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Field Campaign Support by the NCAR Earth Observing Laboratory

The mission of the Earth Observing Laboratory (EOL) of the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) is to insure progress in the atmospheric sciences by providing end-to-end support for observational field campaigns, nationally and internationally. EOL offers scientific, technical, operational, data and logistics support in an effort to continually drive progress in atmospheric research. Facilities available for deployment include aircraft, radars, lidars, surface and sounding systems, and a range of other in-situ and remote sensing instrumentation. EOL has been serving the global atmospheric research community for more than 40 years with experience in coordinating and supporting field campaigns taking place all over the globe. Just in the last 10 years, we have supported more than 70 campaigns, 23 of which took place outside of the continental US and 17 were complex undertakings, involving multiple observing systems and investigators teams and requiring advanced planning and logistics.

Forecasts provided by numerical weather prediction models, including the ECMWF model, have a regular presence in field campaigns and are used to plan missions and guide field operations. Within the past year, EOL has been using high-resolution ECMWF model output to support SOCRATES and RELAMPAGO, two large international field campaigns. Working with ECMWF, EOL has provided specific analyses and forecast fields that were requested by the project principal investigators. The ECMWF model analyses have been also used to initialize research model runs by the investigator teams. All analysis and forecast products in EOL-supported campaigns are saved in the Field Catalog –a web-based tool intended for collecting, organizing, and presenting reports; viewing quick-look data products from operational, research, and model generated sources; and finding and updating status information during the field phases of observational experiments.

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