

REPORT ON THE 3RD EUMETSAT USER FORUM IN AFRICA

This working paper reports on the 3rd EUMETSAT User Forum in Africa that took place in Rabat, Morocco, from 21 to 25 September 1998.

REPORT ON THE 3RD EUMETSAT USER FORUM IN AFRICA

The Third EUMETSAT User Forum in Africa took place from 21 to 25 September 1998 in Rabat, Morocco. It was jointly organised by EUMETSAT, the Department of Meteorological Service of Morocco (DMN) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Over 90 participants from 36 African countries and regional organisations, as well as other experts and ranking representatives of WMO attended the forum.

The forum was opened with an address by the Minister of Public Works of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr. Bouamour Taghouane, followed by a statement by the Director of EUMETSAT and Mr. Workneh Degefu, Director of the Regional Office for Africa of the World Meteorological Organization, representing the WMO at the Forum.

The Third EUMETSAT User Forum in Africa had four main objectives:

1. to provide information on EUMETSAT systems and plans, in particular as regards access to and use of Meteosat products and services, and identify specific requirements of the regional user community in this respect;
2. to provide an update on data and products expected from Meteosat Second Generation (MSG), as well as on MSG user station specifications, and to review and amplify the actions initiated at the Second Forum to prepare the transition to this future generation of systems;
3. to exchange practical experience on regional applications of Meteosat data and services and on how to best meet end-users' needs in the region;
4. to review the progress achieved in satellite meteorology training in Africa and discuss future plans for cooperation between EUMETSAT, WMO and the Regional Meteorological Training Centres (RMTC) in this area.

Forum discussions were organised in three plenary sessions where the current Meteosat applications in Africa, the MSG satellites and actions taken to facilitate the transition from the current satellite system to the new one were presented. In the afternoons, working groups were organised to discuss the following topics:

- MSG-related requirements in the development of new applications in the area of management of the environment;
- Issues relating to the new MSG receiving facilities;
- Policy of fostering new applications having a high social and economic benefit;
- Strategy for resource mobilisation making it possible for African countries to acquire the new receiving facilities.

Furthermore two parallel workshops presented the Computer Aided Learning modules (CAL) developed in the framework of the ASMET project carried out jointly by EUMETSAT and the community of users in Africa and financed by the Gesellschaft für Technische

Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ).

The forum resulted in 32 recommendations addressed at EUMETSAT and the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services of the African States. Actions were drawn up, particularly with respect to technical and training support in the transition to MSG. Further the request for EUMETSAT to continue a satellite in the INDOEX slot was expressed by the African user community. It was emphasised that the efforts undertaken by EUMETSAT in the African region are highly appreciated in all fields of activity and that Meteosat data are generally the most valuable source of information to weather prediction within Africa.

It is planned to organise a Fourth EUMETSAT User Forum in Africa in Kampala, Uganda, from 25 to 29 September 2000.