

WMO-CGMS Virtual Laboratory
for Education and Training in Satellite Meteorology

http://cgms.wmo.int/CGMS_virtuallab.html
<http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/sat/>

VLab Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 1, August 2010

Maryam Uz, EUMETSAT, Editor

VLMG-5 meeting July 2010 in Beijing

The VLMG-5 meeting took place from 12 - 14 July in Beijing, China on the premises of the China Meteorological Agency Training Centre. The meeting was followed by a two day seminar on training matters. The meeting was chaired by the VLab Co-Chairs Volker Gaertner from EUMETSAT and the new Co-chair Kathy-Ann Caesar from the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) in Barbados. In total 24 persons participated in the meeting and the seminar.



Group photo: VLMG-5 meeting participants

The presentations were followed by group discussions during which actions and recommendations were captured for the VLab. The main topics presented and discussed by the Group were: User Preparedness Plan for the Transition of new Satellite Generations, Status of WMO document 258 and in particular chapter 7.9, COMET's ESCR including a hands-on-session to test the functionalities, Status of CoEs VLab websites, Developing the Training Plan and Training Events Calendar.

It can be summarised that the meeting was very successful and initiated interesting discussions. The scope of the VLab will be broadened to other emerging scientific communities in developing countries. Therefore the VLab will prepare a roadmap towards widening the scope of VLab activities to serve the needs of these communities.

The working group meetings were a very good way to closer work together and come up with concrete examples e.g. on improving the VLab central website, reporting templates, the recently developed training events calendar, etc.

(Article contributed by Maryam Uz, EUMETSAT, Darmstadt, Germany)

The West Africa Regional Focus Group Third Workshop

The West Africa RFG held its third workshop in Nouakchott, Mauritania from 4th to 8th July 2010. The workshop topic was the Use of new distance learning techniques and tools

The workshop was intended for ASECNA CELICA MET trainers and sought to train them on the use of online virtual training platforms to create, animate, manage and evaluate activities of distance training. Eighteen (18) ASECNA CELICA MET trainers from 18 African countries, three representatives of ASECNA Operational Division, two instructors from EAMAC and a member of the ASECNA Representation in Mauritania, took part in this workshop.

The lecturers were: Garba (EAMAC), Ouattara (EAMAC) and Ilboudo (ASECNA Operational Division). EUMETSAT developed the workshop site and the operation of the online CENTRA session.



Group photo: Course participants "The Use of new distance Learning techniques and tools"

All training materials were provided through the EUMETSAT training site <http://training.eumetsat.int>, which is very effective for communication. The workshop was conducted in the form of presentations and practical exercises on the Visit View course, the use of MOODLE and CENTRA platforms. The positive experience of the second workshop (held in 2009), where each participant was asked to have a PPT presentation ready was put into practice and allowed time saving.

At the end of the workshop, each participant was capable of installing and configuring Visit View, MOODLE and CENTRA platforms for the needs of knowledge exchange and distance training. The participants made important recommendations including 1) the availability to have high speed Internet connection in their respective centers, 2) the implementation of distance training events 3) acquisition of CENTRA by ASECNA and hosting a MOODLE site on the ASECNA server.

The participants highlighted the success of the workshop through its relevance and the knowledge of new distance training techniques and committed themselves to continue learning these techniques in their respective centers.

(Article contributed by Adamou Garba, EAMAC, Niamey, Niger)

BMTC conducted VLab sessions with JMA, MetService New Zealand and EumetCAL

The Region V activities of the CoE in Melbourne, Bureau of Meteorology Training Centre (BoMTC) have focussed upon the remote lectures for the Advanced Forecaster Course 31 May to 11 June. The satellite related topics were presented on the 7th and 8th of June. These included lectures pertaining to Satellite Data: Strategic Directions, Potential Vorticity: Conceptual Models, Water Vapour Imagery and Hyper-spectral Imagery. A Water Vapour Workshop was also conducted as well as VLab sessions.

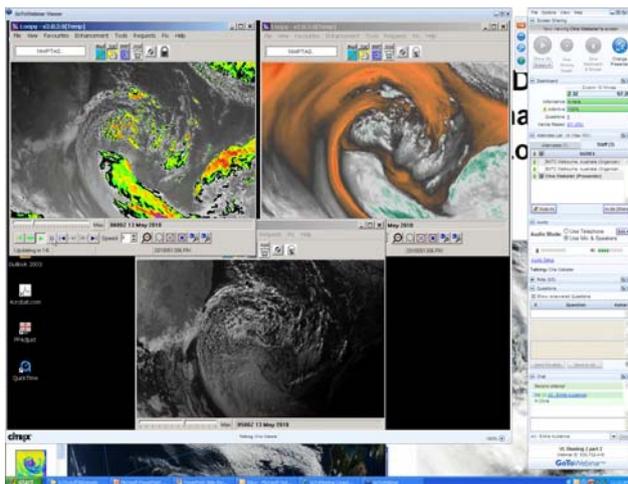


Image shows low pressure system over the Tasman Sea as shown using the Webinar web-conferencing software. (Image courtesy MetService New Zealand)

The VLab sessions were organised together with EumetCAL (Vesa Nietosvaara - "Satrep Online"), Japan Meteorological Agency (Yoshiyuki Terasaka and Akihiro Shimizu - "Objective Cloud Analysis") and with the Meteorological Service of New Zealand (Chris Webster – "Regional Chart Discussion").

For the VLab sessions with JMA and MetService of New Zealand, the Webinar web-conferencing software was used. Webinar was found to be very user-friendly software. The audio transmission was clear and the screen images of the presenter were transmitted without interruption. There were some delays in transmitting image loops during one of the sessions, but these were successfully addressed.

The Eumetcal "Satrep Online" session complemented and enhanced the previous lecture on Hyper-spectral Imagery.

The Regional Chart Discussion session with the Meteorological Service of New Zealand allowed for a valuable exchange of forecasting ideas between Australian and New Zealand forecasters.

The well presented lecture by JMA also generated interest amongst participants. Participants were keen to have access to the Cloud Analysis products, however these are only available for the Northern hemisphere regions in the vicinity of Japan. It may be possible to adapt some of the principles to the processing of MODIS image data for Australian and New Zealand use. The Japan Meteorological Agency kindly provided a copy of the presentation for further reference.

(Article contributed by Bodo Zeschke, BoMTC, Melbourne, Australia)

EUMETSAT Dust Events Week 1-5 March 2010

EUMETSAT, in collaboration with EUMETCAL, the WMO Virtual Laboratory and the Nowcasting SAF, conducted a special online training event week on detecting, nowcasting and forecasting dust clouds using satellite data

to highlight the importance of EUMETSAT satellite data for the detection of dust. The training week consisted of eight online sessions dealing with the detection, nowcasting and forecasting of dust clouds using geostationary and polar orbiting satellite data.



World map showing the countries that participated in the fourth session of the Dust Events Week.

The lectures were offered by Thomas Lee (NRL, USA), H erve Le Gl eau (Meteo France), Humaid Albadi (Oman), Carlos Perez (NASA-GISS and IRI, USA), Nuno Moreira (Portugal), and Jose Prieto, HansPeter Roesli and Jochen Kerkmann (EUMETSAT).

During this training event week, over 130 participants from 34 different institutes in 25 countries attended the online sessions and contributed actively to the discussions.

The general feeling of the participants was expressed very clearly by Tom Lee (NRL, USA). In his lecture he emphasised that our capabilities for forecasting dust have greatly improved in recent years, thanks to the new RGB products and the wealth of related training resources.

The training software used for these online sessions enabled free and easy access for the registered participants. All the sessions were recorded and made available for download on the EUMETSAT website.

(Article contributed by Jochen Kerkmann and Maryam Uz, EUMETSAT)

The VLab has a new Co-Chair



The new VLab Co-Chair Kathy-Ann Caesar

Luiz Machado was released from his duty as former VLab Co-Chair at the last ET-SUP meeting in March 2010. As a result, a new co-chair needed to be nominated for the VLab. Kathy-Ann Caesar from The Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), Barbados, was proposed as a very suitable candidate. Kathy-Ann accepted to take this new responsibility and will help with her expertise to strengthen the activities of the VLab. Kathy-Ann originally from Trinidad and Tobago, is a meteorologist and lecturer at CIMH since 2000. She is very enthusiastic about teaching and research meteorology. Kathy-Ann first became involved in the VLab in 2003 when the online Visit View Regional Satellite Focus Group Discussions began.

She has been a very ardent supporter and has formed the Caribbean Weather Discussion Group. Kathy-Ann firmly believes that the wealth of resources within the VLab and its associated Centres of Excellence can be extended to enhance satellite technology and more in the WMO community, and welcomes the opportunity as Co-Chair to work towards the goals of the VLab.

(Article contributed by Kathy-Ann Caesar, CIMH, St. James, Barbados and Maryam Uz, EUMETSAT)

EUMETCAL Workshop 29 November to 2 December 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland

The sixth international EUMETCAL Workshop will be held from 29 November - 2 December 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland. It will be hosted by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This Workshop is aimed at trainers and professionals with training responsibilities in the field of meteorology, hydrology and climatology.

This year's workshop will have a special focus on long-term training strategies, particularly within Eumetcal. Eumetcal Programme Phase III has already started its fourth year, and it's time to look into the future and evaluate the past activities: What lies ahead of us, what have we achieved so far and what are the success stories of our community? Now it's YOUR turn to come up with your success stories and experiences - how has Eumetcal helped you in your training area to achieve your goals, what could have been done better and what do you expect from Eumetcal in the future?

The Workshop themes are:

1. Current and future education and training needs
2. Co-operation experiences and opportunities
3. Education and training activities
4. Future of Eumetcal

The deadline for registration is 15 October. For more information please go to the following link: <http://euromet.meteo.fr/the-european-virtual-organisation/courses-and-workshops/article/sixth-eumetcal-workshop-30-nov-2>

(Article contributed by Alessandro Chiariello, FMI, Helsinki, Finland)

Next web meeting(s) of the VLMG

The next web meetings will be held on 19th and 20th October 2010. In the meantime, the VLMG members can use the different fora on the VLab Moodle site for discussions.

Note:

The VLab Newsletter editor would like to thank to those colleagues who have contributed to this newsletter with articles, information and their feedback. We would welcome your comments on this Newsletter and would appreciate contributions to future editions. If you wish to contribute to the next edition on training activities or other areas of the VLab please contact: maryam.uz@eumetsat.int and luveeck@gmail.com

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