



ICSU

International Council for Science

The International Council for Science -

Strengthening International Science for the Benefit of Society

CODATA Conference, Berlin, November 10, 2004



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The World Summit on The Information Society (WSIS)

Prepcom1 - July 2002

Geneva Summit – Dec. 2003

Tunis Summit – Nov. 2005

WSIS

Why is WSIS important?

- **First ever UN intergovernmental Summit on the information society**
- **Follows on from Johannesburg, re the role of (scientific) information in development**
- **Attempt to bring all stakeholders – governments, private sector and industry together to agree (and implement) a declaration of principles and plan of action**



WSIS

Why is WSIS important for science (and vice-versa) ?

- **Science underpins ICT developments and so shapes the information society**
- **Scientific progress is dependent on access to information and data**
- **Unique opportunity to address the knowledge divide in science**
- **Scientists needs to engage with other stakeholders on information and data issues**

WSIS

ICSU's contribution to WSIS:

- Present from the outset and organised workshop at Prepcom1
- International Symposium and workshop, with CODATA, NAS and UNESCO in March 2003 to define an 'agenda for action' for Science in the Information Society
- Produced series of brochures to inform other stakeholders of key issues for science in WSIS
- Agenda for action distributed widely and endorsed by ICSU members and other partners to give it broad legitimacy.

The Agenda for Action:

- 1. Affordable and reliable internet connectivity for all Universities and research institutes**
- 2. Capacity building and education**
- 3. Full and open access to public data**
- 4. Interoperability and metadata standards**
- 5. Collection and preservation of essential digital data**



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WSIS

The agenda for action cont.:

- 6. equitable access to scientific information**
- 7. promote scientific literacy**
- 8. research on ICT use in key priority areas**
- 9. role for scientists in decision-making in/for the information society**

Science in the formal Geneva documents:

Declaration of Principles

- “We recognize that science has a central role in the development of the information society”
- “remove barriers to equitable access to information for ..scientific activities and facilitate access to public domain information;
- “promote universal access with equal opportunities for all to scientific knowledge and the creation and dissemination of scientific information”

Plan of Action

- - 7 out of 9 items from ICSU/CODATA agenda for action included in formal WSIS action plan

Science events at the Geneva Summit

1. Major conference on “The role of Science in the Information Society” hosted by CERN + ICSU & TWAS (8-9 Dec)
2. High-level science event, organised by UNESCO and ICSU-CODATA + TWAS & CERN
3. ‘Show-casing’ of science projects, e.g. INASP, in ICT4D.
4. Publications e.g. Science editorial (Sept 04)



WSIS

Major Unresolved issues (Geneva-Tunis):

- Internet governance, freedom of the press, solidarity fund;

Specific concerns for science:

- The role of open-access publishing and open-source software;
- IPR regimes and the public domain for science (Integrating commercial and public interests)
- Using the political agreement to implement e-science actions locally and internationally

ICSU post-Geneva?

- PAA on Scientific Data and Information to develop ICSU strategy
- Relevant interdisciplinary bodies, such as CODATA and CDSI/INASP to consider implementation of action plan.
- National members (science agencies) to implement actions at national level.
- Joint Science event – “Past, present and Future of the Information Society” - in Tunis.



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ICSU and 'access'

Policies:

1. **“Full and open access” to scientific data**
2. **“Universal and equitable access” to scientific publications**



ICSU and Access

‘Operational’ needs:

- 2-way: access to provide/publish and to use/read
- Minimal constraints must be maintained
- Stable systems for providing universal access to quality data and information must be developed and maintained
- Need to develop new economic models – someone has to assume the costs
- Scientists must be involved in policy development, re. IPR issues
- The particular needs of scientists in developing countries need to be heard and addressed, e.g. INASP.



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