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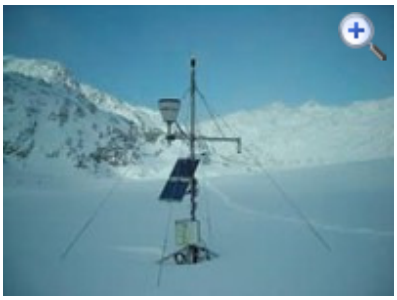
Environmental Analysis **Tuesday 2 February 2010**

Automatic Weather Stations Installed in the Alps



In August 2009, GEWEX confirmed the installation of weather stations for monitoring high up on the Alps for the net SHARE in the network CEOP Phase II.

Italy's first Automatic Weather Station (AWS), manufactured by **LSI LASTEM** - was set up on the melting surface of a glacier at 2669m above sea level (Forni Glacier, Stelvio National Park) on September 26th 2005 e tuttora perfettamente funzionante.

Forni Glacier is Italy's largest valley glacier (c. 12km2 of surface area in the Stelvio National Park). The glacier has a northward sloping surface and stretches over an elevation range of 2600 to 3670m above sea level.

The station is located on the lower glacier sector and the surrounding mountain summits generally reaching heights of 3000-3500m. The AWS uses a 20-channel datalogger, similar to those currently in use in the Ev-K2-CNR Himalayan monitoring network and had been used at 5033m above sea level on Baltoro Glacier (Pakistan) during a two-month field campaign.

The AWS is equipped with 12 different sensors to collect data on the main atmospheric parameters serving to describe the glacier boundary layer. Power is supplied by two solar panels and is backed up by a lead-gel battery.

Data points, sampled at 60-second intervals and averaging over a 30-minute time period, are recorded together with basic distribution parameters. Wind data is sampled every

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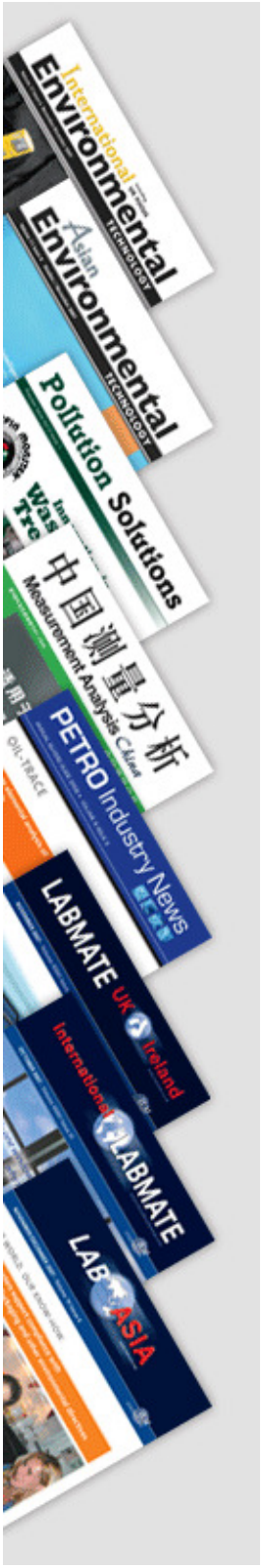

5 seconds, and then processed by data-logger software, which produces an hourly set of results. Data storage takes place in a 2Mb flashmemory capable of storing over 6 months of records.

This sensor suite will permit LSI to evaluate the actual suitability of the selected location and overall system performance under winter conditions. It was selected to provide a comprehensive set of observations and the data is used for glacier surface microclimate investigations and energy balance models and for integration with data derived from remote sensing.

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