

ISC GeoUnions Steering Committee meeting

Virtual Meeting
9th July 2024 9h00 CEST

Present:

Michael Meadows, MM: IGU, Chair
Johannes Mattes, JM: UIS
Lena Halounová, LH: ISPRS
Jiang Jie, JJ: ISPRS
Victor Chude, VC: IUSS
John Ludden, JL: IUGS
Hiroshi Kitazato, HK: IUGS
Orhan Altan, OH: ISPRS
Giuliano Manara, GM: URSI
Yukio Himiyama, YH: IGU
Nadja Zupan Hajna, NZH: UIS
Chris Rizos, CR: IUGG
Edoardo Costantini, EC: IUSS

Guest

Alik Ismail-Zadeh AIZ: ISC Foundation Fellow

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Welcome, apologies and introduction

The chair welcomed all present and noted that seven of the ten GeoUnions were represented.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda, previously circulated, was adopted.

3. Approval of the minutes of the GU Steering Committee virtual meeting on 26th January 2024

The minutes of the virtual meeting held on 26th January 2024 had not yet been distributed and will be sent again for approval at the next meeting.

4. News from the Unions

- The 35th International Geographical Congress will be held in Dublin, Ireland, on 24th -30th August 2024. MM will step down as President but remains on the Executive Committee as Past-President.
- For ISPRS, 2024 is dedicated to the symposia held by the five Technical Commissions as follows: i) Manila, Philippines, 6th to 8th August 2024; ii) Perth, Australia, 22nd to 25th October 2024; iii) Belem, Brazil, 4th to 8th November 2024.
- This year is one of consolidation for IUGG, most of the activities are internal with the aim of defining specific strategic plans, although there will be local symposia. IUGG President, CR, is working on a revision of the GeoUnions Terms of Reference, as previously promised.

- IUGS held its 79th I Executive Committee meeting in conjunction with the Geosciences for Arica Event in Nairobi, Kenya, 19th to 23rd February 2024. The report of this event is posted on the IUGS website. The next IUGS Congress is scheduled for Busan, Republic of Korea, 25th to 31st August 2024, where a new executive will be elected. JL remains as a Past-President for another term of four years. IUGS is intimately involved with the Deep-time Digital Earth (DDE) initiative.
- IUSS celebrated its Centennial: ‘100 Years of Soil Science – Past Achievements and Future Challenges’ in Florence, Italy from 19th to 21st May 2024. The meeting hosted some 1400 participants. In addition, there is an inter-congress meeting in Nanjing, China, from 20th -24th October 2024.
- URSI held the URSI Atlantic Radio Science Conference (URSI-AT-RASC) on Gran Canaria, Spain, 19th to 24th May, 2024. URSI is co-organizing, with the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), the 2024 IEEE International Symposium on Antennas and Propagation and the ITNC-USNC-URSI Radio Science Meeting in Florence, Italy, 14th-19th July 2024.
- UIS is hosting regional conferences this year. The US National Speleological Society Convention was held in Sewanee, Tennessee, USA, 1st-5th July 2024. The Asian Trans-Disciplinary Karst meeting of 2024 will be held in two venues and areas, viz. Special Region of Yogyakarta, and Kalimantan Timur Province, Indonesia, from 12th to 15th August 2024. The European Conference of Speleology will be held in November in Italy. Finally, on 15th July, registration will be opened for the 19th International Congress on Speleology in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil, 20th-27th July 2025. UIS is also working with UNESCO in organizing the International Day of Caves and Karsts. NZH, expressed her gratitude to the unions that already supported the initiative and asks the other unions of the cluster to send their support letters at their earliest convenience.

There was nothing to report from IAU, ICA, and INQUA, since no representative of these associations was present at the meeting.

5. ISC-GeoUnions DRR report

OH reported the activities of the ISC-GeoUnions Standing Committee on DRR, that was started in 2020. Many members of ISC-DRR are also members of this GeoUnions Standing Committee. In particular, OH welcomed VC (IUSS) onto the ISC-GeoUnions DRR Committee. All the meetings are held online. A website of ISC-GeoUnions DRR has been established, and terms of reference for the committee have been defined. The headquarters are at the Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture. Thanks to JJ (ISPRS), the committee has a Secretary: Runje Wang. OH asks all members of the committee to update their personal information. In the past, the committee has prepared several policy briefs and participated in a number of thematic conferences. OH and other committee members have been invited to serve as Guest Editor for a special issue of the journal *Sustainability* on “Monitoring and Predicting Natural Hazards and Environmental Risk.” The Committee has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Nations Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) International Program Office (IPO), which collaboration should prove highly beneficial for both parties, enhancing the committee’s visibility and strengthening its profile. Another visit of the ISC-GeoUnions DRR Committee to IRDR IPO in Beijing took place in May 2024, where the parties agreed on several points, and in particular on how to support each other in scientific meetings and conferences, and organizing joint seminars and workshops. JJ is organizing summer schools in Beijing,

where IRDR will provide speakers. Several members of the committee will also participate to the Gi4DM (Geo-information for Disaster Management) conference in Belém, Brazil, 2nd-4th November 2024. The initiative on Digital Sustainable Development Goals is being considered by IRDR, but still awaits approval by ISC. The 4th International Forum on Big Data for Sustainable Development Big Data International Forum is being held in Beijing from 4th to 6th September 2024, and there is presently a call for sessions. AIZ congratulated OH for the report and for the engagement with IRDR, which is co-sponsored by the International Science Council (ISC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). The program's direction and governance is assured by the IRDR Oversight Group composed of the ISC and the UNDRR. The ISC nominates the Scientific Committee, its Chair and the Executive Director in consultation with UNDRR. The Scientific Committee is a body whose membership is jointly established by the ISC and the UNDRR, and has the responsibility for formulating policy on IRDR programme development and implementation.

6. IDSSD ISC Distinguished Lecture Series

MM noted that the GeoUnions are committed to organizing the Distinguished Lecture Series for the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD). URSI has kindly agreed provide technical support to the initiative, providing the platform for the webinars (Zoom, suitable for up to 500 online connections). The committee for webinar selection, comprising GM, AIZ, YJ and MM, has invited Prof. Ferdinando Boero to present on 10th September 2024, followed by Prof Yong-Guan Zhu on 11th November 2024. Several future speakers have already been proposed, although it was agreed that a call should be made to identify additional possible candidates to continue the series into 2025. MM agreed to moderate the first and second webinars of the new series,

7. Earth-Humanity Coalition (EHC)

MM noted that this initiative arises directly from the establishment of the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD). Both IGU and IUGG have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support the initiative. There was some discussion as to the nature of the EHC which, it was agreed, must represent the interests not only of geosciences but also of the social sciences. The MoU covers the activation phase of the EHC: Sciences for Equitable Wellbeing on a Healthy Planet, which aims to enable the IDSSD (2024-2033), although many IDSSD members have not yet signed. MM agreed that EHC is intended to be more inclusive than IDSSD, and aims to bring together a bigger group of organizations, with specific attention to social sciences. YH observed that the initiative is in the framework of the UNESCO-MOST BRIDGES, a humanity-driven transdisciplinary sustainability science coalition focused on solving the social problems highlighted by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). AIZ proposed that the GeoUnions should develop their own program for IDSSD. For example, IUGG is organizing a conference in 2025 on mathematical geophysics in the context of IDSSD aimed at showcasing how geophysics and mathematics contribute to sustainable development. It was agreed that the GeoUnions should remain engaged with the EHC.

8. ISC Governing Board nominations

The International Science Council (ISC) Governing Board nomination call has been made. It was agreed that GeoUnions should share information regarding any candidates

9. Role of GeoUnions

MM asked CR to introduce this point, since he had previously raised the issue. CR has located a copy of the original terms of reference and there is a need to review them in the context of the GeoUnions engagement and activities. He went on to query the nature of the GeoUnions role in interdisciplinary initiatives, for example disaster risk, climate change, SDGs etc. and posed several questions, viz. Do we want to be involved in general research projects or initiatives? Do we want to propose or support together some particular candidates in the upcoming ISC elections? If so, then perhaps the terms of reference need to reflect this. In his opinion, CR suggests that the GeoUnions should indeed attempt to become involved in general initiatives, rather than simply promoting our own disciplines. He agreed that he will continue to review the terms of reference and that we should have something tangible in time to put in practice and discuss in person at the ISC General Assembly. GM noted suggested that the GeoUnions should organize something that highlights the possible collaboration on research activities. MM agreed to raise this issue with ISC Board Member Maria Paradiso to confirm that the Oman General Assembly does indeed have time set aside for Category I members to meet. AIZ confirmed that ISC has also indicated that, given the success of the one in Paris in 2023, future mid-term meetings are planned.

10. Any other business

MM underlined that the new GeoUnions website, rather than the older one, should be the default one when searching the internet. MM asked for a brief report on the ISC Category I roundtable meeting that had been organized to discuss matters relating to membership. These members have a number of issues in common, especially relating to funding, and the need for more organizational and technical support in the context of increased demand. The issue of ethics in fundraising and investments had also been raised. EC noted the clear need for such meetings and it is hoped that this will be the first of a series.

11. Adjournment

There being no further items, the meeting closed at 11h00 CEST.