

CODATA

Newsletter 92

Committee on Data for Science and Technology

CODATA wishes all its readers a very Happy New Year!

Professor Iwata Addresses Plenary Session at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

Much of CODATA's work in 2005 centred on the many activities it carried out leading to the 2nd phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, which took place in Tunis in November. (See page three for a list of highlights). These activities culminated with the presentation given by Prof. Shuichi Iwata, President of CODATA, at the Eighth Plenary Session of the Summit on the 18th of November. Here is his statement:

January 2006

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<http://www.codata.org>

The Committee on Data for Science and Technology (CODATA) was established in 1966 by the International Council for Science (ICSU).

Working on an inter-disciplinary basis, CODATA seeks to improve the quality, reliability, management and accessibility of data of importance in all fields of science and technology.

Report from a Multi-Stakeholder Event to the 8th Plenary Session of the World Summit on the Information Society

Professor Shuichi Iwata, President of CODATA

"Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As President of CODATA, the Committee on Data for Science and Technology, I would like to thank the ITU and the WSIS secretariat for giving me the opportunity to make this intervention.

Paragraph 7 of the Declaration of Principles states that "Science has a central role in the development of the Information Society."

You may kindly recall that in the Geneva phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in December 2003, 175 countries adopted a landmark Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action.

Article 10 of the Agenda for Action recognizes the importance of "Access to Information and Knowledge," and Article 23 recognizes the important role of "e-Science."

Many institutions and organizations within the scientific community already are engaged in activities that address these principles, in particular the importance of widespread access to scientific data and information. However, there is a growing perception of the need to coordinate and integrate these efforts.

With this in mind, CODATA consulted extensively during the past year with the International Council for Science (ICSU), the International Council of Scientific and Technical Information (ICSTI), the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS), the Science Commons, UNESCO, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), CERN, and scientists and scholars from around the world.



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Welcome to the CODATA Family!

CODATA is delighted to announce the membership of **Ireland**, through the Royal Irish Academy, commencing in 2006. Please join us in welcoming **Ireland** as our newest CODATA National member. ■

Professor Iwata, WSIS (continued from page 1)

Earlier this week, we held a special event at a WSIS Satellite Event here in Tunis to launch a new initiative to create the **Global Information Commons for Science**.

The *Global Information Commons for Science Initiative* is a multi-stakeholder undertaking with the following goals:

(1) Improved understanding and increased awareness of the societal benefits of easier access to and use of scientific data and information, particularly those resulting from publicly funded research activities;

(2) Wider adoption of successful methods and models for providing open availability on a sustainable basis and facilitating reuse of publicly-funded scientific data and information, as well as cooperative sharing of research materials and tools among researchers; and

(3) Encouragement and coordination of the efforts of the many stakeholders in the world's diverse scientific community who are engaged in efforts to devise and implement effective means to achieve these objectives, with particular attention to developing countries.

The Initiative will not duplicate existing efforts. Rather, it will provide a shared global platform to supplement and support members' work on existing initiatives.

More information can be found on our website, <http://www.codata.org>.

To become a partner, organizations will need to make a commitment to undertake one or more activities that contribute to the stated goals.

Finally, I would like to quote from an editorial that was published in the journal *Science*, on October 21st of this year: "Science helped to create the Information Society—it can now help extend that society to all."

Many thanks for your time and attention. We look forward to a successful conclusion of the World Summit and to working with all of you on these important issues."

This statement can also be found on the official *International Telecommunications Union (ITU) WSIS website* at <http://www.itu.int/wsis/tunis/statements/docs/pe-codata/1.html> ■

CODATA – WSIS Activities 2004/2005

Preparation for CODATA's activities in Tunis began in 2004. CODATA organized a Special Session that was considered an official WSIS thematic meeting on the 10th of November 2004, within the framework of its **19th International CODATA Conference**. <http://www.itu.int/wsis/preparatory2/thematic.html>.

Thanks to the participation and input at this meeting, the activities identified by the participants as important within the framework of WSIS commenced in earnest in January 2005. Here follows a list of these activities and relevant links and sites:

CODATA, in collaboration with the US National Academies, the US National Committee for CODATA, and wsis-online, compiled an inventory of more than 500 scientific activities that directly or indirectly related to the Agenda for Action and Declaration of Principles that came from the Geneva phase of the WSIS: http://www.wsis-online.net/science/home_EN/ and <http://www.codata.org/wsis/CODATA-Inventory2Nov05.pdf>.

An editorial on "**Science and the Digital Divide**" was published in the journal *Science* on 21 October 2005 (p. 405) written by Professor Shuichi Iwata and Dr. Robert Chen, CODATA Secretary General: <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/summary/310/5747/405>.

A CODATA international workshop, "**Creating the Information Commons for e-Science: Toward Institutional Policies and Guidelines for Action**," was held at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 1-2 September 2005. The meeting was sponsored by UNESCO, ICSU, TWAS, INASP, and ICSTI, in collaboration with the OECD. Information, including the proceedings, can be found at: <http://www.codataweb.org/UNESCOmtg/>.

A direct outcome of this meeting was the support given by the sponsoring organizations to explore the feasibility of creating a **Global Information Commons for Science Initiative**: <http://www.codata.org/wsis/GlobalCommonsforScienceSept1.html>.

This initiative was officially launched at a special roundtable session CODATA organized in Tunis on 14 November 2005. Panel participants included representatives of all the organizations that collaborated with CODATA at the meeting in UNESCO, together with CERN and the Science Commons: <http://www.codata.org/wsis/sessions/index.html>.

CODATA held a side event at WSIS on 17 November 2005 to highlight the Initiative for WSIS participants. The initiative was officially registered in the **Golden Book: Stakeholder Commitments and Initiatives of the WSIS**: <http://www.itu.int/wsis/goldenbook>.

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CODATA- WSIS Activities 2004/2005

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The initiative has received some media attention since its launch in Tunis. An example is an article that appeared on **SciDev.Net**:

<http://www.scidev.net/news/index.cfm?fuseaction=readnews&itemid=2484&language=1>.

Although events in Tunis are over, this does not mean that our work is now complete. On the contrary, it is only beginning! With your continued support, CODATA plans to develop and implement the Global Information Commons for Science Initiative in 2006 and beyond. ■

2006 CODATA Call for Papers

CODATA is now accepting abstracts for potential inclusion in the CODATA 2006 Conference programme.

Papers relating to all aspects of data sharing and data use on scientific and technical data are welcome. Contributed papers should be in the form of either oral or poster presentations.

Participants wishing to present papers are invited to submit an abstract of no more than one page. The abstract should be submitted online using our automated online submission process.

For more information and to submit your abstract, visit <http://www.codataweb.org/06conf/call.html>. ■

2006 CODATA Prize Call for Nominations

CODATA is pleased to announce the launch of the 4th **CODATA International Prize Award 2006**.

The CODATA Prize is a major biennial prize for outstanding achievement in the world of scientific and technical data. The CODATA award will be presented at the **20th International CODATA Conference**, 23-25 October 2006, Beijing.

The recipient of the award will be presented with a specially commissioned piece of sculpture and will also receive financial support to travel to Beijing to deliver an awards lecture at the CODATA Conference 2006.

The deadline for nominations is 31 March 2006. An online Nomination Form and more information on the CODATA Prize is available online at:

<http://www.codataweb.org/06conf/2006prize>. ■

20th International CODATA Conference News

The **20th International CODATA Conference** marks the 40th Anniversary of CODATA, and we are very excited to bring you this important historical event from beautiful Beijing during 23-25 October 2006.

The world is entering a new era of enormous potential for everyone, that of the Information Society and expanded human communication.

CODATA 2006 will be a great opportunity to promote the use of scientific data and knowledge and harness the benefits of the Information Society to reach scientific and developmental targets. These targets build upon strides the scientific community has made during this information explosion, particularly in the areas of data and technology. Data have become more accessible and more necessary to maintain; more abundant and more complex to manipulate; and more global and more expected to share.

The 20th International CODATA Conference, aptly titled "**Scientific Data and Knowledge within the Information Society**," will address issues such as fair and equitable access to data, data archiving, data security, data interoperability, and the use of data to support science and decision making in a range of important fields such as disaster management, health, genetics, environmental sustainability, materials science, and engineering.

CODATA 2006 will feature sessions on such topics as:

- Infoscience
- Internet-based international science communication
- Safety data and data science and engineering
- I*Ys (Planet Earth, IPY, IHY, and eGY) data management & policy
- CODATA's New Vision

CODATA 2006 will include keynote talks, plenary lectures and contributed paper and poster sessions that will provide new and important insights about the information revolution and its impact on science and how humans live on a daily basis.

This important conference will bring together eminent experts to discuss and share the most exciting new developments in scientific data work, especially on a multi-disciplinary and holistic basis.

We look forward to your participation in what promises to be a very exciting event.

Shuichi IWATA and Yongxiang LU,
Co-Chairs of the International Scientific Program
Committee 2006 ■

Call for Task Group Proposals

New and Renewal Task Group Proposals are now being solicited to be presented to the 25th General Assembly, 26-27 October 2006, Beijing. Information for new task groups: <http://www.codata.org/newTGltr.html>
Renewal Task Group information is available on the Members area of the CODATA website.

Task Group News

Some updates on current Task Groups:

Task Group on Fundamental Constants

The CODATA Task Group on Fundamental Constants periodically provides the scientific and technological communities with a self-consistent set of internationally recommended values of the basic constants and conversion factors of physics and chemistry based on all of the relevant data available at a given point in time.

The detailed and lengthy report on the 2002 adjustment of the fundamental constants has been published as "CODATA recommended values of the fundamental physical constants: 2002," *Reviews of Modern Physics*, Vol. 77, pp. 1-107 (2005). The report describes the criteria and procedures of the data selection and the methodology of the determination of the values of the constants.

Credit card size wallet cards that give values of a selected subset of the constants have also been published. These are available upon request from the CODATA Secretariat (codata@dial.oleane.com or cheryl@codataweb.org), or from the Public Relations Office of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) by sending a request to inquiries@nist.gov.

The Task Group held its annual meeting on 28 June 2005 at the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM) near Paris. At the meeting it was decided that the Task Group would maintain its schedule of providing new sets of recommended values every four years. In keeping with this schedule, the next set of recommended values will be based on data available by the end of December 2006 and will be termed the "2006 CODATA recommended values." These new recommended values will be made available early in 2007. The next meeting of the Task Group is scheduled for 15 July 2006 in Torino, Italy in conjunction with the 2006 Conference on Precision Electromagnetic Measurements (CPEM).

View the 2002 CODATA values on the web at <http://physics.nist.gov/constants>.

*Contributed by Peter J. Mohr
Chair CODATA Task Group on Fundamental Constants*

Preservation of and Access to Scientific and Technical Data in Developing Countries

The CODATA Task Group on Preservation of and Access to Scientific and Technical Data in Developing Countries has held a very successful workshop on **Strategies for Permanent Access to Scientific Information in Southern Africa: Focus on Health and Environmental Information for Sustainable Development**. The workshop was held from 5-7 September 2005 at the CSIR Conference Centre in Pretoria, South Africa. The workshop programme and organizational information can be found at: <http://stardata.nrf.ac.za/html/workshopCodata1.html>

A report summarizing the discussions of the high priority challenges, the available resources, and possible short term actions is forthcoming. It will be made available on the CODATA website as well as the website of the Task Group and the workshop.

The Task Group is currently planning a similar workshop to be held in Latin America in 2006.

*Contributed by Liu Chuang and Bill Anderson
Co-chairs CODATA Task Group on Preservation of and Access to Scientific and Technical Data in Developing Countries* <http://www.tgdc-codata.org/cn/>

Upcoming Events

30 January – 2 February 2006
Symposium on National Biodiversity and Ecosystem Information Infrastructure: Challenges and Potentials.
National Chemical Laboratory, Pune, India

3 February 2006
Information and Data in e-Science - Making Seamless Access a Reality. An ICSTI Public Workshop with the support of the French Ministry of Research, INIST-CNRS and INSERM. More info or register online at www.icsti.org.

20-22 April 2006
9th Association of Geographic Information Laboratories of Europe (AGILE) International Conference on Geographic Information Science. "Shaping the future of Geographic Information (GI) Science in Europe," Visegrád, Hungary
See www.agile2006.hu/Venue.html

28-30 August 2006
INTERCARTO 12, Berlin, <http://www.intercarto12.net>

23-25 October 2006
CODATA 2006 International Conference, Beijing, China
<http://www.codataweb.org/06conf/>

26-27 October 2006
CODATA 25th General Assembly, Beijing, China

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