role in the climate system—so not quite oceanography exactly.

**Did you stay in academia at all, and if so, for how long?**

Yes, I stayed in academia full time until 2005 (postdocs at SIO and at Rutgers University, then a faculty position at Rutgers), when I took a leave from Rutgers to do a two-year American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Policy Fellowship at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). While on leave, I continued my research part of the time, and still worked with graduate students. I took a federal job with the EPA in 2007 at the conclusion of my AAAS fellowship, after which I was a visiting faculty member at Rutgers until 2009. I retained the Rutgers position to make it easier to see a couple of graduate students through their degrees and to wrap up some research collaborations.

**How did you go about searching for a job outside of the university setting?**

The AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellowship Program was really my avenue. I had realized that I wanted to explore the policy aspects of climate science (my field), but I didn't know



where to start or how to envision a career shift. By luck, one of my colleagues at Rutgers had been a AAAS fellow a couple of decades before and planted the idea in my head to seek out the program and submit an application.

**Is this the only job (post-academia) that you've had? If not, what else did you do?**

Yes. I've been at the EPA (and in the federal interagency space through the US Global Change Research Program [USGCRP], see below) since then.

**What is your current job? What path did you take to get there?**

My specific current job is twofold: I'm a scientist in EPA's Office of Research and Development—specifically, its Global Change Research Program—where I work on things like evaluating the specific risks climate change poses to EPA's mission in air quality, water quality, human health, and ecosystems (see <http://www.epa.gov/ncea/global>). For the

past year and a half, I've been on assignment to the US Global Change Research Program (see <http://www.globalchange.gov>), an interagency body responsible for coordinating across 13 federal agencies active in global change science. My role there is to oversee the scientific research components of USGCRP.

**What did your oceanographic education (or academic career) give you that is useful in your current job?**

I still work closely with the research community and I still am, in part, a member of that community. My role is to bridge that world and the world of policy, and so my academic background provides credibility to do so effectively.

**Is the job satisfying? What aspects of the job do you like best/least?**

Very satisfying. The aspect I like best is working in teams of people with very different backgrounds to do something really worthwhile for, with, or about science. The aspect I like least is dealing with the inherent constraints of working within a huge bureaucracy—the federal government. But, this disadvantage is just the other side of the coin of leveraging the influence and reach of the federal government toward effecting important accomplishments.

**Do you have any recommendations for new grads looking for jobs?**

Check out the AAAS Fellowship Program (<http://fellowships.aaas.org>). It changed my life for the better! 🍷