Forecast Product Development

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web-based

Contents

I. Pseudo-Imagery products

WV and IR

• 2. New 'Climatological Context' (EFI) products

- Based around hindcasts
- M-climate (model climate) data is key
- Severe weather focus, but other uses too
- 3. 'Synoptic-Feature' products
 - Cyclone tracking and objective fronts
 - Conveys information using the language of forecasters
- 4. Recent Example to illustrate use of the above
- 5. Future work: 'Representative members'

Operational

In real-time test mode -regularly evolving





1. Pseudo-Imagery products

- Generated for the deterministic run
- Model level data is processed using the fast 'RTTOV' radiative transfer algorithm (as used in data assimilation at ECMWF)
- Enables pseudo-imagery for different geostationary satellites to be created
- Products are provided for IR and WV channels, for several regions
- Data interval varies (due to space constraints), but is deliberately 3-hourly on day 1 – very useful for monitoring short term model evolution



Example 1







Example 2





Some uses

- Gives impression of weather evolution in a format familiar to forecasters
- Inclusion of 850mb theta-w, as an air mass tracer, indicates both airmass boundaries and which cloud features are frontal
- Direct correspondance with real imagery facilitates direct comparison, and diagnosis of some model errors in real time (aided by 3-hourly interval)
- For cyclonic developments the connection with upper levels can often be clearly seen via the WV channel
 - Mismatches with real imagery can then provide early warning of cyclogenesis problems
- For convective outbreaks the short term evolution can be closely monitored and evaluated
 - Diurnal cycle problems will be highlighted
- New products thus provide assistance for severe weather prediction



2. New 'Climatological Context' (EFI) products

- Recap what does the EFI ('Extreme Forecast Index') measure?...
- It is a measure, for a given weather parameter, of the difference in CDF (cumulative distribution function) between the M-climate, for a given date, and the EPS forecast.
- The M-climate is always based on the same model version as the forecast (via extensive hindcasts).
- CDFs are simple they are a scatterplot of rank (y) against value (x) – with lines joining consecutive points







EFI distributions

- So we can account for the 'purple zone' by providing a facility to display CDF graphs - anywhere in the world
- Additional benefits:
 - Sight of the model climate for the user, and its extremes
 - Sight of the full CDF for the user (within M-climate range too)
 - Capability to intercompare recent runs' handling, of both everyday and extreme events
 - This moves towards providing return-period-type information
 - As many aspects of infrastructure are based on this, should be very helpful for early warning provision
 - As the M-climate consists of 450 realisations, the M-climate extrema correspond, approximately, to 15-year return periods (for month-long time windows)



Example: Reading on one day in **June 2009**

- 55% probability of >6mm
- 10% probability of >6mm on an average June day
- The 15-year return period 24h rainfall for ~June is 27mm (Mclimate). In older forecasts there had been a small risk of exceeding 21mm, but not in the latest forecast (red)
- Steeper CDF slope on more recent forecasts signifies increasing confidence
- Downside if parameter values are directly referenced, model biases are not accounted for



Eorecast and M-Climate cumulative distribution functions with EEI values at 51,49 ° N/1 °W valid for 24 hours from Wednesday 10 June 2009 00 UTC to Thursday 11 June 2009 00 UTC

54%

58%

35%

17% 16%

-62%

-34%

-17%

-18%

-18%

-23%

-14%

-4%

-22%

-28%

-39%

-30%

-33%

-33%

-23%

CDF for 24h precipitation (mm)

How do CDFs and PDFs relate ?



- The PDF (y-axis) value equals the slope of the CDF
- Steeper CDF = narrower PDF = higher confidence
- A step in the CDF means a bimodal PDF



How 'should' CDFs behave in successive EPS runs?



- At long leads CDF may be similar to the M-climate
- Lateral variations in CDF position between successive runs should, mostly, become less (with time)
- CDF slope will tend to increase (with time), implying higher confidence



But there are Counter Examples:



- Windstorm 'Klaus' Jan 2009 – Atlantic point. Model problem?
- N England rain June '09 - low prob alternative became likely at short range. If rare this is OK.





Other complementary products

 EPSgrams with M-climate

M-Climate			
	99% 90% 75% rnedian 25% 10% 1%		max 90% 75% median 25% 10% min

Total Precipitation (mm/24h)





Notes on M-Climate

- M-climate is based on 5 EPS member hindcasts, from a Thursday 00Z data time over 18 years, for +/-2 weeks relative to validity date. It is a function of lead time as well as date (and of course location!).
- Model drift and sampling issues can thus introduce trends and noise into the M-climate that do not reflect the 'true climate'
 - Note that one also sees some noise in long period real climates (e.g. the Central England Temperature series)
- Sampling can also adversely affect the more extreme percentiles at shorter leads:
 - One particular extreme (Thursday) event in hindcasts could conceivably be captured by all 5 members on day 1: 5/450 ≈ 99th percentile
 - This will never happen at day 10
- Much testing went into M-climate design. Some compromises were inevitable.





Features of the New Web Interface

- A user-focussed step change from past ECMWF web technology:
 - Interactivity clickable points
 - Minimiseable moveable windows within windows!
 - 'Recent clicks'; past history facility on screen
 - One-stop shop for anomalous weather prediction (combining EFI, meteograms, waves, temporal evolution of forecasts)
 - Covers whole globe
 - pdf/postscript facility retained
- Can be called the 'Clickable EFI'



3. New 'Synoptic-Feature' products

• Principle

- Forecasters make daily use of feature identification (e.g. fronts, troughs, frontal waves, lows, hurricanes,...), due primarily to the connection between features and adverse (or extreme) weather
- Nowadays feature identification is based largely on model output
- Why not therefore automate the identification of those features in that model output ?
- Code now exists

Benefits

- Time-saving, especially when applied to an EPS (without automation feature identification in EPS output is not possible)
- Provides a way of intercomparing EPS members using the 'language of forecasters'
- Features, that the model can recognise, sometimes correlate with severe weather that the model can't explicitly represent



3.1 An extreme weather example

Windstorm Klaus that hit France and Spain in January 2009



12UTC 22nd January 2009, 30-48 hours before windstorm Klaus peaked over land





ECMWF Control Run T+0, with objective features





Standard, larger view









Rationale

Identification

Tracking



Rationale: Extratropical Feature Tracking is broadly based on a revised 'Cyclone Life-Cycle' conceptual model:



Rationale - History

- Diagnostic techniques were developed to automatically identify each of the displayed cyclone types (spots).
- Though the conceptual model provided a useful conceptual framework, no related constraints were imposed on the *behaviour* of any particular cyclonic feature – i.e. they don't have to follow this evolution, and indeed most don't.
- Aim was for output to closely resemble synoptic charts, both for features themselves, and their tracks. Special emphasis was placed on severe weather aspects, e.g. successful tracking of cyclonic windstorms.
- Another aim was to trial products in operational environments and demonstrate them at various international venues (was trialled at the Met Office, and used in T-PARC – a N Pacific field campaign).
- The above lead to considerable forecaster input. Much post-event adaptation and tuning of algorithms resulted.
- System now used operationally at the Met Office (on MOGREPS)



Identification of cyclonic features

- This is much more challenging in the extra-tropics than in the tropics!
- Firstly, Objective Front positions are identified along the warm air boundaries of large theta-w gradient regions, 1km above the earth's surface

See Hewson, Meteorol Appl., 1998

- Frontal waves and Diminutive waves are then identified on the Objective Fronts, being pinpointed using a low level vorticity partition
- Barotropic lows are detected separately, as low pressure centres (where there is no frontal wave)
- There is a minimum permissible feature separation of ~300km



Snapshot – N Pacific domain – showing features





Tracking of cyclonic features

• A sophisticated tracking scheme was required, due to:

- The high resolution of input data (~50km)
- The high feature density
- The operational need to minimise computation time; hence 12h frame interval used
- 'Feature association' is performed between successive time frames to generate sets of tracks in all EPS members

 an iterative process dependent on three factors:
 - Feature positions (estimated using previous movement and 500mb wind)
 - Feature type transition probability
 - 1000-500mb thickness change at the feature point

Hewson and Titley, submitted to Meteorol. Appl., May 2009



Tracking - the association process





Tracking accuracy..

- Tracking is an inexact science. Considerable effort has gone into developing the tracking, elevating feature association accuracy to ~98%. This is ~1 EPS member out of 50.
- Therefore on plume diagrams, it is best to not focus on the one or two outliers (which will stand out), but instead on the majority signal
- In strike probability plots the visual impact of occasional glitches is very minor (compared to the feature plumes)



3.3 New Products

- Synoptic chart-type products (single member animations, several postage stamp formats)
- Spaghetti fronts animation
- A 'Cyclonic feature equivalent' to the spaghetti fronts
- Feature plume diagrams (clickable interface)
- Multi-feature strike probabilities (for 3 intensity thresholds)
 - Live web demonstration to illustrate
- Generic name: 'Cyclone Database' products



4. Recent Example

- Flooding in E Scotland, on Sunday 1st November
- Considerable forecast uncertainty in winds too
- Related to developing frontal wave





Automated Synoptic Chart Sequence - Analyses







Met Op Systems workshop - Nov 2009

ECMWF



Met Op Systems workshop - Nov 2009

CECMWF










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October 2009

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October 2009

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ECMWF











Strike Prob Animation – mid-range wind threshold

Reducing lead time – Fixed validity time (Sun 1st 12Z)

Data time 20091026 00Z Storm track strike probability plot for 24hrs centred on T+156



Now consider the 00Z 30th forecasts



Overall these were rather poor



Forecast and M-Climate cumulative distribution functions with EFI values at 51.5°N/1.3°W valid for 24 hours from Sunday 1 November 2009 00 UTC to Monday 2 November 2009 00 UTC





CDFs for Reading from DT 00Z 30th Oct for 1st Nov

- Note reduction in wind gust, as wave track is more to the SE
- Also note the step in the wind CDF
- Denotes discretization of probabilities due to feature track
- Would not see this without CDFs – a clear benefit of providing these products...





Forecast for Reading (from red curve):

"It will either be very windy" "Or it won't !"

(45% prob) (50% prob)





12Z Fri 30th Oct



- Could forecast problems have been anticipated ?
- Use pseudo imagery, in conjunction with feature points





Forecast and M-Climate cumulative distribution functions with EFI values at 57.04 ° N/2.64 ° W valid for 24 hours from Sunday 1 November 2009 00 UTC to Monday 2 November 2009 00 UTC











CDFs for Huntley, NE Scotland, where flooding reported



- Shorter range forecasts
- Reasonable guide
- Note again steps in some CDFs –both wind and rainfall!
- Forecasting in these situations is a major challenge!



5. Representative members – future work

- By combining multi-feature strike probabilities with feature tracks from individual members there is scope to compute the representativeness, in a given sector of the chart, of a particular EPS member's handling of cyclonic feature(s)
- This can then be displayed as a numerical value, allowing the user to select a 'representative member', for that feature
- At this stage this is just a concept, which needs testing...
- Will illustrate with an example....



Example – From Nov 1st Flood case

nender score Data time 20091029 00Z Storm track strike probability plot for 24hrs centred on T+84 2:83 3:55 For all tracks whose mid point lies in a given lat-long box compute mean strike prob along a -12h to +12h track segment... Finally the user might click on the 40 member number to show the User might click in the lat-long box of interest to bring up the representative part of that member's results in a column format... synoptic chart animation 000

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



The 'Representative member'

0Z on 1/11/2009, from 0Z on 29/10/2009 (T+72)





Coding this calculation

- Want to compute 'mean strike prob' along track
- Technically involves blending of two images, the 'strike prob' image and the 'single track' image
- Then need to compute 'mean colour' along track
- In PV-Wave such operations are straightforward...



For a=1 to NoOfTracksInLatLongBox do Begin TV(StrikeProbImage(LeadTime)) A=TVRD(screen) Plot(TracksInBox[a,0:2,0:2], colour=1) B=TVRD(screen) Indices=(WHERE(B eq 1), count) C=A[Indices] Out2=(1/count)*C Out1=Member[a] Print, Out1, Out2 ; (sort first) End



Example – From Nov 1st Flood case

Data time 20091029 00Z Storm track strike probability plot for 24hrs centred on T+84 S 0 000 0% 10% 30% 100% 20% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%



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The Most Representative Member

- Plotted values provide a semi-quantitative measure of 'representivity'
- For the feature of interest, in the region of interest, at the time of interest, at the threshold of interest, the highest scoring member can be considered the most representative within the EPS (provided representivity is > ~ 50%)
- Over many cases, if the EPS is 'reliable' in its handling of synoptic features, this approach to member selection should yield the lowest errors in feature tracks
- Feature track is CRITICAL for determining adverse weather (heaviest rain to N, strongest winds to S, snow to N in winter, etc)
- This methodology would thus be well-suited to the needs of operational forecasting (related interest/requests received from Finland and Germany)
- Deterministic run could easily be blended into the strike prob plot by applying weight, relative to an EPS member, as a function of lead time, but how much weight...?



6. Summary and Outlook

- ECMWF continues to introduce new products tailored to forecaster's needs, whilst at the same time exploiting new web technology
- More use is being made of hindcast data, to place forecasts in a 'climatological' context, following on from concepts underpinning the EFI
- EFI-related products are likely to be expanded more variables, longer leads, more time windows...
- Resolution of the Pseudo imagery products should increase soon
- Synoptic-feature-based approach relates closely to forecasting practice, has great potential for expansion, and can also be used for verification that implicitly targets scenarios conducive to high impact weather See Hewson, 2009. ECMWF Newsletter (Autumn).



Access to Products

• For the pseudo-imagery products go to:

www.ecmwf.int/products/forecasts/d/charts/medium/deterministic/simulated/sim/

• For the 'Clickable EFI' go to:

www.ecmwf.int/products/forecasts/d/charts/medium/eps/interactive/globalefi/

• For the 'Cyclone Database' (temporary location) go to:

nwmstest.ecmwf.int/products/forecasts/cdb/





Supplementary slides follow



New Cyclone Database web interface:























Help









<< STOP >> |< TOGGLE >| Frame: 10 SPEED: - + OPTIONS: continuous -









Help

ECMWF Deterministic animation





Strike Probabilities

Met Office strike probability verification suggests some skill in predicting intense storms in week 2 – e.g. :





A new name for the 'feature spot' chart?





'Dalmatian chart' ?



'Half-time tracking'





Tracking

- 'Half-time tracking' exhibits considerable benefits compared to most other previously used methods
- Feature-matching performed across the ensemble at time zero is used separately, to associate features for the 'plume diagrams'
- In each EPS run: 15 days, at 12h intervals, times 51 members gives ~85000 feature points to deal with (North Atlantic domain)!



'Quinten' - 00UTC 9 Feb - e.g. of use of simulated IR product



- Signs that model was going awry with track break developing in cloud head (simulated), to SW O of low centre L, implying descent. No such signatures in real IR sequences – so low too far N in model.
- Simply illustrates that mismatch can allow model error to be inferred.
- Next run (red, at T+12) corrected this error (previous run in blue, at T+24).

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