World Data System Scientific Committee (WDS-SC) 2015–2018 Teleconference #18

Teleconference #18 was held on Thursday, 29 June 2017 at 13:00 UTC

Summary

Decisions of Telecon#17

- The possibility of a WDS position paper on physical repositories did not turn into an Action Item, and a statement about this will be added on the WDS website. Identified WDS Members with an interest in this area will be asked for their perspectives on the position piece.

Review of Action items

- The WDS International Programme Office (WDS-IPO) has created four templates for a privacy statement. It will now select a preferred style and language for the statement, and add it to the WDS website.
- The first incarnation of the Training Resources Guide has been completed, subject to some content checks. The Guide initially will be presented as a table, but will be refined over time. The WDS-IPO still needs to follow up with some WDS Members about their training resources.
- The WDS Training Curriculum still has a few comments that need to be dealt with, but these are not considered major and can be quickly resolved. The WDS-IPO now needs to move forward with the development of a longer term training plan.
- The WDS-IPO has received a number of (self) nominations for the Early Career Researcher (ECR) Network, with some expressing high interest in leading the endeavour. ICSU-WDS will review all nominations received in late July, and try to organize a first discussion. The WDS-SC will be given a summary at its next Teleconference of the ECRs who have applied and the roles they are willing to take on.
- The WDS poster presented at the European Geosciences Union General Assembly (GA) 2017 is being updated in preparation for the 10th International Carbon Dioxide Conference. ICSU-WDS is unlikely to organize a side-event on this occasion since it does not appear that many WDS Members will attend the conference.
- The WDS Executive Director (ED) met with the ED of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, which has close connections with the United Nations Statistical Commission, and also with national statistical agencies. It is hoped that two organizations can engage in the longer term and find areas of synergy.

Reports from Subcommittees and Working Groups (WGs)

a. CoreTrustSeal Board

- The WDS–Data Seal of Approval (DSA) Board managing the joint certification has adopted new branding and a logo. The entity is called the CoreTrustSeal (CTS), and its Board will certify data repositories applying for WDS Regular membership. ICSU-WDS will continue to accredit Network Members separately from CTS.
- The WDS-SC was updated on the applications that have been received thus far. Whilst there is still two entry points for certification requests, this will be simplified to a single CTS website in the future. In the meantime, all certified repositories originating from the DSA website are being invited to become WDS Regular Members by the WDS-IPO, since they might not be aware of this opportunity.
- With the certification activity now being scaled up in terms of building a dedicated entity and increasing the number of expert reviewers, CTS needs to develop training tools, robust application management tools, and a good website. Funding must therefore be raised to sustain the activity in a professional way, and it is envisaged to introduce an administration processing fee that a repository would have to pay to be certified for three years.
- The SC Chair asked whether there had been any thought about having a discretionary charge for repositories in Lower and Middle Income Countries to avoid them being put off certification. This has yet to be discussed by the Board, but will be brought up by the WDS-IPO.
- With certification being one of the core elements of the WDS identity, the WDS-SC questioned whether this move to another entity has strategic implications on how ICSU-WDS is describing itself and promoting its activities. In particular, all WDS materials will need to be aligned with these new developments.
- The CTS constitution and bylaws are currently being written and include mechanisms to ensure inputs from important stakeholders, such as ICSU-WDS. Hence, ICSU-WDS is still involved in the certification process, and becoming a WDS Regular Member will continue to require being certified as a Trustworthy

Data Repository. Although certification has been a principal activity of ICSU-WDS, it is towards the goal of building communities of excellence.

b. Landscape Mapping Subcommittee
- The Subcommittee is working with a modified, improved, and fortified spreadsheet according to the changes requested by the WDS-SC at its 16th Meeting. A background document has also been put together, following a suggestion that the Subcommittee should have an overall statement of purpose.
- Subcommittee members have been given the assignment to each add 4–5 examples to the spreadsheet in order to see how easy is it to put in this first level of information. After adding its examples, the Subcommittee will request inputs from the WDS-SC, and will assign a timeline to fill in the spreadsheet and prioritize which entities should be approached first in terms of data issues/needs/interactions.

c. Citizen Science (CS) Task Group (TG)
- The TG had a very productive teleconference on the day prior to that of the WDS-SC. It worked through some remaining issues connected to a consultancy agreement with a Research Fellow experienced in CS data issues. The Fellow will be working for 1.5 months on the TG's effort to catalogue ways data are dealt with by different types of CS initiatives and appreciated/used by the scientific community, as well as issues around curation, validation, and long-term preservation.
- The TG also has a new addition who is knowledgeable about CS issues, especially concerning data, and who is plugged into a whole range of networks. In this regard, the TG is managing to attract the best and the brightest on the subject, and this bodes well for its outputs.
- The real work will start now with the consultancy, and on the basis of this, tasks will then be assigned and responsibilities delegated to the TG to capture more of the CS terrain; it is really vast and growing.

WDS Conferences and SC Meetings

a. Asia–Oceania Conference 2017 + 17th WDS-SC Meeting
- The WDS-SC was presented with a very provisional schedule for the Conference. There is a cooperative event with the ICSU Scientific Committee on Solar–Terrestrial Physics on 26 September, with the main body of the WDS Conference starting on the 27th.
- The WDS-SC was also shown the current list of registered/invited overseas participants. Many are Chinese since the original intent of the Conference was to encourage collaboration between WDS-Japan and WDS-China. Other overseas participants come mainly from the Asia–Oceania region, although representation is still missing from some countries in Southeast Asia since it is difficult to find appropriate people.
- Several universities and research institutes in Japan are collaborating in international projects with Southeast Asian countries, and have accepted young scientists and graduate students for data-related training. ICSU-WDS is now in the process of inviting these scientists and students to the Conference.
- The Conference is not a closed meeting and the number of participants is not limited. The WDS-SC was thus encouraged to invite anyone in the Asia–Oceania region who might be interested in attending.

b. IDW 2 + SciDataCon 2018
- ICSU-WDS, the ICSU-Committee on Data for Science and Technology (ICSU-CODATA), and the Research Data Alliance (RDA) have received the additionally requested information from the shortlisted host countries. One country has decided not to continue its offer, and so now the choice is among three bids.
- A meeting of the WDS, CODATA, and RDA EDs to make an initial decision on the host will happen within the next week. Once the decision has been made, it will be sent back to the RDA Council, WDS-SC, and CODATA Executive Committee for approval.

WDS International Technology Office (WDS-ITO)
- The WDS-IPO has received indications from several WDS Members that they are trying to foster discussions at the national level to respond to the Call to host the WDS-ITO. The WDS-IPO will follow-up by email about trying to provide some support for these Members.
- SC members were urged to connect the WDS-IPO with people in their networks who might be able to have key discussions and stimulate proposals.

Any Other Business
- The next ICSU GA will take place on 21–28 October in Taipei. ICSU-WDS is invited to report on its activities to ICSU Members, and will be given an opportunity to make a short oral presentation and to supply a summary document. The SC Chair will consult with SC members at the next Teleconference about what should be included in these reports.