Ocean Color and Phytoplankton Biomass. The new SeaWiFS ocean color scanner has finally put the G into JGOFS. SeaWiFS images show the distribution and levels of phytoplankton in the upper few meters of the ocean, and the data can be used to derive global scale estimates of primary production and sedimentation.

The SeaWiFS image shows several regimes studied by JGOFS. Note the deep blue, low biomass region surrounding Hawaii, the pale green streak of biomass enhanced by upwelling along the Equator, the higher levels of phytoplankton in the Antarctic Polar Front Zone (APFZ) south of New Zealand (pale green) and the intensive blooms of Phaeocystis in the Ross Sea (orange) along the Antarctic coast south of NZ. The latter two regimes are currently under study in the U.S. JGOFS AESOPS program.