

Progress Report

to the 27th Meeting of the Technical Committee on Meteorology
Exeter, UK, November 13-14, 2003

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1. Objectives of the Action

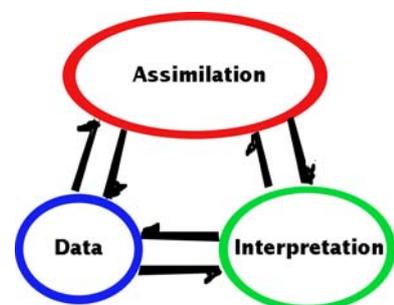
The main objective of the Action is to advance the understanding of the state of the global upper troposphere and lower stratosphere, and the role of the dynamical, chemical, and radiative processes in this altitude region. COST Action 723 will provide value-added quality-controlled datasets of geophysical parameters (e.g., ozone and water vapour) which are believed to be important for the study of radiative, dynamical, and photochemical processes in the tropopause altitude region (5 km above and below the tropopause). Hitherto, there has been little information on these geophysical parameters in this region. The Action will contribute toward making the best use of observations, models and assimilation algorithms, and toward the definition of new strategies for future research.

2. Working Groups (WGs)

The Action consists of three working groups:

- **WG1:** Data and Measurement Techniques
- **WG2:** An assimilated Ozone and Humidity Dataset
- **WG3:** Assessing the State of the UTLS and Understanding the Relevant Processes

These areas are tightly related, as indicated by the figure to the right. Therefore, the three WGs have to be linked together by common meetings and workshops.



3. Status

Presently 17 countries are participating in COST-723:

- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom

On September 9-10, 2002, the 1st MCM was arranged, and MC and WG chairmen were elected. WGs were established, and a first draft workplan was set up (<http://www.cost723.org/docs/>). EoCs have been collected on the web (<http://www.cost723.org/docs/eoc/>).

Then the general COST moratorium interrupted the Action, while still in the formation phase, and did not allow any official meeting. Nevertheless, the WG chairmen continued to assemble the WGs by email, but this process was difficult without knowing when the first meeting would be possible.

An unofficial meeting to discuss the situation was held without COST funding at the EGS-AGU-EUG assembly in Nice, on April 8, 2003. In total 17 COST 723 members participated in the meeting. It was decided to move the Opening Workshop to March 11-13, 2004.

In late May 2003 it was announced to us that we would be allowed to hold a meeting in September or October 2003, but only with a limited number (around 20) participants. This was not enough for the Opening Workshop, and not even enough to make a meeting with all working groups, hence it was decided that only MC and WG1 should meet.

This MC and WG1 meeting was held in Bern, Switzerland on October 6-7, 2003. The plans for the Opening Workshop in March 2004 were reconfirmed.

Initially, the Action was planned to start with the Opening Workshop, which should have taken place 6 months after the first MC meeting, in other words in March 2003. Thus, the moratorium has delayed the Action by approximately one year.

4. Working Group Activities

For WG1, the different available UTLS data sources were represented at the Bern meeting: Radiosonde-based, aircraft-based, and satellite-based. The detailed program is available at http://www.cost723.org/meetings/wg1_1/. The WG has started an inventory of available data sets. Furthermore, a radiosonde humidity sensor intercomparison campaign is planned to take place in January/February 2004.

For WG2 and WG3, brief summaries of group activities were also presented in Bern. WG2 members are concentrating on: evaluation of satellite data using assimilation techniques, examples of quality-controlled ozone analyses for the period of the unprecedented southern major warming of September 2002, and training activities. Examples of collaborations being developed by COST action members were also presented, for example details of the FP5 EU project ASSET ("Assimilation of Envisat data"). Many of the WG2 participants are partners in ASSET. Information on ASSET can be found at <http://darc.nerc.ac.uk/asset>. WG3 is still in the formation phase.

5. Plans

Plans for 2004 include the Opening Workshop in March at ESTEC, and another WG/MC meeting in fall. In 2005 we plan to organize a summer school, in order to disseminate the intermediate results of the Action, if the TC approves. Besides that, we should also hold an WG/MC meeting.

6. COST 723 Website

A dedicated domain has been created for the COST 723 website. The address is: <http://www.cost723.org/>. The website contains general information about the Action and meeting material. It also hosts mailing lists for MC and WGs, as well as an address database of all COST 723 members. Results of the Action are also planned to be added, as they become available.

7. COST 723 at other Meetings

The COST 723 members gave a number of presentation at the EGS-AGU-EUG assembly in Nice in spring 2003, some of which are collected on the COST 723 website.

8. Budget Matters 2004

The two major budget items for 2004 are the Opening Workshop and the WG1-3/MC meeting in fall. A budget estimate can be found in the following table.

Item	Cost [kEuro]
Opening Workshop (17 persons for each WG + 6 MC = 57 persons)	45
MC/WG1-3 Meeting in fall (10 persons for each WG = 30 persons)	25
Total	70