

3.5.6 Global Geophysical Fluids Center (GGFC)

The Global Geophysical Fluids Center within the International Earth Rotation Service has the responsibility of supporting, facilitating, and providing services and products to the worldwide research community in areas related to the variations in Earth rotation, shape, gravitational field, and geocenter that are caused by mass transport in the geophysical fluids.

Eight Special Bureaus (SB) have been established to supply products in response to community requirements. These include: Atmosphere, Oceans, Hydrology, Tides, Mantle, Core, Loading, and Gravity/Geocenter (see attached reports). The products generated by the SBs are based on global observational data and/or state-of-the-art model output. The products are available through the individual SB web sites that can be accessed via the GGFC portal now housed at the European Center for Geodynamics and Seismology (<<http://www.ecgs.lu/ggfc/>>).

The biggest challenge remains to standardize the computed quantities, the algorithms, and the data formats of the products generated by the SBs. However, we must also take advantage of products generated by other research groups and not duplicate efforts or resources. For example, there are many products generated to support the GRACE mission that would be particularly useful to the community at large. We are in contact with the appropriate teams and will try to arrange to make the data available through the GGFC.

In December 2004 Ben Chao stepped down as Head of the GGFC and was replaced by Tonie van Dam. As the new head, I would first like to thank Ben for his service to the GGFC and the larger community throughout his term. Secondly, I would like to thank all the volunteers who chair and maintain the respective SBs, and who are constantly looking at ways to improve the products that we provide to the community.

Detailed reports from each SB follow.

Tonie van Dam