

Towards a Network of Atmospheric Services in GMES

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National Meteorological Services have developed strong capacities in understanding, monitoring and forecasting the different dimensions of the state of the atmosphere: its thermo-dynamical, physical and chemical state. Such capacities reflect also the many needs of environmental decision makers (health warning, flood management, climate change negotiators, etc.).

Against this background and taking into account the multiple needs and the diversity of national capacities, cooperation and arrangements, the EUMETNET Council established in 1997 the Working Group on Environment (WG-ENV) with the objective of improving understanding and co-operation between EUMETNET Members (i.e. National Meteorological Services NMS) in the environmental area, of developing proactive co-ordinated relations with the European Environment Agency (EEA) and other stake-holders (e.g., National Environmental Agencies NEAs).

Recently, several large-scale activities have been launched at the European level dealing with monitoring and forecasting of atmospheric conditions, state and trends with as final aim to provide sound, reliable and useful information, data and services for a wide range of users. These include the joint EU-ESA initiative GMES (Global Monitoring for Environment and Security) to bring environmental and security data and information providers together with users and GEOSS (Global environmental observing system of systems), of which GMES has been designated as the main European contribution.

The EU is currently preparing three 'fast track initial GMES services' in Marine and Coastal Environment, Risk Management, as well as Land Cover State and Changes. A prospectus for each of these services is under preparation. The target implementation date for the initial services is 2008. An initiative for an atmospheric GMES service is now under preparation, covering long-term monitoring of atmospheric composition and real-time air quality. EUMETSAT is coordinating the preparatory work.

In this respect, two GMES-projects have a particular relevance for atmospheric monitoring and forecasting, GEMS (Global Earth-system Monitoring using Space and in-situ data; coordinated by ECMWF) and PROMOTE (MONiToring for the GMES Service Element; coordinated by KNMI).

On the meteorological side, EUMETNET Council has invited its WG-ENV to work with ECMWF and EUMETSAT on the preparation of the Atmospheric service based on a 2009 transition to operations of the GEMS Integrated Project. Participation of

mandated national and international agencies in the preparation of such a proposal will be essential if the proposal is to attract widespread support. Thus, links and coordination with the GEMS and PROMOTE projects and with ECMWF and EUMETSAT should be one important consideration of WG-ENV.

This presentation will briefly review these various developments and look at possibilities for the near future.