

Foreword

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the eighth issue of the European Forecaster, newsletter of the WG CEF. The enclosed articles cover a wide range of topics and I hope that you find them interesting.

The European Forecaster will continue to be available in paper version in addition to the web-site version. This was decided at the latest meeting of WGCEF (Working Group on Cooperation between European Forecasters) held in Lisbon, Portugal on October 5th, 2002 at the Instituto de Meteorologia. You'll find the meeting report in this issue.

Paula Leitão (Portugal) represents an interesting example of an active forecaster. She told us about her growing interest in the occurrence of tornadoes in Portugal against a belief that they simply did not occur in that country. Her research into the subject has now resulted in a database on tornadoes in Portugal. During the meeting Bernard Roulet (France) added that he would send Paula some information on related work carried out in Toulouse. Linking European forecasters like this is a good example of how WGCEF works.

Paula's work was mainly done on days off or whilst on shift. Does that sound familiar? Forecasters are encouraged to take responsibilities outside their operational duties but time resources are often limited. This is a common and unfortunate situation experienced by forecasters not only in Portugal.

Readers are encouraged to report on other forms of forecaster cooperation such as exchanges and visits. It is hoped to set up a link on the WGCEF website to monitor developments. A reminder of the WGCEF website address: <http://wgcef.fmi.fi>

EMMA (a EUMETNET sponsored program) is born. Let us wish her well! I am proud to say that the history of EMMA is part of WGCEF work. You may have read about it in a previous issue of The European Forecaster (pages 25-27, Newsletter 7, April 2002) and Frank Kroonenberg (KNMI) is now heavily involved in the development work. The name EMMA stands for European Multi-service Meteorological Awareness and the aim is to run a European web page that shares severe weather information from participating NMS's (National Meteorological Services). By May 2004 the public should be able to follow the awareness state in real time across European countries taking part in the EMMA program. Every forecaster can, of course, also use this channel to follow the awareness information of neighbouring countries and this will be particularly important in developing meteorological situations. This is another way of bringing European forecasters closer together.

Let us keep an eye on the development of the EMMA program and hope that those involved with the practical work will find consensus in working out the problems to be resolved – within the set time frame.

Enjoy your reading!