

## ISC GeoUnions Steering Committee meeting

Virtual Meeting

4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 11h00 CET

### Present:

Michael Meadows, MM: IGU, Chair

Hassina Mouri, HM: IUGS

Thijs van Kolfcholten, TvK: INQUA

Barbaros Gönençgil BG: IGU

Lena Halounová, LH: ISPRS

Alex Rudloff, AR: IUGG

Jiang Jie, JJ: ISPRS

Diana Worrall, DW: IAU

Orhan Altan, OH: ISPRS

Giuliano Manara, GM: URSI

Yukio Himiyama, YH: IGU

Nadja Zupan Hajna, NZH: UIS

Chris Rizos, CR: IUGG

### DRAFT MINUTES

#### 1. Welcome, apologies and introductions

The chair welcomed all present. The chair noted that seven GeoUnions over ten were represented. The GeoUnions matrix was revised.

#### 2. Approval of the agenda

The agenda, previously circulated, was adopted. AR suggested to move point 8 of the circulated agenda to point 3. MM proposed to move also point 9 to point 4, so the final version of the adopted agenda is the following:

1. Welcome, apologies, and introductions
2. Approval of the agenda
3. ISC General Assembly
4. Role of GeoUnions
5. Approval of the minutes of the GeoUnions meetings held online on 26<sup>th</sup> January and on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024
6. News from the Unions
7. ISC-GeoUnions DRR report
8. IDSSD ISC-GeoUnions Distinguished Lecture Series
9. Earth-Humanity Coalition
10. Any other business

### **3. ISC General Assembly**

MM introduced the ISC General Assembly program. A GeoUnions meeting and self-funded dinner will follow the pre-event workshops on 26 January 2025, with MM arranging a meeting room. The Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue on 27–28 January includes a session, “The Decade of Science for Sustainability: The Post-2030 Agenda,” chaired by MM. GeoUnions may give brief presentations or have a single speaker, followed by a panel discussion. Interest was noted from several Unions, and MM will finalize plans with ISC Science Director, Vanessa McBride. A session on “Science Education for Our Future” is planned for 28 January. The ISC General Assembly on 29–30 January includes a member forum chaired by Edoardo Costantini and a session on “Union Membership Issues,” chaired by MM. OA stressed the need for GeoUnions to gain ISC board representation. Prof. Yongguang Zhu, a GeoUnions affiliate, is the sole Vice-President candidate, and Maria Paradiso will stay on the board. GeoUnions were asked to gather details on ISC working group recruitment. MM will email to confirm participation in the session and dinner.

### **4. The role of GeoUnions**

MM presented the GeoUnions Terms of Reference (TOR) document. Some modifications to the text were discussed. In particular, it was suggested that the TOR should make reference to the idea of developing collaborative projects. There are already some examples of the above, as for instance the ISC-GeoUnions Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and the common initiative for organizing the Distinguished Lecture Series in the context of the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD). HM observed that the collaboration could be also extended to the organization of events and conferences. OA noted that, during the ICSU period, there were several joint projects among members of the GeoUnions cluster. GM noted the importance of online meetings in keeping the respective Unions informed of each other’s activities. MM suggested that these online meetings could focus on specific topics, such as sustainability or climate change. AR proposed that the TOR be circulated and that GeoUnions suggest additions and edits for approval at a subsequent meeting. MM observed that the ISC General Assembly in Oman would represent a further opportunity to discuss this matter, formally and informally.

### **5. Approval of the minutes of the GeoUnions meetings held online on 26th January and on 9th July 2024**

MM proposed to approve the minutes of the two meetings offline. GM agreed to distribute both and ask for comments and corrects, for subsequent approval via email.

### **6. News from the Unions**

- IAU held its General Assembly in August 2024 in Cape Town, South Africa. The next IAU General Assembly will be held in 2027. In 2025, IAU is organizing eight thematic symposia, all listed on the IAU website.
- IGU will hold its next thematic conference in Cairo, Egypt, on 12<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2025. The title of the conference is: “Geo-Spatial Technology, Global Changes and Sustainability.” It represents the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first ever International Geographical Congress

held formally under the auspices of IGU. A second thematic conference is planned for Colombia in October 2025.

- INQUA is already preparing for the next Congress, to be held in Lucknow in February 2027. In 2025, there will be a joint meeting with the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) and a workshop in China focusing on biodiversity, combining recent data with those from the past. It was noted that 2028 will be the centennial year for INQUA and that a joint event with other GeoUnions may be organized.
- ISPRS is hosting a major event, Geospatial Week, in Dubai, UAE, 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> April 2025. In 2026, the XXVth ISPRS Congress will be organized in Toronto, Canada, 4<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> July
- IUGG hosts a General Assembly every four years, with the last one held in Berlin in 2023. In 2025 there will be a number of scientific assemblies organized by its associations and a number of thematic conferences.
- The IUGS Congress was held in Busan, Republic of Korea, 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024. No major IUGG events are planned for 2025.
- IUSS celebrated its Centennial: ‘100 Years of Soil Science – Past Achievements and Future Challenges’ in Florence, Italy from 19th to 21st May 2024 in Florence, Italy. The World Congress of Soil Science, is scheduled for Nanjing, China, 7th -12th June 2026.
- URSI has two important events in 2025. The URSI Asia Pacific Radio Science Conference (URSI AP-RASC 2025), which is an URSI flagship event, will be held in Sydney, Australia, 17<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025. The Electromagnetic Theory Symposium (URSI EMTS 2025), which is arranged by URSI Commission B “Fields and Waves,” will be held in Bologna, Italy, 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025.
- UIS hosts an International Congress of Speleology every four years. The 19<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Speleology will be held in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil, 20<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> July, 2025. UIS is also working with UNESCO to organize the International Day of Caves and Karsts, possibly on the day of the next General Assembly, which will be held in Paris in November 2025. NH expressed her gratitude to those unions that already supported the initiative and appealed to others in the cluster to submit support letters as soon as convenient.

## **7. ISC-GeoUnions DRR report**

OH reported the latest activities of the ISC-GeoUnions Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UN Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) International Program Office has been signed. In May 2024, the members of the committee visited IRDR IPO in Beijing, agreeing to collaborate in scientific meetings, conferences, and joint events. The first collaboration was a joint session at the IRDR 2024 International Conference in Beijing (22–23 October), featuring presentations by INQUA and IGU. OA noted additional activities at the UN Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Week in Deqing, China (21–24 October). OA also participated in GI4DM in Belém, Brazil (4–8 November) and is scheduled to attend GI4DM 2025 in Merida, Mexico, in October 2025. The committee will address the issue of inactive members, with OA reporting the outcome at a future GeoUnions meeting.

#### **8. IDSSD ISC-GeoUnions Distinguished Lecture Series**

The most recent webinar in the series was presented by Professor Yongguan Zhu under the title: “Antimicrobial Resistance in the Ecosystem: A One Health Approach” moderated by Prof. Yukio Himiyama. Although well-advertised, attendance was low, with only 14 participants. The webinars are recorded and available on the ISC, GeoUnions and URSI websites, and via YouTube. MM recommended that publicity for future webinars be improved, the next one to be held on the second Tuesday of February 2025. URSI continues to provide technical support. GM agreed to arrange an online meeting of the ad hoc committee to identify the next, and subsequent, speakers.

#### **9. Earth-Humanity Coalition (E-HC)**

MM that this initiative has been initiated in relation to the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD). Several GeoUnions have pledged support, viz. IGU, IUGG and INQUA. MM noted that the Global Knowledge Dialogue session at Oman will include a brief presentation by a representative from E-HC.

#### **10. Any other business**

There being no further business, MM closed the meeting.