

PRESS RELEASE

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ICSU's new Executive Director appointed

The International Council for Science (ICSU) welcomes Dr. Steven Wilson as Executive Director. Dr. Wilson will provide important leadership as ICSU seeks to implement its newly approved second Strategic Plan 2012–2017.

Dr. Wilson will take up his duties on 1 April 2012. The President of ICSU, Professor Yuan-Tseh Lee, is delighted by Dr. Wilson's acceptance of the post of Executive Director. Prof. Lee said: 'It is a pleasure to welcome Dr. Wilson as the new Executive Director. His experience as the interim Chief Executive and a Director at the UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), which has been a supporter and partner of ICSU, means that he will bring the perspective and dynamism of a Research Council leader to us. His close involvement with a number of international research programmes over the years will help him in his new role.'

Dr. Wilson is a co-chair of the Belmont Forum, an international partnership of major environmental research funders, which is now working closely with ICSU in the development of the new co-designed initiative, Future Earth: research for global sustainability.

Dr. Wilson expressed his eager anticipation to take up the exciting and challenging position of Executive Director: 'I am very excited at the prospect of leading ICSU, as it continues to be one of the world's foremost organizations for science. I look forward to bringing scientists together from all parts of the world, and helping to mobilize the international scientific community to provide new knowledge to tackle the grand societal challenges of the day – be they concerning environmental change, food security or human health.'

Following a degree in Chemistry from the University of Oxford, Dr. Wilson graduated from the University of Bristol in 1995 with a PhD in Chemistry. After working for the UK Meteorological Office, he joined NERC in 1998, and has held positions which include Director of Earth Observation, Director of Science and Innovation, and Director of Strategy and Partnerships.

Among colleagues and peers, Dr. Wilson is known to be an exceptional manager of both programmes and people. He brings enthusiasm and vigour to all aspects of his work, and he has conceived and helped develop several large, highly successful initiatives and programmes that have earned him widespread respect.

Dr. Wilson succeeds Professor Deliang Chen, who will return to the University of Gothenburg in Sweden after three years at the helm.

Professor Lee expressed his appreciation of Professor Chen, stating: 'For the past three years, Professor Chen has worked with extraordinary dedication, and made a tremendous contribution to the rejuvenation of ICSU. It was during his tenure that several major initiatives got off the ground, including Future Earth and ICSU's key role at Rio+20. The international visibility of ICSU also increased, thanks in large part to his efforts. His outstanding service deserves the deep gratitude of our entire community. While we will dearly miss his full-time presence, Professor Chen will continue to work with ICSU as a concerned scientist.'



Dr. Carthage Smith, the Deputy Executive Director of ICSU, will be the acting Executive Director during February-March 2012.

More information from:

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About ICSU

Founded in 1931, ICSU is a non-governmental organization representing a global membership that includes both national scientific bodies (120 National Members representing 140 countries) and International Scientific Unions (31 Members). The ICSU 'family' also includes upwards of 20 Interdisciplinary Bodies—international scientific networks established to address specific areas of investigation. Through this international network, ICSU coordinates interdisciplinary research to address major issues of relevance to both science and society. In addition, the Council actively advocates for freedom and responsibility in the conduct of science, promotes equitable access to scientific data and information, and facilitates science education and capacity building.