

Technology Tips: PDF Viewers

Extension Suite Online contains an extremely large amount of information contributing to the South African agricultural knowledge sector. The information on the system comes in a variety of forms, sizes and formats. The primary task of Manstrat AIS in this regard is to ensure that information is finally presented in formats allowing users access to it in a quick, easy and flexible manner. One such a format is the Portable Document Format or PDF file.

When navigating to a PDF file on ESO, a link to the Acrobat PDF reader website is given where one can download the reader if not yet installed on the computer.

There are many different types of PDF readers available on the internet today, and although most of them basically perform the same function (opening and viewing PDF documents), there are subtle differences that may be important to a user...but more about that next month.



Francois van der Merwe

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"He is wise who knows the sources of knowledge - who knows who has written what, and where it is to be found."
A.A. Hodge



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www.newsletter.esuite.co.za

EUMETSAT SATELLITE RECEIVING SYSTEM

Manstrat AIS recently acquired its own EUMETSAT (European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites) satellite receiving system. The system comprises of a 2m satellite dish with receiver, working station and dedicated software for the capturing, archiving and processing of data. The main purpose of the EUMETSAT is to deliver weather and climate-related satellite data, images and products – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

With this system Manstrat AIS will improve Extension Suite Online (ESO) in the future by providing, almost real-time information regarding:

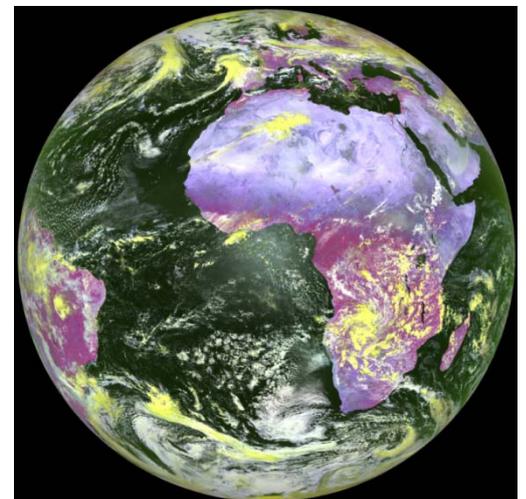
- Cloud cover/movement;
- Fog;
- Active fires;
- Fire hazard; and
- Vegetation activity

One of the main satellites providing invaluable climate information is Meteosat Second Generation (MSG). The MSG consists of a series of four geostationary (moving with the earth) meteorological satellites, along with ground-based infrastructure, that will operate consecutively until 2020. The MSG satellites carry an impressive pair of instruments, the Spinning Enhanced Visible and InfraRed Imager (SEVIRI), which has the capacity to observe the Earth in 12 spectral channels. These channels provide unique information in different wavelengths (visible to infrared) and ground resolution (1 to 3km). The enhanced imagery delivered by MSG provides detailed maps to effectively illustrate weather forecasts, and improved animations of developing weather conditions - such as potentially hazardous fog banks around shipping lanes or storms on an airplane's

flight path.

MSG is also proving to be an invaluable tool for climate monitoring. Cloud observation and precipitation products provide a far more reliable basis for determining how much drier - or wetter - areas of the globe are becoming. MSG's ability to monitor atmospheric water vapour, dust and surface features (such as the distribution of snow, ice and vegetation) is proving to be essential in understanding the earth's climate.

The system will also provide the opportunity for young scientists of Manstrat AIS to conduct research on various applications of the data in agriculture. Some of these research projects envisaged include vegetation activity monitoring, drought monitoring and the provision of a near real-time fire burn scar information.



First image captured with the Manstrat – EUMETSAT system

Dirk Pretorius



EASTERN CAPE –

The basic role of the extension advisor is to disseminate information and give technical advice to farmers. This makes the extension officer a transmitter of information from relevant and reliable sources. The extension advisor should be someone who has access to available relevant information that is aligned to the prevailing situation or environment. This can be seen when one looks at the themes of the last three years: "Partnership in Agricultural Development" (2009); "The Impact of Climate Change on Extension Delivery in South Africa" (2010); and "The Role of Agricultural Extension in Rural Development" (2011). These themes are keeping abreast with the ever changing situation, compelling the extension

advisor to be properly informed and on top of available devices and instruments allowing them to give the correct advice to their clients. By attending SASAE conferences, advisors gain access to new information, and through interaction and sharing they can gauge themselves and learn about the different approaches and problem solving techniques that are available, thus preparing and motivating them for their task.

Presenters from the Eastern Cape have grown from none in 2009 to 5 in 2011. One of the ERP pillars is to "Promote Image and Professionalism" and SASAE believe that joining the organisation and attending its conferences is an important step in attaining this particular goal.

TOP EXTENSION SUITE ONLINE USER FOR APRIL 2011

From monitoring daily utilisation of all users in the nine provinces Manstrat AIS selects the country's top user monthly. These tables will ultimately be used to select an annual national winner.

Congratulations to South Africa's top ESO user for April 2011:
Thommy Malongane (Limpopo)



Thommy Malongane

During May, we had the opportunity to ask Thommy a few questions on his usage of ESO:

Q: What are your responsibilities at the department? I am an extension officer at the department specifically in the fields of vegetable crops and small stock such as goats and pigs.

Q: How long have you been working for the department? Before starting my work as an extension officer at the Department of Agriculture Limpopo in 2008 I was working as an educator.

Q: How often do you make use of ESO? Extension Suite Online forms part of every day in my week,

also when I am out in the field and can connect to the internet.

Q: What is the impact that ESO has on your relationship with your farmers? The great thing about Extension Suite Online is that you can go onto the system immediately; while you are on the farm, to help a farmer with information on diseases, production and many more subjects, this factor has had a positive influence on my work with the farmers.

Q: Would you recommend ESO to your colleagues? I highly recommend that every extension officer log into this service to more effectively help the farmers that they serve.

Q: What have you learned from ESO? The areas in Extension Suite Online that have taught me the most up to this far is definitely, market information, production schedules and pest and diseases.

Q: How would you describe ESO? I would describe ESO in 3 words as "very much excellent"

Utilisation Reports

"Let us use the *Extensionists' number one management decision making tool*".

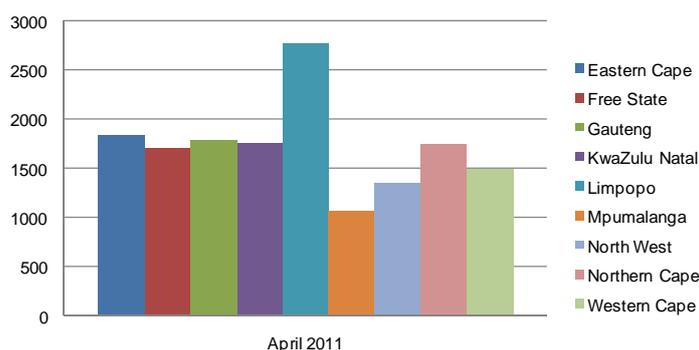
That is our theme for 2011. We aim to increase ESO utilisation this year solely for the benefit of all farming communities. If every user in the country can convince just one colleague to register and activate their ESO account, assistance to farmers can double overnight. Just think of all the positive things that can come from more information becoming available to farmers:

- Increased income for farmers and their dependents;
- More and therefore cheaper food available to consumers;
- Resultant general improvement to rural peoples' lives.

Let us show everyone what real Service Delivery is!

Our top user for the month of April is Thommy Malongane with a user rating of 2 743. His user rating is based on the number of times he visited the system, the number of pages he visited and the time he spent on the system during the month. Well done and keep on clicking ESO!
Amanda Shokane

PROVINCIAL TOP USER RATING



TOP USER IN EACH PROVINCE

PROVINCE	NAME
Eastern Cape	Viwe Qengwa
Free State	Moshodi Marumo
Gauteng	Lesego Phakedi
KwaZulu Natal	Mlamuli Perci Sikhakhane
Limpopo	Thommy Malongane
Mpumalanga	Kabelo Scheepers
North West	Keemetswe Mosang
Northern Cape	Bafshoe Ikgopoleng
Western Cape	Kgadi Senyatsi