

# Global Terrestrial Observing System

INFORMATION NOTE (Thursday, 28 March 2001)

Recent developments from the Global Terrestrial Observing System

## 1) Central and Eastern Europe

The Central and Eastern European (CEE) programme was the first GTOS initiative to build a regional network of terrestrial sites (the other programme is in southern Africa). The first step was a user-needs assessment which identified some of the key issues and priorities among the scientific and policy communities in the region. Among these was a need to focus on data management and accessibility development in the region. Therefore, in collaboration with ILTER (International Long-Term Ecological Research) programme and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a five-day workshop was organized by Dr. Edit Kovács-Láng in collaboration with Dr J. Porter, Dr P. McCartney and Dr K. Vanderbilt (from the US LTER Data Management Group) to develop site-based integrated research and monitoring in the CEE region.

Held in October 2000 in Hungary, the workshop was based on data management and accessibility issues in the form of lectures, demonstrations, discussions and hands-on computer laboratory practicals. Topics included: general data management principles; developing scientific databases; data quality assurance; metadata and their importance to information technology; archiving ecological data and information and the role and use of the internet for data networks. Participants were also involved in discussions in establishing further collaboration in the region and integrating CEE LTER sites into the metadata networks of ILTER and GTOS' TEMS database.

The report of the workshop can now be obtained on the GTOS web site:

<http://www.fao.org/gtos/gtospub/pub27.htm>

The GTOS implementation plan for central and Eastern Europe can be found at: <http://www.fao.org/gtos/gtospub/pub20.htm>

## 2) Terrestrial data and information

During the year 2000 work was started on the updating and upgrading of the TEMS (Terrestrial Ecosystem Monitoring Sites) database. The new system is now being beta tested and will soon be available on the Internet. New features include:

- updated site information (this is an ongoing process);

- an advanced query system;
- a new set of core variables;
- access to satellite data catalogues;
- access to socio-economic databases;
- an improved structure and function.

Further details will be coming nearer to the release date (mid-April).

### Feedback

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