

## Report on CODATA Activities during the First Quarter of 2003

**January 2003**, the US National Committee for CODATA and the National Research Council of the National Academies, US, in cooperation with CODATA International and the Senegal National Committee for CODATA published a Summary of a Workshop on “*Scientific Data for Decision Making, Toward Sustainable Development: Senegal River Basin Case Study*”. The Summary of the Workshop is also available in French on CD ROM. For more information contact the CODATA secretariat. The publication is also available on [http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10546.html?se\\_side](http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10546.html?se_side)

**February 2003** A new edition of the *CODATA Data Science Journal* was published electronically. It may be consulted on <http://www.datasciencejournal.org/>. This peer-reviewed journal is available free of charge. The Editor-in-Chief is Professor Jack Smith, Queens University Belfast. Additional information on the scope and content of the journal and how to submit a paper may be found on the journal website.

**March 2003** the *Proceedings of the 18<sup>th</sup> International CODATA Conference* were published electronically and are now available on <http://www.codata.org/codata02/index.html> As you are aware, the Conference took place in Montreal in 2002. 250 people attended the conference from 37 countries. The Conference featured six keynote plenary lectures by some of the world’s most renowned scientists and data experts, addressing several cross-cutting themes including:

- Emerging tools and techniques for data handling
- Interoperability and data integration
- Data archiving
- Legal issues in the use of scientific and technical data
- Information economics for scientific and technological data
- Ethics in the use of scientific and technological data

It also involved twenty-four invited speakers from different scientific disciplines expanding on themes presented during the plenary sessions.

The *International Symposium on Open Access and Public Domain in Digital Data and Information for Science* took place in UNESCO on 10/11. It was organized by CODATA, the National Academies, US, the International Council for Science (ICSU), UNESCO and the International Council for Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI). The symposium sought to describe the role, value, and limits of public domain and open access to digital data and information in the context of international research. Legal, economic, and technological pressures involved were reviewed as well the ways to preserve and promote public domain and open access to science and technology data and information on a global basis, with particular attention to the needs of developing countries. It was attended by approximately 150 people. The proceedings will be published in a few months. Abstracts of presentations can be found on the CODATA website <http://www.codata.org>. A webcast of the meeting is available on the UNESCO website [http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL\\_ID=8228&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201&reload=1048846579](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL_ID=8228&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1048846579)

### ***World Summit on the Information Society***

CODATA has been working in close collaboration with ICSU to prepare for the *World Summit on the Information Society*, which takes place in Geneva in December 2003. 10<sup>th</sup> February-10<sup>th</sup>

March 2003, ICSU and CODATA organized an online discussion forum on *Science and the Information Society*. This was hosted on the ICSU website.

The following four themes were identified for discussion:

- Scientific data and information for decision-making and better governance
- Ensuring universal access to scientific knowledge internationally
- Scientific data and information as a global public good
- Using scientific data and information to improve all levels of education and training

All members of the international science community were invited to contribute either as individuals or organisations. In addition, any other stakeholders, who felt that they had a useful contribution to make on the role of S&T were also invited to participate

Following from this on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2003 ICSU, CODATA and UNESCO organized an invitation-only workshop on “*Science in the Information Society*”. The overall aim of the workshop was to identify and refine the key messages that the International S&T community wants to convey to the other stakeholders in the information society during the WSIS process. The principal products of this workshop are currently been prepared and will be sent to you for your consideration within the coming weeks.

#### **CODATA Task Groups**

**CODATA** executes an ambitious international scientific agenda, addressing major data needs and policy issues in a broad range of subjects. These activities are peer reviewed and are democratically voted-upon at the biennial **CODATA** General Assemblies. The following eight Task Groups were approved at the General Assembly in Montreal in October 2002 and supported by the CODATA Executive Committee at its meeting in March 2003:

Task Group on Fundamental Constants

Task Group on Data Sources in Asian and Oceanic Countries

Task Group on Virtual Laboratories in Earth, Physics and Environmental Sciences

Task Group on Natural Gas Hydrates

Task Group on Data Information and Visualization

Task Group on Global Species Data Networks

Task Group on Biological Collection Data Access

Task Group on Preservation and Archiving of Scientific and Technical Data in Developing Countries

Contact the CODATA secretariat [codata@dial.oleane.com](mailto:codata@dial.oleane.com) for more information.

A further short update of activities will be sent to you in August 2003

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