

ECSN Quarterly Report April-June 2004

Prepared by the ECSN Manager and the Project Leaders

General remarks

The Irish Meteorological Service will host the 9th ECSN Advisory Committee Meeting in Dublin, 8-10 September 2004.

The Chairman of the ECSN Advisory Committee and the ECSN Manager invited the ECSN Project Leaders to an informal Consulting Meeting to Offenbach, 14-16 June 2004. In a sense of a preparatory approach for the coming ECSN Advisory Committee Meeting in Dublin, the status of the actual projects and the implementation of new project activities have been discussed.

The European Meteorological Society (EMS), in partnership with ECSN, will organize the European Conference on Applied Climatology (ECAC). The first combined conference „EMS4/ECAC5“ will take place in Nice, 26-30 September 2004.

The Call for Papers for ECAC-2004 was a success. About 250 papers have been submitted and already selected by the conveners. Thanks to the good co-operation between EMS and ECSN, and thanks to the efficient work done by the conveners, ECAC-2004 is very well on the way to get a successful conference.

To inform the EUMETNET Council on Programme evaluations and to propose criteria for preparing and organizing the future of EUMETNET, the Members were asked via questionnaire to give their opinion on the degree to which they think each Programme has responded to the ob-

jectives set by the Council and to what extent it had an impact on their activities.

ECSN is recognised as an important Programme for EUMETNET. Each component of ECSN is under a different phase of development and has reached a different level of achievement. The degree of completion can be evaluated as 80% for ECSN. All Programmes suffer from limited participation from their Members. It is suggested that ECSN improves the transfer of knowledge and promotes its activities in order to enhance the number of participating NMSs. It could take the lead in the organization of technical workshops and training sessions in areas related to climatology.

European Climate Assessment & Dataset (KNMI)

In this three months period, numerous users from KNMI have tested the prototypes that have been developed for the database and the new interface of the ECA&D project website. These tests mainly involved the logical structure of preparing and presenting the information and data at the website. The results of the tests were promising and clearly illustrate the advantage of the new website compared to the present website. The automated updating procedure of daily ECA series with GTS synoptical data turned out to work well. Also the manifold of formats (ASCII, NetCDF) that are used for the data appeal to the different user groups. All recommendations resulting from the tests are currently implemented.

Furthermore, automated procedures for placing

quality control flags to the daily data were developed, tested and implemented. Automated procedures for calculation of indices of extremes and calculation of trends were implemented in the system as well.

Work is now in progress to set up dedicated machines for operational implementation of the prototype system within the KNMI infrastructure. This ECA&D system will be launched and presented at the forthcoming European Conference on Applied Climatology in Nice to be held in September.

So far the technical and infrastructure part of the project meets all the deadlines of the schedule in the Description of Work. This came at the expense of the earlier announced preparations for the planning of the contents of the next ECA assessment report, which had to be moved to the autumn of this year. However, we are convinced that even with this delay a timely delivery of the next European Climate Assessment report in 2006 will not run a risk.

Generate Climate Monitoring Products (DWD)

The project Generate Climate Monitoring Products was terminated with a Final Report in March 2004. On behalf of ECSN the Manager expresses his thanks to Deutscher Wetterdienst, DWD, especially to the leading project group in the Department Climate & Environment, for their substantial work they have done for the development of an appropriate Internet platform in order to disseminate the climate monitoring products contributed by the participating NMSs in a timely and co-ordinated way.

So far, the number of countries contributing to this system comprises only Austria, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. Especially this project suffers from limited participation from their Members. Because of this unsatisfactory situation it was decided to keep the GCMP project going on a quasi operational mode in order to enhance the number of participating Members and to achieve a real European co-operation in the field of climate monitoring.

Climate Atlas of Europe (Météo-France)

As indicated in the last report, the project is now completed. Unfortunately the final CD-ROM product revealed to be not compatible with most of the modern navigators: in fact it was working only with Netscape 4.8, a too old version. The problem was identified at the level of the access to the database under Windows XP (which was not existing when the project started): actual operating systems less and less allow reading disk files using Java applets, for security reasons. Several additional tests have been made, including the use of the free MySQL software and database. This test was successful. However we found that MySQL is a freeware only in the case where it is used internally, or redistributed freely. In the case where MySQL is embedded into a commercial product, or a product which might be sold, licenses are needed (see <http://www.mysql.com/products/licensing/commercial-license.html>), which is not acceptable.

Finally, a solution based on "signed applets" has been found, which avoids all above mentioned inconvenience.

Dr. Walter Kirchhofer
MeteoSwiss