

ECSN Quarterly Report January-March 2006

Prepared by the ECSN Manager and the Project Leaders

General remarks

The 27th EUMETNET Council meeting has taken place in Toulouse, France, 4-5 April 2006.

The current Contract giving the responsibility for the EUMETNET/ECSN Programme to MeteoSwiss expires on 31 December 2006. The CO EUMETNET and the ECSN Programme Manager considered that the objectives of ECSN remain valid and recommended to the Council to agree a continuation of the Programme. The Members of the Council unanimously supported this view and approved the continuation of the ECSN Programme for a coming four-year period, starting on 1st January 2007. The Council requested the CO to send out a Call for Proposals to become Responsible Member of the ECSN Programme for the phase 2007-2010.

The ECSN Manager has been invited to present the revised proposal on the Showcase EUROGRID project. Such an approach is fundamental to improve the EUROGRID concept accordingly, so that individual NMHSs and the participating network of European NMHSs can benefit as much as possible from a joint European project. A proposal for a Showcase EUROGRID was already presented at the 26th Council meeting in Helsinki. At that occasion the Council advised that a simpler and less expensive project should be considered. It also recommended to develop a new proposal that included closer co-ordination with ECMWF and better links with other ECSN activities.

At this 27th Council meeting an overwhelming vote supported the revised proposal and declared it as an important step forward in European climatology. Unfortunately, in a second vote, only a small majority of Member countries have been ready to declare their financial support for this Showcase EUROGRID project. But with the support of this small core group the project can be launched! The Council requested the CO to send out a Call for Proposals to become Responsible Member of the Showcase EUROGRID project.

The UK Met Office will host the 11th ECSN Advisory Committee Meeting in Exeter, 21-23 June 2006.

The next combined Conference of the European Meteorological Society (EMS) together with the European Conference on Applied Climatology (ECAC), EMS/ECAC-2006, will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 4-8 September 2006.

The scientific part of the ECAC Conference will be managed by the ECAC Advisory Board (EAB) and by selected conveners.

European Climate Assessment & Dataset (KNMI)

Currently, the ECA&D system does now offer all the data, and the corresponding indices, trend and homogeneities, that has been provided so far. Also the GIS-functionality is now available as well.

The ECSN Programme ECA&D is widely recognized as a EUMETNET baseline dataset, not only by the European NMHS's but also by a number of strategic bodies as WMO, EEA and the EU research Community.

The employee, dedicated to the technical, web and database aspects of ECA&D, and paid from the project budget, has left the organization last January. It is foreseen that the recruitment for his successor will be accomplished next June.

In order to assure the quality of the project execution and in order to set up internal arrangements for continuation of the dataset project, the Council was asked, and it agreed that the available budget for the formal project period 2003-2006 may be applied to extend the project period to 6 months.

ENSEMBLES (KNMI, MeteoSwiss)

In March 2006, two deliverables of the ENSEMBLES project were completed: an assessment of the available station density for the gridding and daily data quality/homogeneity, and a report on the analysis of possible gridding methods. Both deliverables can be downloaded from the ENSEMBLES WP5.1 website: http://www.knmi.nl/samenw/ensembles_rt5/WP51.html. For more information about the ENSEMBLES gridding project see also this website.

Up to now, series of 1670 stations have been collected for the daily high-resolution gridded datasets of Europe. All series have been quality checked following the procedures in ECA&D. The homogeneity of each record has been evaluated using an absolute homogeneity analysis (Wijngaard et al., 2003) in combination with a relative

method based on Steinacker et al. (2000) and Alexandersson (1986). When the results of the two tests are combined, about 20% of the series are considered homogeneous in the period 1960-2004. The data collation is still ongoing in order to increase the current station density. For this reason, we still welcome new daily station series (precipitation, minimum, maximum and mean temperature, snow depth and sea level pressure) from all European countries. Please, contact Lisette Klok (klok@knmi.nl) for further information.

Four interpolation methods have been compared for the development of the gridded data sets: namely natural neighbour interpolation, angular distance weighting, kriging and thin plate splines. In the next months, reduced space optimal interpolation and conditional interpolation will be added to the comparison of gridding methods and a validation of area average values for the UK and Switzerland will be introduced. After that, the best performing method will be chosen, the data sets developed and the uncertainties of the data sets estimated. The gridded data will become available in 2007.

Generate Climate Monitoring Products (DWD)

The ECSN project Generate Climate Monitoring Products had been completed successfully early in 2004. Since then the GCMP communication platform: <http://www.gcmp.dwd.de> is maintained quasi operationally. All European NMHSs who are not yet represented in the GCMP are encouraged to join and to contribute appropriate climate monitoring products to the communication platform in order to increase its comprehensiveness.

As stated in the preceding reports, the development of a successor system, EuCLIS, is under way. The development of the software design is completed. Further planning indicates that EuCLIS will be fully operational in the third quarter of 2006. In the meantime the GCMP platform will be continued.

The implementation of the EuCLIS system will be accompanied by an RA VI questionnaire, inviting Members to specify their requirements for the further evolution of a European climate monitoring platform.

Alpine Tmap (ZAMG)

ECSN/HRT-GAR officially has started on 1st of January 2006. The kick-off Meeting was held in Vienna, 2-3 February 2006, at the Central Institute of Meteorology and Geodynamic. The meeting assembled participants of 11 Institutions (Weather Services and Research Institutions). Due to the ECSN project-funding, ZAMG could support the necessary expenses for travelling and accommodation of participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

The Minutes of the kick-off Meeting were delivered to all participants, the EUMETNET CO and the ECSN Manager.

The basic dataset (monthly normals for the period 1961-1990), with the inclusion of some 30 new sites in Toscana and the adjustment to the common HRT-GAR means calculation standard, is declared to be ready for use. It contains now 1733 stations with "best that can be done" corrected coordinates and adjusted to common means calculation normals.

Due to the decision at the kick-off Meeting to establish a core group for spatial modelling within ECSN HRT/GAR, the project leader contacted Mr. Mueller-Westermeier (DWD) and Mr. Jean-Pierre Ceron (Meteo-France) to become members of the core group.

Spatial modelling of monthly air temperature fields, based on approaches of national partners, has already been started. It was decided that major steps of modelling will be done by ZAMG, based on regular feedback from core group members. First results of GAR air temperature modelling will be presented at the COST719 final meeting in Grenoble (F).

Public relations: After the Vienna's kick-off Meeting, Austrian newspapers reported about the intentions of ECSN-HRT/GAR. On 16-17 March 2006 the project was presented at the „Austrian Climate Day“.

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