

## **International Programme Office of ICSU's new World Data System opened**

The International Programme Office of ICSU's new World Data System (WDS) was opened officially in Tokyo on Wednesday 9 May.

The official ceremony took place in the presence of the Hon. Tatsuo Kawabata, Japanese Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications, and Prof. Yuan Tseh Lee, President of the International Council for Science (ICSU). Other dignitaries taking part in the event were the Hon. Mieko Kamimoto, Vice-Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Dr. Hideo Miyahara, President of the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT), which is hosting the IPO, Dr. Takashi Onishi, President, Science Council of Japan, and Dr. Steven Wilson, Executive Director of ICSU.

The WDS International Programme Office will manage and coordinate the establishment and operations of the WDS, and take responsibility for outreach and promotional activities. The IPO will act under the guidance of the ICSU World Data System Scientific Committee composed of leading scientists who are actively involved with scientific data issues. The first Executive Director of WDS and Director of its IPO is Dr Mustapha Mokrane.

WDS was created through a decision of the 29th ICSU General Assembly, building on the 50-year legacy of the ICSU World Data Centres (WDCs) and the Federation of Astronomical and Geophysical data-analysis Services (FAGS). It aims at developing a common, globally interoperable, distributed data system that incorporates emerging technologies and new scientific data activities. The system seeks to build on the potential offered by advanced interconnections between data management components in order to foster disciplinary and multidisciplinary applications for the benefit of the international scientific community and other stakeholders.

WDS data holdings, WDS services output, and WDS-provided information will be easily searchable, rapidly accessible, and satisfy national and international standards for data and data services. WDS is to enjoy a broad disciplinary and geographic base and seeks to become a world-wide 'community of excellence' for stewardship and provision of scientific data.

*'Society was increasingly calling on science to help solve highly complex and inter-connected problems like climate change and sustainable development. However, this required that science itself, including data, become more integrated and global'* observed ICSU President Lee, *'The World Data System was conceived as an answer to this need... Its vision is to transform today's collection of data bodies into an integrated and inter-operable system.'*

For more information on the ICSU World Data System, see: <http://www.icsu-wds.org>

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