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Newsletter 2010-1 of the European Severe Storms Laboratory e. V. (ESSL)

5th Extreme Weather Congress in Bremerhaven



The 5th Extreme Weather Congress organized by the Institute for Weather and Climate Communication (Hamburg) attracted again journalists, scientists, politicians, representatives of economy, governmental and non-governmental meteorology services



Futuristic architecture: The science centre "Klimahaus Bremerhaven 8° Ost".
(Photo: Christian Frohs)

and the interested public. With more than 800 participants from March 4th to 6th 2010, the congress saw a new record attendance. As in 2009 the event was hosted by the Klimahaus (Climate House) Bremerhaven 8° Ost, a unique science centre which opened in June 2009. The core of the centre is an exhibition called "The Journey" along the 8°E meridian (name!), where visitors are taken through nine stations covering the various climatic regions of the Earth.

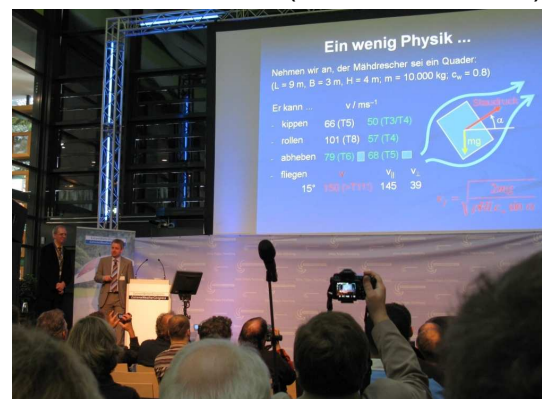


Thilo Kühne reports on the ESWD
(Photo: Christian Frohs)

Comprising 73 talks the congress covered a broad scope of subjects: climate change and impacts, severe weather, space weather, energy, politics and media. A highlight was Tim Samaras' impressive talk on storm chasing and exploring the inside of tornadoes by probes dropped in their paths.

ESSL was represented on the congress by two oral presentations: Thilo Kühne gave a talk about the present status of the European Severe Weather database ESWD and the new quality control levels (QCL). In a joint presentation, Thomas Sävert (Meteomedia AG) and Bernold Feuerstein discussed new information

about a historic tornado case in Brandenburg (former German Democratic Republic) in 1979. Based on exceptional damage (airborne 10 ton harvesters) the wind speed is estimated to be of lower F4 (T8) intensity which makes this case being the most recent F4 tornado in Germany (after Pforzheim 1968). Two side meetings during the congress were related to Skywarn Germany: The Skywarn Symposium and a meeting of the Skywarn Tornado Workgroup where the new QCL system was presented and discussed in detail.



Thomas Sävert (l.) and Bernold Feuerstein (r.) discussing airborne harvesters.
(Photo: Björn Witha)

New Quality Control Level System for the ESWD

To assess the status of quality-control (QC), the individual data records are assigned with particular quality levels. The meaning of the three quality-control levels in the ESWD and the underlying regulations for their assignment are as follows:

QC0 **"as received"** (new report, quality-control pending).

QC0+ **"plausibility checked"**

(assigned by partner organisation, partner NMHS or ESSL)

The report is plausible, given the overall meteorological situation in, or data from the affected region and timeframe.

QC1 **"report confirmed by reliable sources"**

(assigned by partner organisation, partner NMHS or ESSL)

Only some aspects of the report are still under discussion.

QC2 **"event fully verified"**

(assigned by partner NMHS or ESSL)

All information available about this event is verified, consistent and comes from reliable sources.

ESWD quality-control levels denote the reliability of the contained information, and do not refer to the mere quantity of information (number of filled database fields).

The significant step in report quality takes place from QC0+ to QC1. Both QC1 and QC2 reports are confirmed and suitable for quantitative analysis. However, for some analyses, even the QC0+ reports will still be adequate.

ESSL Development 2009

Highlight of the year 2009 was the organization of the 5th European Conference on Severe Storms in Landshut (Bavaria), 12–16 October with more than 200 participants from 41 countries. The ESWD data base is continuously growing and contained by 31 December 2009 26184 entries. The total amount of ESSL Executive Board and Staff working hours in 2009 was 4240.

ESSL General Assembly 2010



This year's ESSL General Assembly is going to be held during the 10th EMS Annual Meeting and 8th European Conference on Applied Climatology (ECAC) 13–17 September 2010 Zürich, Switzerland. More details will follow in the next Newsletter.

Bernold Feuerstein
(Deputy Director and Press Officer)

Nikolai Dotzek
(Director)