



NEW GLOBAL WEATHER FORECASTING SYSTEM SHOWCASED AT COMMUNICATING EUROPEAN RESEARCH EVENT

Uses power of GÉANT2 network to share data and resources

CER, Brussels 15 November 2005: Predicting and minimising the effects of extreme weather events such as floods and droughts is a vital global issue. The planned new Global Interactive Forecasting System (GIFS), being showcased at the Communicating European Research (CER) Event, aims to improve weather prediction speed and accuracy, reducing the effects of extreme weather on the developed and developing world.

GIFS is being developed by a group of National Weather centres across Europe, led by the Deutscher Wetterdienst (DWD www.dwd.de). It will rely on the power of the GÉANT2 pan-European research and education network, managed by DANTE, to transmit vast amounts of data quickly between distributed researchers. The GIFS could transfer as much as 500 Gb of data daily – the equivalent of over 700 CDs worth of information.

With an estimated 30 million users in 34 countries across the continent, GÉANT2 offers unrivalled geographical coverage, high bandwidth, innovative hybrid networking technology and a range of user-focused services. Its extensive geographical reach interconnects with other world regions, enabling global collaboration. GÉANT2 will offer projects point-to-point services to connect distributed research centres with high capacity links at a far lower cost than running a private network.

“Climate change is one of the crucial issues affecting the world today,” commented Dai Davies, general manager, DANTE. “Accurate weather forecasting is central to better prediction of extreme weather and prevention of its effects. To this end GIFS aims to bring together data and resources from across the globe and we are delighted that GÉANT2 will be used as part of this project.”



To ensure the closest collaboration and to share the processing power of national weather computers GIFS will use advanced grid computing technology. This enables workloads to be shared across national weather computers automatically via the GÉANT2 and national networks, speeding up weather forecasting and enabling more accurate and timely predictions.

The GIFS project will undergo feasibility studies in 2006/7 with operational tests in 2008 and the aim of full operation within 10 years.

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About GÉANT2

GÉANT2 delivers the next generation research and education network for Europe. With over 30 million users in 34 countries across the continent, GÉANT2 offers unrivalled geographical coverage, high bandwidth, innovative hybrid networking technology and a range of user-focused services. Its extensive geographical reach interconnects with other world regions, enabling global research collaboration. GÉANT2's comprehensive programme of research and service development keeps Europe at the forefront of global research.

GÉANT2 is co-funded by the European Commission under the Sixth Research and Development Framework Programme. The project partners are 32 European National Research and Education Networks (NRENs), TERENA and DANTE. It is co-ordinated by DANTE, the research networking organisation that plans, manages and builds research networks all over the world. For more information visit: www.geant2.net

About DANTE:

DANTE is a non-profit organisation whose primary mission is to plan, build and manage research and education networks on behalf of Europe's National Research and Education Networks. Established in 1993, DANTE has been fundamental to the success of pan-European research and education networking. DANTE is currently building GÉANT2, which will upgrade the GÉANT network and will continue to provide the data communications infrastructure essential to the success of many research projects in Europe.

DANTE is involved in initiatives worldwide to interconnect countries in other regions to one another and to GÉANT2. DANTE is currently managing initiatives focused on the Mediterranean, Latin American and Asia-Pacific regions through the EUMEDCONNECT, ALICE and TEIN2 projects respectively. For more information please visit: www.dante.net

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