

GeoUnions Steering Committee Meeting

21 October 2017, 14.00-17300

The Academy of Sciences (Academia Sinica) located in Taipei, Activity Center, Conference Room 3 (3rd floor)

Present:

Makoto Ando, URSI P
Allan Ashworth, INQUA P
Paul Cannon, URSI IPP
William Cavazza, IUGS, VP
Lena Halounova, ISPRS SG
Alik Ismail-Zadeh, IUGG SG (Meeting's chair)
Takashi Kosaki, IUSS PE
Menno-Jan Kraak, ICA P
Michael Meadows, IGU SG
Michael Sideris, IUGG P
Yukio Himiyama, IGU P

Guests:

Orhan Altan, Member of the ICSU Executive Board
Gordon McBean, ICSU President

Minutes

1. Opening of the meeting

A. Ismail-Zadeh welcomed the participants of the ICSU GeoUnions (GUs)

2. Introduction of the meeting participants

All participants introduced themselves

3. Approval of the Agenda

Agenda for the meeting was approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the 2017 GeoUnions Steering Committee meeting in Potsdam on Sep 1 2017

The Minutes of the 2017 GeoUnions Steering Committee meeting in Potsdam were approved

5. SCIENCE: Priorities for new global initiatives (in GeoUnions and in the new Council)

Discussion of priorities highlighted importance of education and its support and interdisciplinary cooperation. That stressed importance of existence of GUs and their cooperation, exchanges of knowledge and experience. A. It was mentioned that for the last decade ICSU initiated three scientific programs: Integrated Research on Disaster Risk co-sponsored by the International Social Science Council (ISSC) and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR); Urban Health and Wellbeing co-sponsored by the UN University and the Interacademy Partnership (IAP), and Future Earth with many co-sponsors Unfortunately, there is a little (if any) cooperation with the programs; they generate own activities without any cooperation with ICSU's Scientific Unions and particularly with GUs. Initially

thought as a source for funding, the Belmont Forum initiates its own programs (much relevant to the three scientific programs, but also without coordination with the programs) and finance them.

During discussion about the Strategy of the new council, P. Canon (a member of the Strategy Task Force (STF) reported on the SWG activity.

It was decided to prepare new scientific initiative of GeoUnions. It was recommended to refresh contacts of members of GeoUnions with National and Interdisciplinary bodies of ICSU.

6. Consideration and discussion on the agenda of the ICSU GA – do we have questions on the agenda to be raised at the ICSU GA?

The topics of the agenda of the GA were considered and commented. It was mentioned that new agenda items could not be added. It was decided to prepare a statement of GeoUnions to be presented at the ICSU General Assembly (see the Appendix).

7. Joint Meeting of the ICSU and ISCC Membership

ICA and IGU supported the proposed merger, other GUs mentioned some hesitations concerning the future role of Unions in the merged council, future membership dues, etc.

8. Other topics

Gordon Mc Bean and Orhan Altan visited for GeoUnions meeting after the ICSU Executive Board meeting. Orhan invited GeoUnions members to hold a meeting in Istanbul during GI4DM in March 2018. This proposal will be decided later.

All participants thanked A. Ismail-Zadeh for his active and very successful work as GeoUnions Steering Committee Chair. Allan Ashworth and Lena Halounová will serve as co-chairs for the next period of 2017-2018

The meeting was closed at 5:30 p.m.

Lena Halounová and Allan Ashworth, December 15th, 2017



From left: Rattan Lal (IUSS), Qiuming Cheng (IUGS), Takashi Kosaki (IUSS), Makoto Ando (URSI), Piero Bienvenuti (IAU), Paul Cannon (URSI), Heide Hackman (ICSU), Rainer Horn (IUSS), Michael Sideris (IUGG), William Cavazza, (IUSS), Lena Halounová (ISPRS), Michael Meadows (IGU), Menno-Jan Kraak (ICA), Alik Ismail-Zadeh (IUGG), Orhan Altan (ISPRS), Himiyama Yukio (IGU), Geoffrey Boulton (CODATA), and Allan Ashworth (INQUA)

Appendix:

Statement of GeoUnions

The GeoUnions, an interdisciplinary consortium of nine ICSU International Scientific Unions, belonging to three Council's clusters – Earth and Space Science Unions cluster, Physics/Chemistry/Mathematics Unions cluster and the Social Science cluster, makes the following statement.

Considering the importance of the unified voice of science and challenging problems which society faces, GeoUnions is in favor of the merger of two Councils: the International Council for Science and the International Social Science Council, and considers that the new title of the council should be the “International Science Council”.

The GeoUnions call on the other Scientific Unions and National Members to vote in favor of the merger.

Meanwhile, the GeoUnions considers that the merger provides possibilities for strengthening the cooperation between the Scientific Unions/Associations, National Members and interdisciplinary bodies.

1. There has been a trend in the last few decades for ICSU to progressively distance itself from its member Unions. The merger provides an opportunity to reset this. ICSU and the new Council is largely underpinned by the expertise of its component Unions and Associations and this expertise should be better used. One way to do that is to ensure that the Council provides financial and logistic support to the Unions to enable them to reciprocally support the Council.
2. The role of the international Scientific Unions/Associations should not be restricted to paragraph 5.4 “An engaged membership” within the document JM5 “Advancing science as a global public good”, but considered more broadly. For example, representatives of both Scientific Unions clusters and National Members (representing different regions) should be a part of the new Council Governing Board either as elected members of the Board or as coopted Members. The Unions and National Members should feel that they are part of the Council and not passive observers.
3. An annual increase in Union and National Member dues of 2% to ICSU has been proposed. This is higher than the annual increase in the dues which some Unions feel able to request from their National Members. This creates downward pressure on Union activities, activities which underpin ICSU. This inconsistency makes no sense and the GeoUnions propose that the creation of a new Council is an ideal opportunity to rationalise this issue by informally linking the ICSU inflation rates to the inflation that the Unions impose on the adhering national bodies.
4. The GeoUnions were disappointed to see that the ICSU flagship programme reports make either no, or only passing, reference to Union activities in the same fields. The GeoUnions request that this be rectified in the reporting associated with the 2018 Council GA. By so doing the flagship programmes will be incentivised to communication with the Unions.

The International Astronomical Union
The International Cartographic Association
The International Geographical Union
The International Union of Quaternary Research
The International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing
The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics
The International Union of Geological Sciences
The International Union of Soil Sciences, and
The International Union of Radio Sciences.

23.10.2017, Taipei