

**Constitution and Bylaws**  
ICSU Panel on World Data Centers  
(Geophysical, Solar, and Environmental)  
(revised February 2005)

**Constitution**

The Panel on World Data Centers (Geophysical, Solar, and Environmental) was established in 1968 at the 12th General Assembly of ICSU, to advise the Officers of ICSU on the management of the World Data Centers (WDCs), and to carry out related activities. It succeeded the other ICSU bodies that created the WDC system for the International Geophysical Year of 1957-1958 and supervised its operation during and after the IGY. Today the Panel oversees dozens of WDCs, which are maintained by their host countries and are responsible for collecting, archiving, and distributing a wide range of data. These data cover timescales ranging from seconds to millennia and provide baseline information for research in many ICSU disciplines, especially for monitoring changes in the geosphere and biosphere—gradual or sudden, foreseen or unexpected, natural or man-made. Through its varied activities and initiatives, the Panel promotes the use of common standards and new technology, enabling good science to be done with both new and old data by the scientists of many nations.

1. The Panel shall work with data centers, providers, and users to further the following objectives:
  - a. To ensure permanent archiving and availability of geophysical, solar, and environment data for the benefit of the world research and education community.
  - b. To coordinate and further develop the WDC System, to establish the criteria to be met by the WDCs, to review the operation of WDCs, to approve the formation and closure of WDCs, and to agree and enforce the rules for availability and access of data.
  - c. To work with ICSU bodies to ensure the retention and access of data collected as a part of ICSU programs, and to identify and meet their data requirements.
  - d. To advise ICSU as appropriate on matters relating to scientific data within the purview of the WDC System.
2. The Panel should report to ICSU annually or otherwise as required.
3. Panel membership represents scientists and data managers concerned with the international exchange and dissemination of geophysical, solar, and environmental data.
4. The chair of the Panel is appointed by ICSU, with advice from the Panel. The chair appoints the vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary, with concurrence of the Panel. These officers form the executive.

5. The Panel shall comprise the executive and scientific representatives with regional oversight over WDCs and coordination offices. Other members of the Panel may include scientific representatives of relevant ICSU programs and bodies.
6. The Panel shall normally conduct affairs by consensus, but when an election or other matters requires a vote, each member of the Panel shall have one vote. The matter will be decided by a simple majority of those voting. The chair shall have a casting vote.
7. The Panel shall maintain its own bank accounts under the operational control of the Treasurer or other officer acting as Treasurer.
8. Accounts shall be rendered for approval to ICSU annually or otherwise as required.
9. Amendments to this Constitution are subject to the approval of ICSU.
10. The Panel shall maintain a set of bylaws to support this constitution.

### **Bylaws**

1. The Panel shall compile and publish guides to the WDC system. Such publishing may be supplemented by electronic means.
2. The Panel shall promote awareness of the WDC and its capabilities through means such as publications, workshops, and exhibitions.
3. The Panel may undertake or sponsor special operations to acquire data from remote or unusual sources, to convert data into digital form, or to develop special analysis or applications services.
4. The chair of the panel may appoint assistant secretaries on an ad hoc basis to perform duties as requested. These assistant secretaries will not be voting members of the panel.
5. The Panel may designate officers and working groups for specific tasks, such as publishing reports, reviewing WDC activities and infrastructure, executing projects, or liaising with other bodies.
6. Panel members shall be appointed for a term of four years, and are eligible for reappointment for one further term of office. Efforts should be made to stagger the terms of appointment.
7. Relevant ICSU bodies shall be invited to submit nominations for Panel membership. Decisions on these nominations will be made by the Panel.
8. The size of the Panel shall not exceed 12 members. Two-thirds of members of the Panel members shall be considered a quorum for voting.

9. Panel members who miss two consecutive Panel meetings will normally be replaced.
10. The Panel may have correspondents, including all WDC directors and named representatives of appropriate ICSU and international bodies. These correspondents will receive the major mailings of the Panel.
11. Meetings of the Panel or the executive shall normally be called by the chair. Extraordinary meetings of the executive may be called at the request of a majority of the executive. Intercessional decisions may be carried out by correspondence.
12. Meetings of the Panel or the Executive shall take place at least annually. A summary of actions or recommendations arising from these meetings shall be distributed to Panel members and correspondents.
13. WDC directors and other correspondents are encouraged to participate in Panel meetings, although the Panel has no financial obligation to support their expenses.
14. The agenda and documents of Panel meetings shall, whenever possible, be circulated beforehand.
15. The Panel may call and organize meetings of all WDC directors as needed, and may contribute funding for such meetings.
16. The normal work of individual WDCs in receiving, archiving, and distributing data is financed by their host countries or organizations.
17. The Panel may receive funds from ICSU, national and international bodies, and individual WDCs. Such funds may be contracted to specific WDCs for work on special projects.
18. A yearly WDC membership fee shall be established by the Panel. The amount of this fee shall be reviewed annually.
19. Panel funds may be used to support the attendance of Panel members or representatives at meetings of the WDC Panel, ICSU, or other bodies at which the Panel should be represented.
20. Travel and other expenses necessary to carry out the Panel's objectives or projects must be authorized by the chair.
21. Proposed changes to the bylaws shall be circulated to the Panel at least one month before a vote. Amendments to these bylaws may be made by majority vote of the Panel.