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IUGG Grant for eGY-Africa

The international Union of Geodesy and Geophysics has awarded a grant of USD 10,000 in support of eGY-Africa programs.

eGY-Africa is an eGY-inspired initiative to reduce the Digital Divide by promoting better Internet connectivity in universities and other research and education institutions on Africa. The grant will be used to help run a pan-African workshop to address the problem and coordinate action. Information about the eGY-Africa Working Group is available at <http://www.egy.org/egyafrika.php>.

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

Quick Tutorial on Data Management

eGY Participants will find the quick guide to data management and publishing put out by the MIT libraries of interest. It can be found at:

<http://libraries.mit.edu/guides/subjects/data-management/index.html>.

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

Proceedings of the Conference “50th Anniversary of the International Geophysical Year and Electronic Geophysical Year”

Proceedings published in English, as well as abstracts in English and Russian and pointers to PowerPoint presentations made at this conference, held 16-19 September 2007 in Suzdal, Russia, are now available on the eGY Web site at <http://egy.org/newsroom.php>.

Received from gvi@wdbc.ru (Alexei Gvishiani)

Mapping the Digital Divide

Sandwiched between YouTube videos of laughing babies and exploding fountains of Mentos and Diet Coke, you can find a 45-second animation of Africa’s “Internet weather.” The continent is bright yellow, and as the video runs, pale red dots flicker across its surface. A voiceover with a sprightly British accent informs the viewer that the dots represent Internet connectivity measured from April 2007 to March 2008. The paler the dot, the slower the connection, and the more the dots flicker, the more unstable the connection is. While the dots flutter dimly, the voice informs us that “Africa’s performance is the worst in the world, and is ten or more years behind Europe and the US.” Click [here](#) for the full report.

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

New Visualizations of Internet Connectivity

Dr. Les Cottrell of the Stanford Linear Accelerator and his colleagues have used a new cool tool from Google to create a bubble/scatter plot that visualizes up to 4 metrics (e.g. throughput (y), average RTT (x), population (size of bubble), Region (color)) as a function of time. You can choose various PingER metrics including: Average RTT, min RTT, jitter, loss, throughput, unreachability, plus other more generic metrics such as Population, Internet users, Human Development Index, Digital Opportunity Index. Then by pushing the play button you can see the changes from 1998 to the end of 2007. You can also select the monitoring site as being SLAC(California), CERN (Switzerland) or ICTP (Italy) and you can view the data for all regions or select for a single regions such as Africa.

The web page is at:

<http://www-iepm.slac.stanford.edu/pinger/pinger-metrics-motion-chart.html>

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

IUGG Commission for Data and Information

The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) has established a Union Commission for Data and Information to provide a focused and sustainable organizational structure that supports and strengthens IUGG science through integrated scientific information activities. The formation of this Commission was an Electronic Geophysical Year (eGY) initiative led by Peter Fox and Charlie Barton. The commission will build on the foundation established during eGY and expand ownership of the eGY 'Declaration for an Earth & Space Science Information Commons' to include ICSU, IAU, IUGG-CGI, CODATA, AGU, EGU, CEOS-WGISS, and others – with the goal of realizing a broad worldwide ICSU vision for shared data and Information.

The Commission will follow the IUGG structure. Officers are appointed by the IUGG Executive: chair, vice-chair, one member from each of the eight Associations, and two members without formal Association affiliation. One member of the Commission Executive shall be identified as the Secretary.

Commission officers appointed for 2008-2011 are:

Peter Fox (USA) – Chair, representative of IAGA

Charles Barton (Australia) – Vice-Chair, representative of eGY and ICSU-CODATA

Mark Parsons (USA), representative of IACS

Bernd Richter (Germany), representative of IAG

Pierrick Givone (France), representative of IAHS

Maria Assunção F. Silva Dias (Brazil), representative of IAMAS

John Gould (UK), representative of IAPSO

Tim Ahern (USA), representative of IASPEI

Adelina Geyer Traver (SPAIN), representative of IAVCEI

Ruth Neilan (USA), representative of ICSU-FAGS

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Digital Library Presentation

Rajendra (Raj) Bose, Digital Initiatives Manager for the Center for Digital Research and Scholarship at Columbia University, was invited to represent the eGY in a technical session hosted by the Geoscience Information Society at their annual meeting, co-located with the Geological Society of America conference, in Houston, TX, on 8 October 2008. The session "Libraries in Transformation: Exploring Topics of Changing Practices and New Technologies" provided an opportunity for the geoscience librarians and other professionals present to hear about a variety of issues and challenges facing libraries that provide access to geoscientific information. Raj presented on "Realizing the research library-data center alliance." His talk described the Long-Term Archive collaborative project between the NASA Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center (SEDAC) (which is hosted by the CIESIN research center at Columbia) and the university Libraries/Information Services as an example of such an alliance. Raj also discussed the origins of eGY and described how his talk, and a similarly-themed Union Session which will be co-convened by Mark Parsons of NSIDC and himself at the 2008 AGU Fall Meeting in San Francisco on Monday 15 December, resulted from discussions about the topic at the March 2008 eGY meeting in Boulder, CO.

Received from rbose@columbia.edu

CODATA Conference, Kyiv, Ukraine, 5-8 October 2008

This 21st Conference of ICSU's interdisciplinary [Committee on Data for Science & Technology](http://www.codata.org/08conf/index.html) (CODATA) was held at the National Technical University of Ukraine, Kiev, 5-8 October 2008. The meeting attracted nearly 600 participants from 30 countries, and included a strong eGY contingent. The 55 sessions (which were too many) covered scientific, technical, managerial, social, policy, and legal aspects of informatics across all scientific disciplines – a very modern and progressive array of session titles. Some 80% of these had direct relevance to eGY. Conference details and program are at: <http://www.codata.org/08conf/index.html>.

Australia and the UK have been admitted as new member countries and IUGG has renewed membership. [Twelve Task Groups](#) were approved, including one called eGY: *Earth and Space Science Interoperability* (chair: Alexei Gvishiani, co-chairs: Eric Kihn and Jean Bonnin). This group will continue certain functions of eGY beyond the end of 2008 when eGY ends.

A resolution was passed urging action to reduce the digital divide in Africa:

“CODATA, recognising that modern information and communications technologies are revolutionising the conduct of research, education, and training by providing a rapid and effective means for

- communicating among people,
- discovering, accessing, and sharing data and information,
- accessing the vast worldwide archives of research information, teaching resources, and publications that exist,
- obtaining computational services, including data processing, visualization, and analysis,
- transmitting observational data,
- participating in international, regional, national, and institutional scientific and educational efforts,

“Notes that the scientific, economic, and societal benefits that flow from the above capabilities are only available to communities that have an efficient cyber-infrastructure and good Internet connectivity,

“Regrets that many African scientists and educators, particularly in Universities, do not have adequate access to the Internet, and that the digital divide between Africa and rest of the world is growing,

“Recommends that all efforts be made, both in Africa and within the international scientific community, to improve

Internet performance and access in African scientific, technical, and educational institutions.”

CODATA Conferences are growing in popularity as the organization becomes an increasingly important forum for informatics developments internationally. ICSU recognizes that CODATA is well-positioned to play a central role, consistent with the [recommendations](#) of the ICSU Strategic Committee for Data & Information ([SCID](#)).

At the meeting, the ICSU General Assembly passed the following decisions:

“7.4. To urge all IPY Projects to explicitly identify and fully share the data they collect as part of IPY, in full accordance with the IPY data policy; and

7.5. To urge all ICSU Members to support formal stewardship and long-term preservation of IPY data through a distributed, internationally recognized and supported IPY Data and Information Service in collaboration with the proposed ICSU World Data System.”

and the following Resolution:

“Resolution 2: In the context of the discussion about the International Polar Year and Scientific Committee for Information and Data, ICSU shall take a leadership role in developing basic principles for forward planning at all stages of research projects and programmes, for data identification, sharing, availability, and long-term preservation, noting that data management be an intrinsic element of programme reviewers.”

Received from cebarton@gmail.com

The Tsukuba Declaration

The participants in the four “IGY+50” programs—the International Polar Year (IPY), the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE), the Electronic Geophysical Year (eGY), and the International Heliophysical Year (IHY)—met in Tsukuba, Japan, on 10-13 November 2008. These programs extend and enhance the legacy of IGY fifty years ago. An outcome of the meeting was the “Tsukuba Declaration” that advocates continued cooperation among the global science community, national academies of sciences, research funding agencies, industry, national governments, and inter-governmental bodies so that society and its leaders will have at their disposal the best possible data and information to make the decisions necessary for a sustainable future for humankind. Participants recognized the unique value of conducting international science year

<http://www.egy.org/>

programs and envisaged an IGY+75 or even an IGY+100 exercise.

A complete copy of the declaration is available on the eGY website (www.egy.org).

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

eGY Booth at the Fall AGU Meeting

eGY will sponsor a booth featuring virtual observatory technology at the Fall AGU Meeting. It will be located near the Google booth. If we have not yet contacted you about making a presentation in the booth and would like to, please contact Bill.Peterson@lasp.colorado.edu for a list of available slots.

Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning, eGY collaborates with the International Polar Year to present demonstrations of data access systems for cold regions science. We demonstrate and seek user feedback on three different data discovery, access, and visualization systems working to enhance interdisciplinary use of diverse polar and cryospheric data:

- The Cooperative Arctic Data and information Service for the Arctic Observing Network
- Discovery, Access, and Delivery of Data for the International Polar Year
- NSIDC Searchlight—an integrative discovery and analysis tool for the National Snow and Ice Data Center

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

eGY Sponsored Event at the Fall AGU Meeting

eGY will co-sponsor the Earth and Space Science Informatics (ESSI) focus group reception on Tuesday evening 16 December. Come meet your eGY and ESSI colleagues in an informal setting. See the AGU program for more details.

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

Presentations at the IGY+50 Conference in Japan

Presentations made by Mark Parsons and Charles Barton at the Tsukuba IGY+50 Conference are now online on the eGY web site at: <http://egy.org/presentations.php>.

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IHY Newsroom: <http://ihy.gsfc.nasa.gov/newsroom/newsroom.shtml>

IYPE Website: <http://www.esfs.org/>

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