

ECSN Quarterly Report July - September 2001

Prepared by the ECSN Manager and the Project Leaders

General remarks

The 6th ECSN Advisory Committee (EAC) Meeting has taken place in Zurich, 4-5 October 2001.

Mr Volker Vendt-Schmidt, DWD, was unanimously elected as Chairperson of the ECSN Advisory Committee.

The ECSN Manager invited the members and the project leaders to focus the activities on a limited number of priority actions to permit allocation of enough financial and human resources to the projects. The EAC decided to follow these views and agreed upon the following proposals:

- The project **Climate Databases** will be transformed into some basic activity with a more specific mandate.
- With the presented Final Report the ECSN project **GIS in Climatological Applications** will be terminated and followed up by COST-719.
- The project **Drought Investigations** will be completed with a Final Report by the end of this year.

The Royal Meteorological Institute of Belgium is organizing the Fourth European Conference on Applied Climatology "ECAC-2002". The conference will take place in Brussels, 21-25 October 2002. The core-members of the International Or-

ganizing Committee (IOC) had a first meeting in Brussels on September 6th, 2001.

The third ECSN-Workshop on Climate Databases will take place in Langen, Germany, 12-13 November 2001, focussing on Climate Data Exchange and Data Quality. One of the main objectives of the workshop will be a list of requirements for the EUMETNET project UNIDART.

Generate Climate Monitoring Products (DWD)

As the European Meteorological Services are responsible for their meteorological networks and the data management it is obvious that they should also provide first hand information about climate variation and variability and derived products for monitoring purposes. With this in mind and in order to contribute to the required climate monitoring information this ECSN project was started, aiming at developing, generating and distributing standardised climate monitoring products on a monthly as well as on an annual basis.

The status of the project to generate climate monitoring products has been reviewed. A proposal for continuation has been prepared. The project is for products at European and National scale to be made accessible through a WEB site. The proposal is for a period of two years. The Deutsche Wetterdienst is offering to bear the cost of the project during these two years.

At its 13th Meeting the EUMETNET Council agreed to the proposed continuation of the project Generate Climate Monitoring Products.

Climate Atlas of Europe (Météo-France)

The following 17 countries have already signed the contract: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom. It is expected that Spain will do it soon.

There are still plans for offering some non EUMETNET countries to join the project, e.g. Baltic countries, Croatia, Czech republic, former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Yugoslavia.

A message has already been sent to Slovenia, to the Czech Hydrometeorological Institute, and to Met services from Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Yugoslavia.

Answers to the questionnaire concerning national practices for climate information have been received from the following 18 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands and United Kingdom.

The computation of 1971-2000 normals for France have been completed. The results are in a validation phase by regional and local centers.

Some participating countries are still asked to provide the list of stations that they will provide (with their latitude-longitude), in order to speed

up the first phase of the work with the subcontractor, i.e. the extension to the whole western Europe of the map allowing the selection of stations. For the moment, this information was received only from:

Austria (17), Belgium (8), Finland (65), France (about 100), Germany (19), Italy (54), Luxemburg (1), Spain (79), Sweden (30), Switzerland (14), The Netherlands (7). The numbers between brackets represent the number of stations proposed by the considered country.

Spain was the first country to provide a full dataset. However, some problems were identified (wrong formats, missing information) and forwarded to the data providers. Prior to sending their datasets to the project, all contributors are kindly invited to check carefully that the formats that they have been using are the recommended ones. The subcontractor has been chosen.

There were several fruitful exchanges of information between the project leader and participants, especially from Austria, Denmark and Spain, which allowed to clear up some possible misunderstandings. For example, the original description of the dataset mentioned among the parameters the "number of days with snow". It was not clear enough whether it was meant "day with snowfall" or "day with snow at ground". The correct reading was in fact "number of days with snowfall". These kinds of corrections have been indicated in the updated "Data formats" document dated August 10, 2001, which was distributed in August to all participants.

ECSN Climate Dataset (KNMI and DNMI)

The EUMETNET/ECSN Data Set (ECD) project has started at the end of April 2001. During the last 3 months, efforts have been directed to the production of the 1st version of the CD-ROM and web application. The data that will be distributed concerns quality-controlled data from the European Climate Assessment project (ECA). It covers station data from all 18 EUMETNET members. So far, no problems have been encountered and the presentation of the intermediate results is planned for the ECSN Data Management Workshop in Langen, Germany (November 12-13).

As foreseen in the project proposal, the first milestone for ECD will be reached at the end of October/beginning of November. Then a CD-ROM will be presented while the web application will be operational. The data set covered by both will consist of precipitation and temperature (minimum, mean, maximum) data from ECA, for stations within the 18 Member states. These data are quality-controlled during ECA so there were almost no efforts made in this area as far as this stage of the project is considered. In the second stage (November-May) quality control will be required for additional data. The ambition for the 2nd stage is to make accessible more metadata as well as more parameters (specifically moisture content has been mentioned). Inherent quality control procedures will result in "flagging" of the data instead of removal of data; some experience with this "flagging" has already been gained.

The way in which the data should be structured in the database has been assessed according to an extensible database model. Also, a simple structure for the XML data has been proposed and is about to be assessed. XML is used as a standard

for data transfer and will be the basis of the CD-ROM data set. The web application will work with an Oracle database, but it could be desirable to use XML for the 1st version (the discussion about the co-existence of XML and relational databases goes beyond the scope of this report but will be extensively elucidated in the ECD documentation).

Meanwhile, the 2nd prototype of the ECD Java application has been released recently. It will be a blueprint for the intermediate version to be released beginning of November. The ECSN Data Management Workshop (Langen, November 12-13) will feature a joint presentation of KNMI and DNMI on ECD.

Further Actions:

- the partners that have submitted data to ECA have been informed on the intentions of ECD and asked for additional, updated data sets;
- KNMI is about to return the signed contract;
- Advisory Board members have been proposed and will be asked for feedback on the 1st version of ECD.

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