

## World Data System Scientific Committee (WDS-SC) 2015–2018 Teleconference #19

*Teleconference #19 was held on Monday, 31 July 2017 at 13:00 UTC*

### **Summary**

#### **Review of Action items**

- The first incarnation of the WDS Training Resources Guide is a static table containing the training resources compiled so far from WDS Members and beyond; it will be reviewed in the future to make it more dynamic. The WDS-SC asked the WDS International Programme Office (WDS-IPO) to publish the Guide on the WDS website and to allow SC Members to provide feedback before it is publicized more widely.
- The current version of the WDS Membership Maturity Document will be finalized and shared with a sizable proportion of the WDS membership to ensure they can be more fully integrated into Global Research Data Infrastructure. The document is written in such a way that it is generic with annexes pertaining to the Earth and Environmental Sciences; it will be continued stepwise, with annexes added on other scientific disciplines once the WDS-SC has collated material.
- The Landscape Mapping Subcommittee has made a good start of listing example organizations that ICSU-WDS should be collaborating with. All SC members will now be invited to add their contributions to the spreadsheet. An initial analysis is needed to report on WDS strategy at the upcoming ICSU General Assembly.
- Some documentation on physical sample repositories has come out of a recent symposium in Australia. However, the issue is broader than this, since there is also a need to provide preservation and archiving for many more elements of the scientific process: code, methodologies, protocols, and so on. It will be added as a point for discussion at the 17th WDS-SC Meeting because it could influence WDS strategy—the landscape is changing rapidly and there is a need for certification of more-and-more repository types.
- Organizations in Africa identified as potential WDS Members have difficulties with resources and financial stability, and a course of action needs to be found to resolve this. With International Data Week (IDW) 2018 now being hosted in Africa (see below), it will provide impetus to talk more on issues around Open Data, data stewardship, and so on; and ICSU-WDS will continue working to make progress on the obstacles.
- A presentation on the WDS African Workshop will be given to department heads of Institut de recherche pour le développement in mid-October, the idea being to have an agreement whereby ICSU-WDS can work directly with the observatory heads to see how they can be involved. A similar action via Institut national des sciences de l'univers is to see how to involve the French national pôles in ICSU-WDS, with an intervention being planned in one of their meetings in September or October.

#### **WDS Conferences and WDS-SC Meetings**

- a. Asia–Oceania Conference 2017 + 17th WDS-SC Meeting
  - The estimated attendance for the Conference is larger than expected. A point of concern for the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) is thus where to accommodate everyone—both those registered and prospective participants—at a time of year when accommodation could be difficult to find. Those coming from abroad will be prioritized, since domestic participants are expected to be able to organize accommodation on their own. The WDS-SC advised the LOC to continue attracting participants, but to alert people that accommodation is at a premium and they should not be slow in making arrangements.
  - The draft programme is also being prepared, but as the LOC is receiving more-and-more submissions—particularly from Japanese scientists—there is an issue in trying to include as many presentations as possible in the programme. It is hoped that the revised programme can be distributed to the WDS-SC within one week.
- b. Latin American and Caribbean Workshop + 18th SC Meeting
  - A meeting has been held with representatives of key institutions in Brazil, who all welcomed the idea of a regional Workshop on data; it is really necessary for them, as they feel outside of the international data environment. The suggestion is for the Workshop to be held in April 2018 in the auditorium of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences. The 18th WDS-SC Meeting would then take place on two days before/after the Workshop at the Museum of Tomorrow.
  - Some funds have been secured to support the Workshop, and attempts are being made to raise more to invite participants from the region (some will self-fund). The WDS-IPO will help with this endeavour.

- Suggestions have been made for themes that could be developed within the Workshop, and a short report will be written sharing these, as well as information on the arrangements, with the WDS-SC such that the programme can be built.
- c. IDW 2 + SciDataCon 2018
  - ICSU-WDS, the ICSU Committee on Data for Science and Technology, and the Research Data Alliance have agreed that Botswana should be selected as the host of IDW 2018. The organizations are still in the discussion phase with the Botswana bidding team though, and it is hoped negotiations will conclude in the coming week such that the location can be announced before the end of August.

### **Institutional Repository Ranking**

- The WDS-SC was made aware of a ranking system for institutional repositories that claims to be fairly comprehensive. The list largely contains institutional repositories for scholarly publication, but also data-holding repositories, with a ranking in terms of usefulness, level of accessibility, and openness. However, it is not transparent as to what the goal is of the ranking, what metrics are used, how representative the list is of institutional repositories, or what authority is providing validity to the ranking.
- As far as can be determined, it is not a peer-reviewed certification or a manual ranking, and hence its value is highly questionable if used as a benchmarking tool or as a standard to which institutional repositories should adhere (certainly, the veracity is not demonstrated on the website). The list may have some value to ICSU-WDS since the information shows the many different repositories throughout which data are distributed.
- Such rankings are gaining traction, and ICSU-WDS—and the CoreTrustSeal—will increasingly have to understand their response to them. The WDS-SC was thus asked whether it needed to give a formal message in answer to the list, and if so, how best to do it. As a first step, ICSU-WDS will contact the organization compiling the list and ask for more information on the used ranking methods.

### **WDS ECR Network**

- It was decided at the 16th WDS-SC Meeting to put out a general Call to look for enthusiastic Early Career Researchers (ECRs) to take forward the nascent WDS ECR Network. Ten people responded, and so ICSU-WDS now has a list of 14 ECRs, including the WDS Data Stewardship Awardees. The geographic spread needs to be increased, however, and SC members were asked to think about possible additions.
- If others express an interest they will be integrated, but the point has been reached where the WDS-IPO needs to start the discussions. To this end, a poll will be sent to the list for a first teleconference in early September. Four people have been earmarked to lead the group, and they will be approached about a pre-meeting with the intention that they take the initiative in the kick-off teleconference.
- The SC Chair has given the WDS-IPO a provisional list of important, practical steps that should be discussed and implemented. The main goal is to gather momentum in the lead-up to IDW 2018 and to have a presence from the group there. In this regard, the list current contains only one person from Africa, and it is hoped this number can be increased to ensure good African ECR participation.
- The issue of funding ECR participation in IDW 2018 will have to be dealt with: how opportunities can be created to raise funds to ensure travel can be covered for at least participants from Low and Middle Income Countries. SC members were asked to inform the WDS-IPO if they have links with possible donors/funders.

### **Any Other Business**

- The deadline for abstracts for the 2017 Fall Meeting of the American Geophysical Union (AGU) is 02 August 2017. ICSU-WDS is co-organizing two sessions with the Data Observation Network for Earth:
  - A panel session with eight speakers.
  - A traditional AGU session with an open invitation for submissions.
- Several WDS representatives have been invited to give presentations at AGU 2017, and all of them are interested in submitting a WDS paper in addition to their invited ones. The WDS-IPO will look at other sessions where ICSU-WDS can encourage submissions.