World Data System Scientific Committee (WDS-SC) 2015–2018
Teleconference #1

Teleconference #1 was held on Wednesday, 15 July 2015 at 13:00 UTC

Summary:
Introduction to ICSU-WDS
• The former Chair gave an overview of the ICSU World Data System to the new SC members in attendance.
• Making WDS Members feel they are part of the organization and they should be advancing WDS goals is a topic that will be returned to in subsequent teleconferences. The new Chair (hereinafter ‘the Chair’) asked SC members to put forward any ideas about how to encourage Members to become more actively involved in ICSU-WDS.

Implementation Plan
• The WDS Implementation Plan is a living document, designed to map out how ICSU-WDS achieves its Strategic Targets. The current draft was updated at the 12th Meeting of the WDS -SC (07–08 March, San Diego). However, the draft still contains missing sections, and a very high priority has to be placed on completing the Plan such that it can be disseminated to the WDS community and used by ICSU-WDS to move ahead with realizing its objectives.
• For ‘In Progress’ tasks assigned to former SC members, the Chair and the WDS International Programme Office (WDS-IPO) will approach the members about their willingness to continue to provide input and act on the tasks.
• For the tasks listed as ‘Not Started’, volunteers from the new WDS-SC will be expected to take things forward and SC members were requested to identify both the tasks they might be interested in leading/supporting and any extra deliverables that serve the purposes of the Action Items.
• SC members should read through the Plan and suggest how it can be improved or if they are willing to take over part and update it. Actions in the current document might now be obsolete and need to be replaced, and there may be other concerns or measures that are not represented in the current document.

WDS Members’ Biennial Reports
• As part of the certification process, WDS Regular and Network Members agree to be reviewed on a cyclic, semi-continual basis via two processes:
  i. Biennial Reports—every two years, a Report must be provided following a template as a statement to both the public and the SC of the Member’s current status. In particular, the Reports are expected to highlight any changes in a Member as a result of its last accreditation.
  ii. Periodic Reviews—every 3–5 years, Member Organizations are expected to have their accreditation re-evaluated and their membership renewed.
Since WDS does not want to place a repetitive burden on its Members, Biennial Reports are considered to be support documents for Periodic Reviews; they potentially show which criteria are already satisfied by the Member, and thus which should be focussed on during re-review.
• The Biennial Report process was implemented for the first time at the 2014 Members’ Forum in New Delhi. The WDS Membership and Accreditation Subcommittee created a template and sent this out to the Representatives of all WDS Regular and Network Members. Most of the Reports have been returned to the WDS-IPO, and were randomly allocated to the former WDS-SC for review.
• The majority of the Reports have now been reviewed. With approximately 50% of WDS Regular and Network Members reaching the start of their Periodic Review interval, one on the pressing tasks of the new WDS-SC is to start this process by determining the specific information that will be requested from each WDS Member.

Membership Applications
• The WDS application procedure is a simple two stage process.
  i. An organization submits an Expression of Interest (EoI) for a particular membership type.
ii. For Associate/Partner Members: the WDS-SC makes a decision on whether to co-opt the organization.
   For Regular/Network Members: the WDS-SC decides on whether the organization is sent an application form,
   which once completed, the WDS-SC certifies the Member on the basis of assessments given by two reviewers.
   
   - Previously, nearly all reviews were performed by the WDS-SC. But, to give more ownership to WDS Members,
     Representatives have been increasingly asked to act as second reviewers. This has been highly successful thus far.
   - The SC members in attendance agreed on Reviewers to assess the WDS Regular Member applications of the
     Research Institute for Sustainable Humanosphere, Kyoto University and the Permanent Service for Mean Sea Level.