

Official Inauguration of the Partnership Centre for the Ocean Data Portal (ODP) of the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) Programme of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.

Session of the Steering Group (SG) for the IODE ODP

On 10 September 2013, a Ceremony of the Official Inauguration of the Partnership Centre for the Ocean Data Portal (ODP) of the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) Programme of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO was held in the Research Institute of Hydrometeorological Information – World Data Centre (RIHMI–WDC), Obninsk, Russian Federation. The Ceremony was attended by the Executive Secretary of the IOC, Dr. Wendy Watson-Wright; Deputy-Head of the Russian Federal Service for Hydrometeorology and Environmental Monitoring (Roshydromet), Dr. Alexander Makosko; representatives of IOC Member-States (Australia, Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Greece); the Inter-Agency National Oceanographic Commission (IANOC) of the Russian Federation; and the Administration of the City of Obninsk.

The Partnership Centre for IODE ODP has been opened following a decision taken in 2011 by IANOC and a resolution of the 45th session of the IOC Executive Council (June 2012), on the basis of which a Memorandum of Understanding on the Partnership Centre for the IODE ODP was signed between IOC, UNESCO, and Roshydromet in March 2013.

At the Ceremony, a number of welcome and opening addresses were made. In particular, the IOC Executive Secretary stated, "The IODE Ocean Data Portal aims to provide seamless access to collections and inventories of marine data from the NODCs in the IODE network and will allow for the discovery, evaluation (through visualization and metadata review) and access to data via web services. The Russian Federation has been the lead partner in ODP since the end-to-end data management concept and has continued to build the ODP infrastructure ever since."

Dr. Alexander Makosko (Roshydromet Deputy-Head) emphasized that, "The tasks that the Partnership Centre should fulfill are not simple. It is necessary to support and develop the Portal tools and to coordinate the use of the Portal technology by the network of the IODE Centres and data sources available under other programmes of the IOC. The high quality of fulfillment of these tasks will pave the way to increase effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of ocean research and services conducted and provided by the IOC and the Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) in cooperation with the WIS, GEOSS and other ocean-related systems." He furthermore promised that Roshydromet will provide financial assistance to the Centre on a regular basis.

Representatives of IANOC and IODE noted that, "The Partnership Centre will further increase visibility and significance of the IOC in the field of international cooperation on the study of the World Ocean and development of the international ocean observing systems in close collaboration with the JCOMM", and that, "The continuous development by the Russian Federation of the Ocean Data Portal as an architecture and infrastructure devised to provide seamless and open access to data and products whilst ensuring simplicity and interoperability is a matter of pride for our IODE community."

The RIHMI–WDC Director, Dr. Vasily Kopylov, thanked the IOC and Roshydromet for giving credence to the Institute and expressed his confidence that the Partnership Centre hosted by RIHMI–WDC will achieve positive results. The staff of the Partnership Centre made a presentation on the IODE ODP using the most advanced information technologies. It outlined the IODE ODP goals, objectives, terms of reference, commitments, and prospects.

The Official Inauguration was followed on 11–12 September 2013 by a Session of the International Steering Group for the IODE ODP. The aim of the Session was to specify activities of the Centre for the nearest future and identify priority actions to be taken internationally to ensure its efficient operation.