Preface

East Asia is located in the southeast part of the Eurasian continent. It is bordered on the east by the Pacific Ocean and on the southwest by the Tibetan Plateau, which intrudes into the middle troposphere. The unique geographic features of the area produce distinct climate characteristics over East Asia. To study the capability of general circulation models (GCMs) in simulating the climate over this region, a workshop was held on 18–20 October 1994, at the Atmospheric Sciences Research Center, State University of New York at Albany, to propose organizing an international research project: GCM Simulations of the East Asian Climate (EAC). This project was accepted shortly afterward as Subproject 25 of the Atmospheric Model Intercomparison Project–Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (AMIP–CMIP). The objectives are to assess the ability of GCMs to simulate the EAC, and to study the mechanisms and factors that cause the seasonal to interannual variability in the EAC.

Over the years, substantial progress has been made and research findings were presented in five EAC workshops, with the most recent one, the Sixth EAC Workshop, held 4–6 August 2002, in Harbin, China. The three-day workshop, attended by scientists from 15 groups from Korea, Japan, mainland China, Taiwan, Italy, and the United States, covers six topical areas—mean and anomalous climate, subtropical highs, intraseasonal oscillation, surface–atmosphere interaction, cloud–climate interaction, and climate predictability—that are important to EAC. The 11 papers in this EAC special issue summarize the research presented at the workshop, including both diagnostic studies and climate model simulations.

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