Constitution

of the International Council for Science

World Data System (ICSU-WDS)

As modified by the ICSU Executive Board at its 110th Meeting, November 2013

ARTICLE I

Name

1.1   The name of this organization is the **International Council for Science (ICSU) WORLD DATA SYSTEM (WDS).**

ARTICLE II

Objectives

2.1   ICSU-WDS ensures the long-term stewardship and provision of quality-assessed data and data services to the international science community and other stakeholders. It incorporates new scientific data activities into a common globally coordinated and distributed data system, and advances interconnections among data management components for (multi-)disciplinary scientific data applications. ICSU-WDS has a broad disciplinary and geographic base, and strives to become a worldwide 'community of excellence' for scientific data.

2.2   ICSU-WDS Goals and Objectives
ICSU-WDS shall:
- Enable universal and equitable access to quality-assured scientific data, data services, products and information
- Ensure long-term data stewardship
- Foster compliance to agreed-upon data standards and conventions
- Provide mechanisms to facilitate and improve access to data

ARTICLE III

WDS Members

3.1   WDS Members shall consist of organizations that have a role in collecting, analyzing, compiling, distributing, archiving, and networking data supporting the scientific community. ICSU-WDS is multidisciplinary in nature and is not discipline restricted.

3.2   An organization applying to be an accredited Member of ICSU-WDS shall meet all membership criteria as developed by the WDS Scientific Committee (WDS-SC). Approval of such an application shall be by assessment of the organization's resources and capabilities.

3.3   Upon entering into ICSU-WDS, a new Member Organization must sign an appropriate agreement with ICSU that addresses key issues defined by the WDS-SC.

3.4   Funding cannot be provided by ICSU for organizations within ICSU-WDS. All WDS Members shall be recognized as essential parts of the core infrastructure of science and must be funded accordingly by national and international funding bodies.

ARTICLE IV

WDS Scientific Committee (WDS-SC)

4.1   The WDS-SC shall be the governing body of ICSU-WDS.

4.2   The responsibilities of the WDS-SC shall be to develop and prioritize plans for ICSU-WDS, guide their implementation, and publicize the results.

4.3   The WDS-SC, including the Chairperson, shall be appointed by the ICSU Executive Board and abide by Terms of Reference as approved by ICSU Executive Board (Annex 1 of this Constitution).

4.4   At least four members (one-third) of the WDS-SC shall be Directors of WDS Member Organizations.

4.5   The WDS-SC shall normally conduct ICSU-WDS affairs by consensus. Should a vote be required, each member of the WDS-SC shall have one vote, and the matter decided by a simple majority of those voting. The WDS-SC Chairperson shall have the casting vote in the event of a tie.

4.6   The WDS-SC shall normally meet face-to-face twice in each calendar year.

4.7   The WDS-SC shall be supported by an International Programme Office (the WDS-IPO) that is responsible for both implementing the decisions of the WDS-SC and the daily tasks of coordinating ICSU-WDS.

4.8   A designated representative of the hosting institute of the WDS IPO shall serve as ex officio member of the WDS-SC.

ARTICLE V

WDS Members' Meetings

5.1	The WDS-SC shall organize biennial meetings of WDS Members. Where possible, these meetings shall be in concert with the CODATA Scientific Conference.

5.2	To accomplish ICSU-WDS Goals and Objectives, the WDS-SC may organize or facilitate special WDS Symposia, meetings among the Directors of WDS Member Organizations, or other meetings, as necessary.

ARTICLE VI

WDS Executive Committee (ExCom) and WDS-IPO

6.1	The WDS ExCom shall consist of three members: a Chairperson and two Vice-chairpersons. The Vice-chairpersons shall be elected by the WDS-SC.

6.2	The WDS-IPO shall be led by an Executive Director (ED) and staffed by supporting scientific and administrative personnel, as required.

6.3	The WDS-IPO ED shall act as Secretary to the WDS-SC, and will participate in all WDS-SC and ExCom meetings, except those pertaining to his/her performance.

6.4	The WDS-IPO ED—with oversight from the WDS-SC—shall facilitate the expeditious and orderly development and implementation of ICSU-WDS, including the preparation of WDS-SC and ExCom meetings.

6.5	The WDS-IPO ED and his/her supporting staff shall organize and implement the biennial meetings of WDS Members.

ARTICLE VII

Committees

7.1	To accomplish WDS Goals and Objectives, the WDS-SC may establish committees, working groups, or task groups, as needed.

ARTICLE VIII

WDS Bylaws

8.1	The WDS-SC shall maintain a set of Bylaws, consistent with this Constitution, for conducting ICSU-WDS affairs.

ARTICLE IX

Parliamentary Authority

9.1 The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern ICSU-WDS in cases in which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with this Constitution and any special rules that ICSU-WDS may adopt.

ARTICLE X

Amendment

10.1 Amendments to this Constitution must be agreed upon by two-thirds of the WDS-SC, after which it shall be submitted by the WDS-SC to the ICSU Executive Board. The contents of this Constitution may also be amended by ICSU, after consultation with the WDS-SC.

ANNEX

1. Terms of Reference of the ICSU World Data System Scientific Committee

Terms of Reference

of the ICSU World Data System

Scientific Committee

As modified by the ICSU Executive Board at its 110th Meeting, November 2013

Background

In September 2006, the International Council for Science (ICSU) established an ad hoc Strategic Committee on Information and Data (SCID) charged with, as one of its main remits, guiding the reform of two ICSU Interdisciplinary Bodies: the World Data Centres (WDCs) and the Federation of Astronomical and Geophysical data analysis Service (FAGS). Taking the recommendations from the December 2004 Priority Area Assessment report[1] of the ICSU Committee for Scientific Planning and Review (CSPR) as a starting point, as well as the vision for Scientific Data and Information developed in the *ICSU Strategic Plan 2006–2011*, SCID produced a report that was published in June 2008.

Key recommendations[2] in the report included the creation of the 'World Data System' (ICSU-WDS); a new ICSU Interdisciplinary Body incorporating the WDCs and FAGS, in addition to other state-of-the-art data centres and services. SCID also recommended that this new system be overseen by a dedicated WDS Scientific Committee (WDS-SC). On the basis of these recommendations, the 29th ICSU General Assembly (Maputo, October 2008) elected to formally launch ICSU-WDS for an initial 10-year period as a replacement Interdisciplinary Body of the WDCs and FAGS.

Terms of Reference

The WDS-SC is appointed by the ICSU Executive Board, and shall report to both this Board and the ICSU General Assembly. The WDS-SC is the governing body of ICSU-WDS and has the following responsibilities.

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[1] *Scientific Data and Information, a report of the CSPR Assessment Panel*
[2] Endorsed by the CSPR and the ICSU Executive Board.

1. To ensure that ICSU-WDS clearly supports ICSU's mission and objectives by safeguarding long-term stewardship and provision of quality-assessed data and data services to the international science community and other stakeholders.

2. To develop and continuously review an implementation plan for the realization of the World Data System; incorporating the former WDCs and FAGS, plus other new and relevant data centres and services.

3. To define agreed standards, and establish and oversee procedures for the review and accreditation of existing and new components within ICSU-WDS[3].

4. To monitor the geographic and disciplinary coverage of ICSU-WDS, and to develop strategies for recruitment and establishment of new WDS nodes, as necessary.

5. To consider the resource issues of WDS components and, where appropriate, provide guidance on funding mechanisms.

6. To cultivate strong links with the ICSU Strategic Coordinating Committee on Information and Data.

7. To closely cooperate with the ICSU Committee on Data for Science and Technology.

To perform the above functions, the WDS-SC shall be assisted by an International Programme Office (the WDS-IPO) located within an ICSU-WDS component centre or service.

WDS-SC Membership

Membership of the WDS-SC shall
- Consist of a Chair and no more than eleven additional members serving in their personal capacity, as well as include an ex officio member from both the hosting institute of the WDS-IPO, and the ICSU Secretariat.
- Be gender and geographically balanced insofar as possible.
- Be made up of leading scientists experienced in using large data resources or be data centre/service Directors.
- Be normally appointed for a three-year period, which may be renewed once. Tenures are to be staggered to allow for renewal whilst maintaining continuity.

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[3] The SCID report identified that Scientific Unions and Interdisciplinary Bodies should have a role in the overall governance of ICSU-WDS; identifying new data services and validating their products to help ensuring that scientific quality is upheld.

Finances

ICSU shall provide financial support for the WDS-SC during the development phase of ICSU-WDS. This funding shall be supplemented by support from the hosting institute of the WDS-IPO. In the longer term, alternative financial mechanisms are to be explored.