

RESOLUTIONS OF THE 27TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ICSU

1. Response to Report of Assessment Panel

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Noting the report from the Executive Board on implementation of the recommendations in the report of the ICSU Assessment Panel;

Expresses satisfaction with the considerable progress made since the 26th General Assembly; and

Requests the Executive Board to take note of the discussions during the 27th General Assembly and to implement further the recommendations of the Assessment Panel.

2. Traditional Knowledge

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Noting the report of the Study Group on Science and Traditional Knowledge;

Acknowledging with gratitude the work done by the Chairman and Members of the Group in preparing the report;

Affirms the importance of traditional knowledge;

Further affirms its opposition to all forms of pseudo-science; and

Recommends that members of the ICSU family suggest concrete initiatives to the Executive Board which ICSU itself could undertake; and themselves take action appropriate to their own circumstances.

3. Development of Strategic Priority Initiatives

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Expresses its satisfaction with the work of the CSPR; and

Noting the proposed procedure by the CSPR to identify new ICSU priorities;

Requests the CSPR to consult with the wider ICSU community in the process of priority setting, considering, *inter alia*, the SPRU studies, the reports from the Fora and relevant discussions during, and resolutions of, the General Assembly; and

Further requests the Executive Board to initiate detailed planning of initiatives with wide interest and support from the ICSU community, with special emphasis on areas of societal importance, and to report to the 28th General Assembly.

4. COSTED-IBN

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Expresses its appreciation to members of the COSTED Review Panel;

Further expresses its appreciation to the COSTED-IBN Executive Committee and Secretariat staff for the excellent work conducted over many years; and to the Indian National Science Academy and the Government of India for their generous support of COSTED since its inception;

Decides to dissolve the Special Advisory Committee on Science and Technology in Developing Countries and International Scientific Networks (COSTED/IBN); and to set up a Policy Committee on Developing Countries; and

Further agrees to establish ICSU Regional Offices for Developing Countries in Africa, Asia, the Arab Region, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

5. International Biodiversity Observation Year

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Aware that 2001 and 2002 were designated by DIVERSITAS as the International Biodiversity Observation Year (IBOY), and that an ICSU large grant in 1999 was instrumental in launching IBOY;

Noting that IBOY successfully addressed ICSU's priorities; and

Further noting that the new networks, databases, web pages, publications and community of scientists with training in media communications built during IBOY can significantly support ongoing programmes in biodiversity and the science of sustainability;

Thanks all those involved in the International Biodiversity Observation Year for their work in building capacity for integrative biodiversity research and science communication; and

Urges ICSU members to help ensure that the networks and resources produced by IBOY are continued and used to strengthen ongoing programmes in biodiversity science, including, but not limited to, DIVERSITAS.

6. Follow up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Noting the request by the 26th General Assembly that the Executive Board should assess what steps ICSU should take in pursuing a science agenda for sustainability;

Taking into consideration the discussions that have taken place over the past year in preparation for and during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) (2002);

Further noting the decision by the CSPR to launch a strategic review of ICSU activities in environment and sustainable development and the presentations and discussion during the Scientific Forum on Science for Sustainable Development at the General Assembly;

Invites the Executive Board to appoint an *ad hoc* committee, in consultation with other partners, to develop a science plan for sustainable development and to identify topics for possible early action in consultation with ICSU's Scientific Unions, National Members and Interdisciplinary Bodies;

Decides that ICSU should provide the necessary financial and Secretariat resources to enable the planning group to undertake this task; and

Requests that a report be presented to the 28th General Assembly on progress made and the status of implementation of a new programme.

7. Energy and Sustainable Societies

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Realising that energy is a challenging domain of ongoing interdisciplinary research;

Recognizing that the production and utilisation of energy are strongly linked, in positive as well as negative ways, to all aspects of sustainability;

Noting that energy was identified as a vital issue in its own right at the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

Further noting that science and technology are essential for improving the ways in which energy is produced, utilized, stored and distributed, and that the development of sustainable energy policies requires consideration of many issues across multiple domains, such as the social, political, economic, cultural, and ethical;

Acknowledging that ICSU, as a politically independent, multidisciplinary global organization, is ideally suited, together with international partners, to provide scientific analyses and advice on energy issues for decision-makers in government, industry and society;

Recognizing that successfully addressing the complex set of energy issues requires the integration of existing knowledge from several domains, and the development of partnerships with organizations that are already active in the energy field, as well as organizations that have expertise in the social and behavioural sciences, and the humanities;

Requests that the Executive Board establish an *ad hoc* committee that will make an area assessment in preparation for a new ICSU initiative on energy and sustainability, develop a plan of action for ICSU, and report to the 28th General Assembly.

8. Ensuring Global Access to Scientific Data and Information

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Noting the tremendous impact of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on the acquisition, exploitation, processing, communication, storage and long-term availability and preservation of scientific data and information, calls on all ICSU members to maximize the use of ICT for the benefit of the scientific enterprise;

Emphasising that an efficient and well functioning infrastructure for information and communication technology is of the utmost importance for science and the dissemination of data and information worldwide;

Accepts the recommendations of the IUBG Inter-Union Bioinformatics Group in relation to biological data;

Encourages all ICSU members to use the new possibilities to obtain greater control by the scientific community of the information chain, through use of alternative forms of publication of scientific articles; and

Further noting the special challenges encountered by developing countries in making optimal use of the new facilities,

Applauds the activities of the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) and similar programmes which make production of, and access to, data and information more available across the digital divide;

Encourages the relevant members of ICSU to identify the issues which the scientific community would wish to bring to the World Summit on the Information Society, and charges the Executive Board to ensure the timely input of the scientific community, in cooperation with appropriate partners, to this Summit; and

Requests that the Executive Board take all appropriate action to safeguard international databases and to ensure that full and proper access is maintained.

9. Capacity Building

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Recognizing the importance of capacity building as discussed in several fora and by many committees;

Encourages the ICSU Executive Board, ICSU Unions, National Members and Interdisciplinary Bodies to intensify their efforts in effecting partnerships within and beyond the ICSU family to strengthen capacity building, especially for developing countries, and to broaden outreach to teachers and young scientists.

10. Earth System Science Partnership

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Recognizing the importance for science and society of the evolution of the four ICSU Global Environmental Change Programmes (IGBP, WCRP, IHDP and DIVERSITAS) to a truly integrated Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP) and of the Global Change System for Analysis, Research and Training (START), which are delivering significant scientific results regarding the causes and consequences of global change;

Noting the difficulties of the ESSP and START in generating the stable core financial resources required to perform their tasks of coordination, synthesis, integration, and communication of their scientific activities; and

Recalling Resolution 2 of the 26th General Assembly;

Requests the Executive Board to assist the ESSP and START by taking appropriate action to create a dialogue between the ICSU National Members, the funding bodies responsible for the contributions to the ESSP and START programmes, and the broader global change funding community in order to provide long-term, stable, core funding.

11. Water Research

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Expresses its thanks to the Members of the Scientific Committee on Water Research (SCOWAR) for their efforts;

Agrees to dissolve the Committee; and

Taking into account the overwhelming importance of water to the world,

Charges the Executive Board to develop a strategy for ICSU's involvement in this area.

12. Food Security

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Expresses its thanks to the Members of the Committee on Sciences for Food Security ;

Agrees to dissolve the Committee; and

Recognizing the significance of food security,

Requests the Executive Board to provide an innovative and integrative approach to this high priority scientific issue.

13. Observing Systems

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Recognizing that monitoring of global change is critical to the support of their programmes,

Urges all ICSU members to bring to the attention of the appropriate government agencies the need for environmental observations in the framework of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and the Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS) to meet observing standards for global change monitoring, and the need to improve research access to global data.

14. Membership and Structure of ICSU

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU,

Noting the recommendations in the ICSU Assessment Report that Unions representing engineering, medical and agricultural sciences be admitted, and noting the recommendation that criteria for membership be developed to avoid redundant representation of disciplines and to discourage fragmentation, especially in the biological sciences;

Further noting discussions during the Forum of Scientific Unions and during the Business Meeting of Scientific Unions;

Requests the Executive Board to establish an *ad hoc* committee to review the overall balance of scientific disciplines within ICSU, to provide guidelines for the acceptance of new Scientific Union Members, and to establish a more proactive mechanism with regard to National Membership. The *ad hoc* committee should present its preliminary findings to the meeting of Scientific Unions in 2004 for discussion and to the National Members for their input. The results of the review should be reported to the 28th General Assembly.

15. Expressions of Appreciation

The 27th General Assembly of ICSU

Expresses its deep gratitude to the Brazilian Academy of Sciences, its President, Eduardo M. Krieger, the staff of the Academy and the members of the Local Organizing Committee for the excellent arrangements made for the ICSU meetings, for the generous support of representatives from developing countries, and for the warmth of the welcome extended to participants;

Extends its sincere thanks to the Officers of ICSU and the Members of the Executive Board for all their dedication and hard work in the service of ICSU over the last three years; and

Thanks the Secretariat of ICSU for its work during the last triennium and in the preparation of this Assembly.