

Minutes ICSU GeoUnions Meeting

Midtown Hotel, Istanbul, 28-29 April 2012.

Present: Ron Abler (P – IGU), Mike Meadows (SG – IGU), Allan Chivas (INQUA), Orhan Altan (P – ISPRS), Chen Jun (SG – ISPRS), Alik Ismail-Zadeh (SG – IUGG), Jacques Charvet (VP – IUGS), Stephen Nortcliff (IUSS Executive Member), Phil Wilkinson (P – URSI), and Francois Lefevre (PP – URSI). Guoxiong Wu (ICSU EB Member joined the meeting on Sunday 29th April)

Appointment of Chairman: Ron Abler (IGU) was appointed by the meeting, Stephen Nortcliff (IUSS) was asked to take the Minutes

Tour de Table: Participants introduced themselves

Additions to the Agenda: Proposed to discuss website and further meetings

Minutes of the Meeting held in Rome 25 September 2011:

Prior to the consideration of the minutes, it was proposed that we produce detailed Minutes for the participants and Summary Minutes for wider circulation.

Note p.1 spelling 'Riccardi', p.2 IUGS meeting in San Sebastian not Madrid

Action 1. Ron Abler reported he had taken the action in relation to ***International Year of Global Understanding*** and would continue to contact the Unions who had not replied to his earlier enquiries.

There was discussion on whether ICSU allowed individual membership rather than country member. It had previously been thought that ICSU Union members must have National Membership rather than individual membership. There appears to be a misunderstanding between ICSU and its Union and National Members concerning whether individual members are allowed. It would appear that ICSU Statutes do not prohibit Unions to have individual Membership. This generated much discussion, it was clear that the GeoUnions have different ways of dealing with participants who are not from a country with National Membership.

Action: Orhan Altan agreed to forward copies of his correspondence with ICSU on this matter.

It was agreed that in addition to circulating full minutes to GeoUnions members, summary minutes will be sent to the Executive Board of ICSU.

Updates from the Unions:

URSI

- a. A major concern is the lack of resources to promote the activities of URSI. There is also a lack of communication between Council (Country Members) and their national constituents. URSI have been looking to improve these links. URSI is also seeking closer links with International Telecommunications Union; there is a dichotomy between URSI (Academic/University) and ITU (Governmental/Commercial), URSI is seeking to make the barrier between these two groups less rigid.
- b. Endorsed the **International Year of Light**.

- c. Supported application for ICSU Grant to support Weather Training Sessions in Asia, Africa and South America.
- d. General Assembly in Beijing 2014 and a mid-term Meeting in Taiwan.

IUSS

- a) The World Congress of Soil Science will be held in Jeju, Korea in June 2014
- b) The Intercongress Council Meeting will be held in Jeju, Korea June 2-9 2012 with three days of papers and a field excursion,
- c) As part of the plan to ensure Union based activity in the period between Congresses, we are holding a meeting on 'Soil Carbon' in Madison, Wisconsin in July 2013.
- d) On 16th April Stephen Nortcliff had an audience with the King of Thailand at which he presented the IUSS Humanitarian Soil Scientist Medal. In addition to the presentation Stephen had a most interesting discussion on a wide range of soil related topics.
- e) With the shift from the situation where our President has been linked to the host of our World Congress we are moving to a position of President being separate from the Congress. We have two very strong candidates. The election will take place in the near future.

IUGG

- a. Harsh Gupta (President of IUGG) was unable to attend because he is a member of the Indian National Disaster Management Authority which is chaired by the Prime Minister and this demands considerable time commitment.
- b. Introduced a Grant Programme (up to \$20000) linked to the 5 basic priority areas, the aim to bring together the Associations of IUGG within the IUGG community as well as links with bodies outside IUGG.
- c. Seeking to strengthen Science Education through a collaboration with Abdul Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics to develop training programmes in geodesy and geophysics cosponsored by IUGG.
- d. IUGG established a Union-based interdisciplinary series of publications with Cambridge University Press.
- e. There are a number of Association and Inter-association events scheduled for the Inter-Congress period (2013)
- f. There has been considerable discussion within IUGG to ensure that the National Committees are more active and are able to sustain activity as National Officers change.
- g. Developing Affiliate membership with AGU, EGU etc.
- h. Next General Assembly will be held in Prague 22 June to 2 July 2015.
- i. IUGG is to establish a Secretariat in Potsdam with funding provided by GFZ-Potsdam initially for three years, from September 2012.

IGU

- a) Regional Conference in Santiago in Chile with 800 participants in November 2010. This was a good increase in Latin American activity.

- b) The next Congress will be held on 26 - 30 August 2012 in Cologne (expected 2000+ participants).
- c) The Journals Project – Because of ISI pressure publications in languages other than English are decreasing. IGU have produced a spreadsheet with details (contacts etc.) of relevant journals in all languages and this is available for download from the website.
- d) The Sustainable Cities Project – Establish a web-based network of urban areas to develop and share ideas of best practice of sustainability.
- e) Established a Joint Commission with the International Cartographic Association on 'Place Names' to foster research on place names.
- f) Application from the Palestinian Authority for membership which will be considered in Cologne in August 2012.
- g) Discussions about a possible Working Group with ISPRS on Land Use in borderlands.
- h) International Year of Global Understanding (<http://global-understanding.info/>) has been endorsed (April 2012) by ICSU for 2016. Because of bureaucratic problems 2014 was impossible, 2016 is being pursued as a possibility through UNESCO and UN.
- i) Next IGU President will be Vladimir Kolossov of the Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences.

ISPRS

- a) ISPRS will introduce the system of individual membership.
- b) The eight Technical Commissions provide the main scientific structure of ISPRS. The Chairs of these TC rotate on a four yearly basis. The main executive body is The Council which includes the President, the Congress Director, the First Vice-President, the Second Vice-President, the Secretary General and the Treasurer. The Council conducts the affairs of the Society in the interval between meetings of the General Assembly in accordance with the Statutes and Bylaws and with the decisions and directives of the General Assembly and of Congress.
- c) ISPRS are encouraging their many Working Groups to organise meetings with other WGs and with other Unions (e.g. Spatial Information Science, Education).
- d) ISPRS Congress in Melbourne Aug 25 – Sept 1, 2012. There are invited speakers from ICSU including David Blake (SG) and Gordon McBean (ICSU EB Member).
- e) Orhan mentioned the high costs of the Meeting in Melbourne and especially the not good performing PCO, Sarah Markey-Hamm, AMM

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- f) A recent example of interdisciplinary collaboration was the 15 March 2012 Beijing Joint seminar with IGU – 'Geo-frontier Understanding'.
- g) An important recent development is the GEO Project (Global Land Cover Map at 30m x 30m resolution) – ISPRS has active involvement in this.
- h) A new Open Access Journal 'International Journal of Geo-Information' has been established. There are possibilities for other GeoUnions to contribute to this open access publication.

IUGS

- a) The 40th anniversary of IGCP (International Geoscience Programme) was celebrated at UNESCO in February. It is hoped this programme will continue to be active, particularly in its support for Geoscience in the less developed world.
- b) The International Geological Congress will take place in Brisbane in August in 2012. There will also be the second meeting of YES (Young Earth Scientists).
- c) IUGS and IGC come together in one organisation, although the Statutes have yet to be resolved for the joint organisation.
- d) IUGS strongly supports activity in GEO.
- e) In August a new President, Secretary General and Treasurer will be elected, together with many others in the Executive Committee. This will result in a major change in the personnel of the Executive Committee.
- f) The Permanent Secretariat will be based in China from 2013 (previously in Norway -12 years and USA – 3 years).
- g) IUGS has created a series of awards, the naming of the main award has still to be decided.
- h) Episodes is now published in India.
- i) European GeoParks Network and Global GeoParks Networks have received recognition from UNESCO (Mark McKeever is taking over as the Head of Geoscience in UNESCO).
- j) IUGS will no longer support the PEI and Earth Science Matters.
- k) Global Geoscience Initiative does not appear to have produced any 'solid' outcomes to date.
- l) Endeavouring to increase the involvement of National Committees in part through an upgraded website.
- m) It is recognised that IUGS (and indeed all the GeoUnions) must be involved in the GEO project. In discussion the question asked was how the GeoUnions could be **actively** involved in GEO.

INQUA

- a. Congress held in Bern July 2011 with 2100 participants which represented almost a doubling in numbers (1000 delegates at both Reno 2003 and Cairns 2007)
- b. In 2015 Nagoya will be next host city
- c. Following the elections the President Margaret Avery (South Africa) and S-G Julius Lejju (Uganda) plus a new set of V-Ps, Marie-France Loutre (Belgium) remains as Treasurer.
- d. Early Career 'Shackleton Medal' awarded every two years (the third award was made at the Bern meeting).
- e. The principal medal of INQUA the 'Liu Tungsheng Medal' was awarded to Professor Stephen Porter (University of Washington, Seattle).
- f. INQUA has about 50 members plus some regional groupings (e.g. East Africa, West Africa, South America (excludes Brazil and Argentina who have National Membership)).

- g. A profit sharing with Elsevier for Quaternary International provides about ₺50,000 per year income.
- h. Introducing a new grants programme focusing on Skills Development .
- i. An Intercongress meeting will be exclusively for Early Career Scientists in 2013/2014 most probably in Australia.

Joint Geo-Union Actions

VALID Project

The Value of Geo-Information for Disasters and Risk Management is a programme of the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Sciences (JBGIS) and UN Office for Outer Space Affairs/UN-SPIDER.

JBGIS involves a number of International Societies (including ISPRS and IGU) and meets annually, normally linked to the Congress of one of the member association (free registration is given to one member from each of the associations to enable representation at these Congresses). There are a number of ad hoc committees (e.g. Risk and Society Management; Capacity Building in Africa).

A booklet on Risk Management was launched by JBGIS in July 2010 in Vienna (this booklet is free to download from the ISPRS website).

A current question being asked by JBGIS is 'do they need another joint publication'. A series of work packages have been drawn up to address the needs of the new publication. There is a fee (₺750) for the Unions to participate and there must be a designated contact for each Union. Unions wishing to nominate a participant in the editing of the document should contact Orhan Altan by the end of May 2012.

There is a conference – 8th International Conference in Geo-Information for Disaster Management – 14-17 December 2012. Orhan asked GeoUnions to actively participate to this event and send their logos to the organiser (Sisi Zlatanova (Sisi Zlatanova – OTB; S.Zlatanova@tudelft.nl) to be included into the webpage (<http://www.gi4dm.net/2012/>) and publications. Another action was to disseminate the conference to all members of GeoUnions.

Brief Report on the ENHANS Project (www.enhans.org)

Extreme Natural Hazards and Societal Implications (ENHANS) aims to strengthen International Cooperation in understanding Natural Hazards and the impacts on Societies. There are 8 project events across a number of continents and regions. IUGG, IUGS, ISPRS, IGU, IUTAM and ICSU Regional Officers are involved together with a number of bodies including AGU and GOOS of UNESCO-IOC. From August 2010 to December 2011 there have been 8 meetings often with a specific regional focus and in some cases a focus on education. The meetings involve natural and social scientists, engineers, insurers and policy makers and have greatly assisted the communication amongst these groups.

One of the outcomes will be a publication (CUP) in 2013.

It was noted that these sorts of projects raise the profile of the Union clusters, a policy which might be followed by other Union Clusters.

The Unions were asked to endorse the report entitled 'Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction Through research and Assessments' presented by Alik Ismail-Zadeh.

International Year of Deltas (2013-2014) (www.iyds-2013.org)

Following a paper in EOS in October 2011, IUGG have supported this initiative by Professor Efi Foufoula-Georgiou (Univ. Minnesota, USA). IGBP, IAHS and IAPSO have already supported this. This has developed from promoting an initial year into a possible International Decade of Deltas (2013-2023) with a strong scientific focus (the year would probably have a focus on outreach). Deltas are an area of concern for almost all of the GeoUnions and indeed other Unions including Social Science Unions. The aim is to educate on the value of deltas both in terms of food security and hydrological control and their vulnerability both in respect of climate change and human intervention and research to manage these potential changes.

The GeoUnions are asked to endorse this programme and identify individuals who will work together with the programme to move this proposal forward.

Strategies for enhancing the the influence of the GeoUnions in ICSU

How do the Unions get more involved in setting the items for discussion at the ICSU Unions meeting, for example in Paris in 2013? Do we need to formalise our structure, by for example having a chair who would speak on behalf of the GeoUnions cluster. Where we make decisions we should communicate these decisions to the EB and ICSU and hope that these form the basis of some of the discussions at the Unions meeting. We might for example propose a speaker on a topic for the meeting, rather than simply receive information from ICSU HQ and EB. There was some informal discussion on this topic during the subsequent excursion.

It was noted that we need to encourage National Members to ensure that many of the scientists who wish to be involved in Union activities are often not encouraged to do so by their employers. We ask that the National Members encourage Universities and Research Bodies to recognise the involvement in Union activities as a significant scientific contribution.

The meeting adjourned at 15.15 and then joined together in a bus excursion to the 'Asian' part of Istanbul. From this side of the city we boarded a small boat for a cruise up the Bosphorus during which we had a most excellent dinner. We returned to the European side of the Bosphorus.

Day 2

Ron Abler opened the reconvened meeting at 0900 on Sunday 29th April.. He first thanked Orhan for an excellent and enjoyable evening on the Bosphorus.

The chair welcomed Professor Wu, who briefly introduced himself.

The earlier discussion on 'strategies' continued briefly with the following topics:

1. The EB should not meet at the same time as the GeoUnions meeting so that our EB Nominated member is able to attend our GeoUnions meetings. Orhan Altan will raise avoidance of the conflict with the ICSU Secretariat.
2. The Unions should be more involved in setting the programme for the ICSU Unions Meeting.

It was agreed that we should return later to the 'Strategies' following our discussions.

The role of Unions in ICSU interdisciplinary committees.

Ron Abler recalled a comment by Carthage Smith that The Unions and National Members should remember that appointments to the EB and CSPR were to govern ICSU as an entity not to represent one particular part of ICSU (Unions/National Members; specific groups of Unions or specific Unions). This has been reiterated in other fora.

The World Data System (originally these activities were under the auspices of the World Data Centres, WDC, and the Federation of Astronomical and Geophysical Data Services, FAGS) is an example of where there is a lack of clarity in the aims of WDS and how they expect the ICSU Unions should be involved in these activities related to global data management. It was clear that there was some uncertainty over what were the aims of WDS and ICSU's vision for how Unions were to be involved.

Orhan Altan made the following suggestions (he noted that it would strengthen our case if we related our comments to the ICSU Strategic Plan):-

- a. That the format of '4 Union – 4 National Members on the EB' should be mirrored on the Interdisciplinary Bodies; essentially this is equal representation for Unions and National Members. These members of the Interdisciplinary bodies should be nominated by the Unions and National Members respectively.
- b. Detailed reports should be sent annually to all members on the activities of the Interdisciplinary Bodies (IBs). This should be something more detailed than the current 'glossy' reports that are circulated.
- c. ICSU is about to be involved in an External Review (the last Review was in 1996); we should ensure that the Unions are consulted and involved in this External Review.
- d. ICSU should urge IBs request the Unions to identify 'liaison officers' to maintain contact with the interdisciplinary committees, providing a two-way flow of information.

The GeoUnions in the ICSU Regional Scientific Programmes.

There have been some examples of good co-operation between Unions and Regional Offices (ROs): for example ISPRS reported very close collaboration with the Africa Office on one of their projects; IUGG had successful cooperation with all three ROs in the framework of the ENHANS project.

The problems which have occurred seem in part to be related to the 'turnover' of staff and the scientific background of the individuals. There is unlikely to be any one individual who has the breadth of scientific background to successfully liaise with all Unions. There seems to be a lack of resources in the Regional Offices given the breadth of tasks they are given, consequently they often are not able to keep all Unions informed of their activities. It might be that the Unions should be more proactive in making sure that they are aware of our possible inputs and, by, for example, 'keeping tabs' on the websites of the Regional Offices, explaining when we might be able to contribute to their activities.

One step the Unions might take is to ensure that we identify from within our Unions 'regional liaison officers' who would act as the linkage points with the offices in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Some Unions have done this, but this has not always been successful, whether through the lack of interest from the Union representatives or from the ICSU Regional Office staff.

It was noted that there is relatively little knowledge amongst the Unions about the Regional Office Scientific Programmes.

The role of the GeoUnions in the Earth System Sustainability (Future Earth) Initiative

ESSI has been renamed ***Future Earth: Research for Global Sustainability***. This was presented at the meeting in London on 'Planet under Pressure' and will be revised and presented at Rio +20.

This is recognised as a key area for the GeoUnions and it is an area that we should be involved with collectively. We need to refer the document, which will be circulated by Orhan, with the request to refer this back to our Unions. There is a requirement for a rapid response if these views are to be

taken in to consideration in revisions of future documents and the implementation of the Future Earth Initiative.

There has been some concern expressed by some of our members within ICSU at the lack of geoscience input in to the programme. The scientific aims of the Initiative have been criticised as being somewhat broad and lacking in any clear indication of how the Unions will be involved. Future versions of the Initiative should include clear actions.

There will be a Future Earth secretariat established in 2013, because of the strength of the GeoUnions we should expect involvement in this secretariat.

Role of GeoUnions in the Health and Well-being in the Changing Urban Environment

IGU is actively involved in this Initiative and nominated a candidate for the Scientific Committee, but there is no information on the selected composition of the Committee (there were 17 nominations, which had been 'screened' by CSPR).

GeoUnion involvement in Observing Systems – GCOS (climate), GOOS (oceanic), GTOS (Terrestrial), GEO/GEOSS, GGOS (geodetic).

Given the very specific nature of many of these Observing Systems the involvement of the GeoUnions is often on a relatively narrow disciplinary base within the activities of the Unions, with, for example, in IUGS the linkages are taking place through Commissions within the Union. ISPRS is actively involved in GEO. IUGG cooperated with GOOS via the ENHANS project; GGOS is a program of the International Association of Geodesy, an IUGG association. The linkages seem to be operating efficiently.

GeoUnion involvement in Integrated Research on Disaster Risk

IUGS nominated H. Modaressi (BRGM) who was placed on this committee. IGU has similarly made a nomination which was successful. IUGG reported very active involvement with IRDR in activities within the Union and that there would be a joint Workshop on 'Forensic investigation of Disasters' at the IUGG GeoRisk Commission Conference "Extreme Natural Hazards and Their Impacts", Chapman University, Orange, California (8-12 December 2012; <http://www1.chapman.edu/~rsingh/GeoRisk2012>).

The amount of contact with the other Unions seemed to be very limited. For those not directly involved there was almost no information on what IRDR had currently identified as their priority areas. This seemed to be symptomatic of many actions within ICSU, we hear about the establishment of an action, but then hear nothing until reports are presented. There are Newsletters for IRDR, but these seem to have limited circulation. It would appear that it was required for the Unions to ask for information rather than receive information without requesting it!

Where appropriate the GeoUnions may need to identify individuals to liaise with IRDR.

Action: Orhan Altan should invite Jane Rovins, IRDR Executive Director, to attend the meeting in Delft

Action: Alik Ismail-Zadeh to send details of the IUGG GeoRisk Commission Conference "Extreme Natural Hazards and Their Impacts" and the IRDR Workshop on 'Forensic Investigation of Disasters'

The relevance to the GeoUnions of the Programme on Ecosystem Change and Society

There was a lack of information on this Programme since the Unions Meeting in Rome. It was thought that it may have been subsumed in the 'Future Earth Initiative'.

What should be the GeoUnions involvement in Rio+20?

This has been discussed by the GeoUnions previously but we have not taken any specific actions on this topic. It seems very unlikely that the GeoUnions will be specifically involved in Rio+20. This seemed to be the case with all the Unions although they were often working together with other bodies and organisations. Some of the ICSU activities seem to be going ahead, but the Unions involvement in the preparation appears to have been very limited. We should ensure that the GeoUnions are aware that documents and plans for activities such as Rio+20 are being planned as early as possible so that we are able to make fundamental contributions rather than the normal practice of making comments on documents and practices which are close to final stages of development.

Action: EB Members to ensure that the GeoUnions are aware of planned activities to which we might be able to make fundamental contributions.

Action: Stephen Nortcliff was requested to send links to John Liu's website and documentary films.

Geoscience Education

IUGS are taking a number of initiatives on scientific education. There is also an IUGS Commission on tectonics which has been actively promoting awareness and techniques related to tectonics. IUGS also plans to be involved in the UNESCO Geoscience Education Initiative in Africa.

ISPRS have involvement in a number of activities including involvement in the USA Initiative entitled 'Book of Knowledge' which included a number of geoscience actions. ITC at Enschede was noted as a major centre for Education in the broad geosciences area.

INQUA have supported graduate level workshops.

IGU through its Education Commission has active broad involvement in educational matters. A significant activity is the Olympiad Task Force (the Olympiads are held just prior to the IGU Congresses and involve gathering local geographical information which is judged and prizes awarded during the Congress). At the Congress a special postgraduate session has been organised and a travel grant programme is aimed particularly at graduate and young geographers. There is also a programme for Schools linked to the Congress.

IUSS have supported (often jointly with National Members) some activities at a local level to develop teaching materials which we disseminate more widely.

IUGG has established a Committee on Education and Strategy Building. Each of the constituent Associations has developed educational programmes.

ICSU bodies related to data and information (SSCID, WDS and CODATA) and GeoUnions involvement

SSCID seems likely to be discontinued. CODATA has had a change in personnel which has seen a change in policy with respect to GIS. Ron Abler has been appointed to the Program Committee of the 28-31 October 2012 CODATA Meeting in Taipei. World Data System has requested nominations for membership of the Scientific Committee of WDS. Nominations have also been requested for the CODATA review committee. IGU have made nominations in response to these requests. ISPRS has had a good amount of contact with CODATA and an active involvement in a number of their activities. IUGG is a Partner Member of WDS and develops a link to the ICSU body; also IUGG is involved in several programs of CODATA via its Union Commission on Data and Information and its Liaison officers.

ICSU Union in meeting in Paris – How should the GeoUnions be involved in setting the agenda?

It is provisionally planned for April 2013.

Alik suggested that each ICSU cluster to nominate 1-2 distinguished speakers to present recent scientific advances in geosciences especially those related to societal problems. The topics should be related to the ICSU scientific priority areas.

The meeting should provide the opportunity to discuss how different Unions address the problems they encounter, for example,

- a. managing our Congresses, improving communications within our Unions,
- b. ensuring the Unions work together to address the ICSU priorities,
- c. how we move towards the acknowledgement by academic employers of the academic value of involvement in Union management.

Should we make a presentation from each member of the GeoUnions cluster on one of the future priority areas within the Future Earth Initiative? We might also look to the future possibilities in the FEI.

Should we develop a White Paper from the GeoUnions to be circulated to the EB and ICSU Secretariat? Who should take the lead on this?

Proposal that the agenda for half of the meeting be prepared by the Unions.

Should we write to the other Union clusters indicating that we would wish to set some of the agenda items for discussion?.

What are the benefits of ICSU Membership?

For some the benefits of Unions of being members of ICSU are that this membership brings them some financial benefit (it should be noted that this is not the case for all Unions).

What are the benefits to the Unions and National Members of being members of ICSU?.

What do we as Unions expect from ICSU?

What does ICSU see as the benefit of having a membership Union and National Members?

What does ICSU expect from the Unions?

One benefit to ICSU of the Union membership might be considered to be the ability to deal with the interdisciplinary nature of many of the current problems. This is highlighted by the Future Earth Initiative which is a truly interdisciplinary approach to a major problem.

One benefit is the opportunity given to the Unions by membership of ICSU to nominate individuals to membership of the Interdisciplinary Programmes. This enables our scientific communities to see that our voices are being heard.

Is there any real clarity in the role of the ICSU Regional Offices particularly in relation to the activity of Unions and the links to Union activities?

How do we ensure that the White Paper becomes a reality?

Ron Abler agreed to produce a draft outline of the White Paper. The rest of the Unions present agreed to respond to this draft commenting on the priorities given and any omissions and adding where possible substance to some of the proposals.

Action: Ron Abler to produce a draft White Paper on 'ICSU and the GeoUnions cluster'.

Action: Unions to respond to GeoUnions' White Paper.

Other Business

Orham Altan raised the point which we had discussed informally during the meeting concerning the status of the GeoUnions. He mentioned that he was familiar with a similar grouping, the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies (<http://www.fig.net/jbgis>), where several GeoUnions currently participate (e.g. IGU, ISPRS, IUGG via IAG). He suggested we should formalise the GeoUnions in a similar manner, that is, to elect a Chair and Vice Chair, to establish and run a web page, to organise

relevant working groups, etc. During the discussions it was apparent that there was no consensus for a new formal entity and the wish was to maintain the 'informal nature' of the GeoUnions cluster, but recognised that some limited formal structure would be beneficial.

Action: Orhan Altan to prepare a proposal outlining ideas for a GeoUnions Joint Board which would be considered at the next meeting in Paris in 2013.

As an interim measure Ron Abler was elected as Chair and Alik Ismail-Zadeh as Vice Chair of the GeoUnions until and including the meeting in Paris in 2013.

The meeting closed at 15.20