113th Meeting of Executive Board

Auckland
New Zealand

Thursday, 4 September 2014

DECISIONS

Present: Orhan Altan, John Ball, David Black, Michael Clegg, Barbara Erazmus, Raghavendra Gadagkar, Yuan Tseh Lee, Manuel de León, Jinghai Li, Gordon McBean, Nicole Moreau, Daya Reddy, Cheryl de la Rey, Kazuyuki Tatsumi and Steven Wilson (ex officio)

Apologies for absence: John Buckeridge

Secretariat: Tish Bahmani Fard and Denise Young

Regional Offices: Nordin Hasan, Manuel Limonta and Edith Madela-Mntla

Agenda Item 1: Sharizad Tengku Dahlan, Camilo García, Richard Glover, Ángela Guzmán, Mohd Hizamddin Jaafar, Maureen Brennan, Vivien Hwey-Ying Lee, Johannes Mengel, Howard Moore, Daniel Nyanganyura, Nora Papp, Katsia Paulavets, Anne-Sophie Stevance and Andrew Wei-Chih Yang

1. Welcome and Opening of the Meeting

The President welcomed the participants and invited each person present to introduce themselves briefly.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda had primarily been set up to brief the new Executive Board. Information items were kept brief and it was agreed that any substantive discussion should be held at the next meeting of the EB.

Decision
To adopt the Agenda.
3. **Decisions of 112th Meeting of Executive Board and Matters Arising**  
   (not treated elsewhere)

All matters arising from the Decisions of the 112th meeting of the Board were treated elsewhere on the Agenda.

**Decision**

To note the Decisions of the last meeting.

4. **Introduction to ICSU**

The Executive Director gave a brief introduction to ICSU.

**Decision**

To note the ICSU structure and activities.

5. **Role and Responsibilities of the Board**

5.1 **Role**

According to the Statutes, the Executive Board is responsible to the General Assembly. It oversees the operations of ICSU; recommends the directions and priorities of ICSU to the General Assembly, taking into consideration the recommendations of the appropriate Committees; and implements and communicates ICSU's policies and views between sessions of the General Assembly.

Board Members were reminded that whilst they were elected by the General Assembly based on nominations from National Members and Scientific Unions, they did not represent either the Union or National Member nominating them or the clusters of Union Members proposing them for election. The affiliation (country or Union) given after their names was for information purposes only.

**Decision**

To note the roles of Executive Board Members and Officers.

5.2 **Conduct of Board Meetings and decision-making between meetings**

Board Members are expected to take an active part in Board discussions and in implementing General Assembly and EB decisions. It is essential that discussions in the Executive Board are open and constructive and, therefore, discussions during the meeting could not be reported outside the Board; once decisions were made, dissenting views should not be reported outside the EB. Dissenting views could be noted in the report of the meeting, if so requested, although this had so far never happened. The EB decisions are made publicly available on the ICSU website.

In between meetings of the Board, decisions, such as appointments to committees, can be taken electronically when these cannot wait until the next meeting of the Board.

**Decisions**

To note expected behaviour of Board Members in conduct of meetings; and to agree that there would not be paper files of EB meeting documents in future.
5.3 Liability

The opinion of the ICSU auditors concerning the legal liability of members of the Executive Board was provided. Members requested that this be updated to refer specifically to the Executive Board as a whole and not just the Officers. ICSU has an insurance policy which covers EB Members for misconduct or injury caused to third parties.

**Decision:**
To ask the Secretariat to update the note on the legal liability of EB members.

5.4 Rules for Travel on ICSU Business

Members were informed that the rules for travel could be found on the third page of the ICSU Travel Claim form. Reimbursement of expenses (air tickets and so on) could be made in advance of the meeting upon receipt of an invoice. Originals of air tickets and all other expenses have to be submitted after the meeting. ICSU reimburses tourist or economy class fare using the most economical fare possible. For flights over five hours economy class tickets with upgrading possibility could be considered and a request to that effect sent to the Secretariat but any upgrading had to be authorized in advance.

ICSU’s insurance policy gives limited cover for EB Members travelling on ICSU business. ICSU will also reimburse reasonable additional insurance cover taken out by Members, as required. It was stressed that Members must ensure that they have adequate travel insurance.

**Decision**
To note ICSU travel rules.

5.5 Conflict of Interest

ICSU has recently adopted a policy on conflict of interest and this is now routinely used in meetings.

Members should indicate any general conflicts of interest for the register of conflicts of interest. In addition, at each meeting members will be asked to declare any interests specific to particular agenda items.

**Decision**
To agree that each EB Member sends a short note on their potential conflicts of interest to the Assistant Executive Director; the chair would then decide how they are best managed.

6. Appointment of Committee on Finance

The Board has to appoint, from among its own membership, the Committee on Finance. This consists of a chair and two Members with the Treasurer ex officio.

**Decision**
To appoint Orhan Altan (Chair), Nicole Moreau and Manuel de León to the Committee on Finance.
7. Review of General Assembly

7.1 Process

Board Members noted the smooth running of the Assembly and expressed their thanks to the ICSU Secretariat, the Royal Society of New Zealand and the Conference Company.

The following points were raised as needing addressing:

- Voting system, particularly the slates chosen by the fora – felt to be confusing and highlighted the difference between National Members and Unions
- Counting of votes took too long and should be programmed to take place during coffee breaks
- Unions upset by the possibility of losing the “U” in ICSU
- Revisit the form of, and necessity for, separate fora, perhaps only the business sessions were required
- Possible press conference at end of General Assembly with a press declaration
- Start GA with a briefing session on procedures
- Simplify access to online documentation
- Set up a list of actions mentioned (raised) at the General Assembly (especially the External Review vis-à-vis the Strategic Plan)
- Change the voting on elections to Executive Board. Hold a session before the vote to explain the process clearly

7.2 Follow-up to External Review

The Board agreed that urgent action was needed to identify the most immediate steps to be taken up in following up to the Assembly recommendations with regard to the External Review if there was to be an electronic General Assembly to decide on these in a year’s time.

The Board also agreed that as Future Earth became more independent of ICSU time should be spent nurturing other ICSU programmes, such as Urban Health and IRDR.

An eminent persons advisory committee could be established to work on funding and visibility for ICSU.

Decisions

To ask John Ball, Manuel de León and David Black to prepare a one page paper on revision to the voting system; and
to agree that the Officers should start an initial reflection on future action on the External Review as soon as possible for consideration by the Executive Board and with a view to assigning tasks.

8. Dates and Places of Next Meetings, including Officers and Regional Chairs and Directors Meetings and Webinars between physical meetings

The Executive Board and Officers usually met twice per year with a webinar of the Board halfway between meetings. One meeting of the Officers is held jointly with the Regional Chairs and Directors, usually in the second half of the year.
The Board noted that the following matters would need electronic decisions by the Board before its next physical meeting, some of them upon the recommendation of the CSPR:

- New members for CSPR
- Renewal of membership of Regional Committees
- New Chairs for Urban Health and IRDR

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<td>To agree on those matters requiring a decision by electronic means before the next physical meeting of the Board;</td>
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<td>to agree to hold an EB webinar before the end of the year; and again between the Officers and EB meetings in 2015; and</td>
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<td>to agree to hold an Officers meeting in January-February 2015 and EB meeting in April-May.</td>
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9. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

10. Evaluation of Meeting

It was agreed that this had been a good first meeting of the Board.

11. Closed Session

11.1 With Executive Director
11.2 Without Executive Director

There being no other business, the President closed the meeting at 13:00.