

# ISC GeoUnions Steering Committee meeting

Virtual Meeting

11<sup>th</sup> September 2023 13h00 CET

## Present:

Michael Meadows, IGU: Chair  
Thijs von Kolfshoten, TvK: INQUA  
Johannes Mattes, JM: UIS  
Lena Halounová, LH: ISPRS  
Victor Chude, VC: IUSS  
John Ludden, JL: IUGS  
Hiroshi Kitazato, HK: IUGS  
Orhan Altan, OH: ISPRS  
Giuliano Manara, GM: URSI  
Yukio Himiyama, YJ: IGU  
Alex Rudloff, AR: IUGG  
Will Benz, WB: IAU  
Georg Gartner: GGICA

## Guest

Alik Ismail-Zadeh AIZ: ISC Foundation Fellow

## DRAFT MINUTES

### 1. Welcome by Chair

The chair welcomed all present, especially JM, representing the International Union of Speleology as new member. The chair noted with satisfaction that all GeoUnions were represented.

### 2. Introduction of participants

All participants briefly introduced themselves.

### 3. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda, previously circulated, was adopted.

### 4. Approval of the minutes of the GU Steering Committee virtual meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023

The minutes of the virtual meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 were approved with minor changes.

#### 4a. Matters arising

The chair had approached GM (VP, URSI) suggesting that his name be put to the Steering Committee as Vice-Chair for the period September 2023 to September 2025 and, as customary, to take over the Chair for two years thereafter. GM agreed, and the decision was approved by acclamation.

### 5. News from the Unions

- IAU is preparing for the XXXII General Assembly in Cape Town, South Africa, from 5<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

- ICA has just completed its International Congress and 19<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Cape Town, South Africa.
- IGU is holding the 35<sup>th</sup> International Geographical Congress in Dublin, Ireland 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August 2024.
- INQUA recently completed the XXI Congress in Rome, Italy.
- ISPRS XXV Congress will take place in Toronto, Canada, 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> July 2026. A session is reserved for the United Nations Committee of Experts Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) at the Congress. GeoUnions members who are part of that group will be able to benefit from two days free registration at the Congress. Geospatial Week, with events in Australia, China, United States, Brazil and The Philippines, will be held in 2025.
- IUGG recently hosted its 28<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Berlin, Germany, with almost 5000 delegates in attendance.
- IUGS has proclaimed the first 100 Geoheritage sites and is in the process of selecting the next 100. The next IUGS Congress is scheduled for Busan, Republic of Korea, 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024.
- IUSS is celebrating its Centennial: '100 Years of Soil Science – Past Achievements and Future Challenges' in Florence, Italy from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 in Florence, Italy.
- URSI recently held its XXXV General Assembly in Sapporo, Japan, 19<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The URSI Atlantic Radio Science Conference (URSI-AT-RASC) will be held in 2024 in the island of Gran Canaria, Spain.
- UIS: Following on from the successful International Year of Caves and Karst (2022), during which approximately 1300 events were held, attempts are underway to have UNESCO establish an International Day of Caves and Karst.

## **6. GeoUnions matrix table update**

The chair requested all members to update their contact details and agreed to send a reminder. The GeoUnions website is in need of updating, and LH undertook to attend to this. She appealed to members to check the website and ensure photos of the two contact persons are forwarded to her.

## **7. ISC mid-term Members Meeting, Paris, May 2023**

- a. Report back  
MM noted that all GeoUnions had been represented at this meeting.
- b. ISC Constitutional changes  
Following debate at the mid-term members meeting, ISC recently distributed a 'zero draft' of the revised Statutes and Rules of Procedure for comment. Discussion indicated the GeoUnions main concern is the retention of their proportional voting rights as Category I members and there are some misgivings about the potential inclusion of national/regional scientific societies in a separate membership category. Consultation meetings with all members are scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September, and comments are due with the ISC Secretariat by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The final version will be tabled at an Extraordinary General Assembly to be held virtually on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024. Given the complexity of the issue and, there being insufficient time to develop a consensus, it was agreed that the GeoUnions will respond to the zero draft individually.

#### **8. ISC Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (ISC-DRR)**

OH reported that a meeting of the ISC-DRR had been held on virtually on 3rd August 2023. The future development and leadership of the committee had been the main agenda item. It was agreed that OH should continue as ISC-DRR chair. Establishing a connection with IRDR in order to enhance our visibility and strengthen our appearance should prove mutually beneficial. This collaboration could prove highly beneficial for our committee. MM will take the responsibility of drafting a letter expressing our interest in cooperating with the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk Reduction Programme (IRDR). MM reported that he has been in contact with the IRDR Executive Director and Scientific Officer regarding the possibility of developing a Memorandum of Understanding between ISC-DRR and IRDR and a draft MOU is already under consideration.

#### **9. International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development**

##### **a. Future developments**

Many events are still planned, but the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development (IYBSSD) closing ceremony will be held at CERN, Switzerland on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the International Decade of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDBSSD) 2024-2033.

##### **b. IYBSSD Distinguished Lecture Series**

In view of the proclamation of the international decade, it was decided to continue the Distinguished Lecture Series, which has proved highly successful thus far, for the foreseeable future. MM undertook to approach ISC with a view to their continuing to provide the necessary technical support. Several further lectures are already in the pipeline.

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

No further items of business were tabled.

#### **11. Date of next meeting.**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held virtually at a date to be confirmed. AR undertook to provide the Zoom platform.