

The 10th General Assembly of ALADIN Partners
Bratislava, 21 October 2005
Minutes (final version)

Opening

The 10th General Assembly of ALADIN Partners was opened by Peter Roncak, General Director of the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute. He welcomed all participants and stressed the importance of the meeting. Practical organisational details were given by Maria Derkova.

Adoption of the Agenda

The Agenda was adopted as proposed.

Signature of the new MoU

The main text of the MoU

Jozef Roskar, chairman of the MoU preparation subgroup, being absent for health reasons, the last draft version of the new MoU was introduced by Alain Ratier. A first round table showed a general agreement on it, with four additional comments:

- Poland missed the Annex 1 (scale of contribution) in their version of the MoU
- Hungary wanted the role of RC LACE be clarified, especially as regards the accounting in the ALADIN budget of the part of the LACE budget which is devoted to consortium-level activities (in order to avoid double payment)
- Austria proposed the transition between acceding member and full member be accepted by GA after checking the actual fulfilling of the commitments by the candidate country, rather than automatically
- Austria proposed to add a statement indicating that GA may allow a subset of ALADIN products be declared as essential data in the frame of WMO resolution 40.

The scale of contributions was updated according to the decisions about membership (see further). GA agreed on all other points, and modifications were proposed in order to reflect them.

The Annex 3 (co-operation agreement with HIRLAM)

The draft Annex 3 and its rationale was introduced by Christian Blondin and Andras Horanyi for the ALADIN side. Maria Agren (Sweden, chairwoman of HIRLAM Council) explained the ongoing changes in HIRLAM following the recent external evaluation, stressed the importance of the collaboration with ALADIN and the need to formalize it, and gave her feeling that the current draft version of the co-operation agreement was close to a status where HIRLAM can sign it.

A round table, specifically devoted to the text of Annex-3, showed an unanimous approval of the GA members. The chairman of GA receives the mandate to participate in the next HIRLAM Council on 5th December 2005 and, if the agreement is also accepted by HIRLAM, to sign it in the name of ALADIN.

GA expressed its warm thanks to Per Unden, outgoing HIRLAM Project Manager, for his constant efforts building the HIRLAM-ALADIN co-operation.

ALADIN budget

The minimum flat rate financial contribution, as defined in the new MoU, is estimated at 7.8 kEuro per year and per country, at the current economic conditions. Referring to item 61 of the MoU, the AG decided that this amount will be the ceiling for the duration of the MoU.

Signature

The MoU text, as modified during GA, was unanimously approved, and signed. However, some countries being absent or represented by people without the right of signature, the signature process will continue by correspondence over the next weeks.

GA asked the Slovenian delegation to pass to Jozef Roskar their unanimous thanks for the work done in the preparation of the new MoU.

Membership issues

Algeria:

Algeria is directly accepted as a member, subject to written confirmation of their e-mail stating that they will fulfil the commitments, including the 2-people equivalent manpower dedicated to ALADIN.

Moldavia:

Moldavia is not granted the membership of ALADIN under the new MoU, since their manpower investment in the last years is far below the threshold defined in the MoU. They will be immediately offered a specific co-operation agreement covering at least the continuation of their operational ALADIN-RO data reception. Romania will remain the contact point. Action on PM to draft the co-operation agreement.

Macedonia:

The NMS of Macedonia expressed in a letter their interest in becoming a new ALADIN member. Croatia indicated they would be happy to help Macedonia in basic training and implementation of ALADIN. GA tasked PM to write to Macedonia expressing positive feeling about this candidacy, and inviting them at the next GA meeting for presenting their objectives and plans.

Observers at GA

HIRLAM and ECMWF were confirmed as observers at GA meetings under the new MoU.

ECMWF indicate that, from their point of view, the only modifications that have to be put on the current Meteo-France / ECMWF agreement on ALADIN concern the list of ECMWF members and co-operating states, which significantly changed since the signature of the agreement.

Election of Chairperson and vice-Chairperson of the General Assembly

Henri Malcorps (Belgium) has been unanimously elected as Chairman of the General Assembly.

Jozef Roskar (Slovenia) has been unanimously elected as vice-Chairman of the General Assembly.

Appointment of ALADIN Programme Manager

Jean-François Geleyn (France) has been appointed as ALADIN Programme Manager.

PAC membership

Chairperson and vice-chairperson

Fritz Neuwirth (Austria) has been unanimously elected as chairman of PAC.

Cornel Soci (Romania) has been unanimously elected as vice-chairman of PAC.

Members

A good balance between the 6 PAC other members would be based on the repartition: 2 for Meteo-France, 2 for RC LACE, 2 for the other ALADIN members.

Alain Ratier nominated the 2 French members (Eric Brun and Emmanuel Legrand) and suggested names for the remaining 4 positions: Radim Tolasz (Czech Republic), Gabor Radnoti (Hungary, currently at ECMWF), Maria Monteiro (Portugal), Abdallah Mokssit (Morocco).

Programme team

Local managers

Most of the members were in position to nominate their local manager:

- Austria: Thomas Haiden
- Croatia: Alica Bajic
- Czech Republic: Martin Janousek
- France: Claude Fischer (replacing originally nominated F. Bouttier)
- Hungary: Andras Horanyi
- Morocco: Hassan Haddouch
- Poland: Marek Jerczynski
- Portugal: Maria Monteiro
- Romania: Cornel Soci
- Slovenia: Neva Pristov
- Slovakia: Martin Benko

Names received via e-mail after GA:

- Algeria: Bachir Hamadache
- Belgium: Josette Vanderborgh

Bulgaria and Tunisia has not nominated yet.

Administrative support

Meteo-France indicated that the level of administrative support brought to ALADIN remains at the same level as previously.

Project organisation

Meteo-France will prepare and distribute a matrix schematically describing the relations between the bodies/entities established by the new MoU.

Scientific and technical talks

The scientific and technical talks were noted with interest by GA. Among the main topics, the operational usefulness of ALADIN assimilation now, the ARPEGE/ALADIN/AROME convergence process, and shown by Per Unden the first results of HIRLAM work on ALADIN. Also, GA noted with satisfaction the presented Working Plans: the 4th ALADIN medium-term research plan 2006-2008, and the joint ALADIN-HIRLAM objectives. The reader is directly referred to the presentations on ALADIN Web site for more details and for the other issues.

In the discussion, RC LACE informed that they just agreed on Predictability becoming as it a new working domain in their organization (in addition to physics, dynamics and data assimilation), and that they will correspondingly appoint a fourth working group leader.

Next PAC and GA meetings

The beginning of the work with the new organization implied by the new MoU requires an extraordinary meeting of General Assembly as soon as possible. At least the following topics: strategic plan, licensing policy, work plan for 2006, resources (manpower and budget) have to be addressed. The work should be prepared by a PAC meeting before the GA one.

PAC will meet on January 26th, 2006, in Vienna.

The extraordinary GA meeting will take place in Brussels on February 23rd (commencing at 11h) and 24th.

AOB

CHMI (Czech Republic) informed about their ongoing co-operation with the computer centre of the Academy of Sciences in Prague, which includes the provision of the ALADIN code with the classical clause of restricted use only for research purposes.

Meteo-France informed that Dominique Giard was about to leave GMAP and to join a new position, still in the research area. She will keep the co-ordination of STORMNET (if accepted by EU), but leave her other ALADIN responsibilities. GA expressed its grateful thanks to Dominique for her continuous dedication to ALADIN.