Report on GTSPP
(Bob Keeley)

1. Report on Activities during the last intersessional period

   • Arrangements of Meetings

   Over the last intersessional period the GTSPP Steering Group has met at one-day sessions in conjunction with the WOCE Data Products Committee meetings. This allowed most members to attend without incurring major costs. This has worked reasonably well although no meeting has taken place with all active participants and additional interested parties. Many of the participants of GTSPP are also involved in the Argo program, so that it seems we can continue to hold annual meetings in conjunction with Argo Data Management Team meetings.

   • Support for WOCE

   A major focus of GTSPP activity has been in supporting the production of the WOCE Data Resource and specifically the data set for the Upper Ocean Thermal (UOT) Data Assembly Centre (DAC) of WOCE. GTSPP has been operating as the data management infrastructure of this DAC and so has been central in the production of the data set. The final issue of the WOCE Data Resource is targeted for release at the final meeting of WOCE in San Antonio in November of 2002. The UOT contribution will be close to 1.4 million stations many with temperature profiles only and some having both temperature and salinity. The UOT data set contains displays of the locations and times of the measurements, as well as meeting reports and program documentation. GTSPP has used the opportunity of producing this data collection to document its activities from the start in 1990. IODE members wishing a copy of the 2 DVD set of the WOCE Data Resource should contact the US NODC. As well, a number of Internet servers are being installed from which any or all of the information may be downloaded.

   • XBT Fall Rate Corrections

   The XBT data that are present in the UOT collection have had fall rates corrected whenever sufficient information was known about the probe and fall rate equation used. The US NODC, operating the database for GTSPP, has done a very good job of collecting this information from international sources. The strategy employed in writing the corrected data to the WOCE Data Resource stores information about what profiles were changed and how.
Support for the Ship Of Opportunity Programme (SOOP)

WOCE has ceased operations, but GTSPP continues to provide the data management for the SOOP. GTSPP was represented at the first Ship Observations Team meeting of JCOMM held in early 2002. That meeting declared their intention of having an annual reporting of activities to which GTSPP will contribute.

Revised Project Plan

About 2 years ago, the science centre partners remarked that the Project Plan for GTSPP did not present its activities and functions in a way that they could easily use when seeking financial support from national or other organizations. A rewrite has been undertaken with the draft under review (at the time of this report in early October, 2002). As soon as members are satisfied that the new version meets all needs, this will revision will be issued.

Brochure

The existing GTSPP brochure is dated and in need of revision. Work is proceeding to update this document.

2. Proposed activities for the next period

- Annual reports on the SOOP activity will begin sometime in 2003 and GTSPP will be providing information for this. In addition, GTSPP proposes to continue to issue updates on an approximate 2-year schedule to the data set. These will appear likely as CDs for the immediate future. They will serve to advertise the existence and functions of GTSPP.

- GTSPP is exploring how to extend the GTSPP data set backwards from 1990.

- France has become a very active member of GTSPP and works closely with NODC to maintain the GTSPP archives. This requires frequent exchanges of data and reconciliations of possible duplicates or versions of data. This is a time consuming activity. Given the state of technology available today, France and the US are exploring ways to operate the GTSPP continuously managed database as a distributed archive. The goal is to have a single copy of the data residing in one or other archive, but with an client interface that masks the distributed nature.

- From the start, members of GTSPP recognized the problems of managing duplicates and near duplicates of data. This problem arises because low resolution versions of data travel on the GTS, to be replaced by higher resolution versions in delayed mode. These high resolution versions pass through quality control which can further complicate matters. Much simplification can be achieved if data can be marked immediately after collection with a unique identifier that is carried along with the data. GTSPP is attempting to implement such a scheme that will allow data circulating on the GTS to be reliably connected to the original, high resolution data. It will also solve the problems of different versions of the data co-existing. It requires common use of an algorithm to generate the identifier, and every participant to carry the identifier with the data.

- A representative from the Asia-Pacific Data Research Center (APDRC) at the University of Hawaii attended the last GTSPP meeting. His interests included not only gaining access to the data but also using the data in products and contributing in some manner to additional quality control of the data. Contact with this program is still being explored but if realized will bring additional scientific scrutiny to the data and will improve its quality.
• The GTSPP supported WOCE through participation in the Upper Ocean Thermal Data Assembly Centre (DAC). Recently the CLIVAR Project Office has requested that this activity continue in order to support CLIVAR. All participants in the DAC have agreed to provide support. It is expected that some changes will be required to meet the different needs of CLIVAR.

3. Results assessment

During the GTSPP meeting held in Brest in 2001, a review of GTSPP activities was made. The review examined the stated goals of the GTSPP and attempted to show quantitative measurements of how well the project was meeting its goals. This review process, will be transformed into an annual assessment that will appear on GTSPP web pages.

4. Requested Actions

• This is of special importance to IODE. At a previous IODE meeting, it was recommended that IODE data centres collect probe and fall rate information for new data received and where possible for data already in their archives, but that no action be taken to make corrections. The archives at NODC have not been corrected. It is time for IODE to address making corrections to the global archives for XBT data so that there will not be a mismatch between what clients find on the WOCE Data Resource and what they find in the global archives. It is requested that IODE form a group
  a. to review the actions taken by the US NODC to correct the fall rates of XBT data for the WOCE DR,
  b. to propose an appropriate strategy for all IODE data centres and other global archives to correct their holdings and
  c. to encourage all member states to implement these corrections as quickly as possible.

[end]