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Scientific Applications:

Int'l Grid Projects Participate in G8-UNESCO Forum

The EUChinaGRID, EU-IndiaGrid, EUMEDGRID and EELA projects took part in G8-UNESCO World Forum on "Education, Research and Innovation: New Partnership for Sustainable Development," which closed May 12 after three days of high-level presentations, including Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi.

These projects are based on the innovative grid computing paradigm, allowing geographically dispersed users to share computing, storage and instrumentation, independently of location. In the experts' opinion, this approach will have a dramatic impact, comparable to the World Wide Web. Thanks to grids, besides sharing large amounts of information over the Internet, users will exploit the same computing power of an enormous supercomputer just connecting from their PC.

In the framework of the FP6 for Research and Scientific Development, the European Commission (EC) financed a number of grid infrastructure and applications projects aiming at promoting cooperation between EC and worldwide emerging countries. Such projects set out to integrate the European grid infrastructure with other regions in order to create one wide resource for scientists working on existing or future collaboration.

Besides the technological and scientific impact, these projects are linking research communities in Europe and other world regions -- namely Asia, North Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. Granting access to large resources with comparatively small investments in infrastructure, grids may effectively contribute to bridge the digital divide and fight the drain brain in developing countries, allowing researchers to participate in large collaborations by providing their intellectual contribution only.

OECD recognized the grid approach's potential in 2005, recommending "the creation of new mechanisms (or the strengthening of existing ones) to facilitate access to grids for researchers and research organizations in developing countries, plus other appropriate measures to broaden international participation in grid projects."

Several research and academic organizations all around the world are at the forefront in this field and the projects participating in the forum are a tangible proof of such commitment.

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