

## REPORT ON DARE PILOT PROJECTS IN REGION IV

*Selvin Burton*  
*DARE-IV Rapporteur*

This report is a review of two pilot projects of the data rescue programme in Regional Association IV (DARE-IV).

### **Digital scanner project**

1. The DARE Planning meeting held in Barbados in July 1997 recommended that a pilot project on scanning and converting strip charts be started in Costa Rica. This recommendation followed a report that progress was made in testing scanning software for digitising climate strip charts. The software package, provided by the Hungarian Meteorological Service, used an optical scanner and desktop PC to digitise traditional meteorological strip chart data.

2. The National Meteorological Institute (NMI) of Costa Rica received the hardware for the pilot project, two Dell computers and a Fujitsu scanner, in June 1999 and the Strip Chart Conversion Programme (SCCP) was implemented. Ms Eva Katai from Hungary, who developed the software, was contracted to assist the personnel at the NMI with modification and further development of the software.

3. The Strip Chart Conversion Programme was demonstrated at the DARE-IV Planning Meeting in Costa Rica during July 2000. The demonstration revealed a number of problems which still had to be solved before getting a ready-to-use version of the software. For example, the procedure (painting software) used to redraw and sharpen the strip charts lines was still under development and the software was difficult to use, even in a Windows environment.

4. In light of these and other problems, it was recommended that the WMO Secretariat should decide in consultation with the NMI of Costa Rica whether or not to continue with the development of the software. A decision was later made to discontinue the project.

5. The National Meteorological Institute of Costa Rica sought other funding to continue with the development of the software. However, to date, no funding has been obtained.

### **Digital camera pilot project**

6. The last DARE planning meeting in Costa Rica in July 2000 recommended that the WMO develop two pilot projects, one in an English speaking country (Jamaica) and one in a Spanish speaking country (Honduras), using digital camera technology to test the possibility of using digital cameras to create usable digital climate archive on CD-ROM.

7. The DARE-IV rapporteurs, Selvin Burton and Hugo Herrera, worked with Hama Kontongomde of the WMO Secretariat in developing a project outline. With the assistance of Mr Andrejs Saulesleja, an expert consultant to WMO, specifications for the necessary equipment were drafted.

8. Funding for the project was provided by XXXXXX, and procurement of the equipment started in June 2001. The equipment, including a digital camera and accessories, was received in Barbados and Costa Rica in July.

9. Staff at the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), Barbados and NMI, Costa Rica are currently testing the digital cameras for use in archiving meteorological and hydrological charts.

10. It is anticipated that visits to Jamaica and Honduras will be undertaken shortly to implement the project in full.