



UNESCO/Flanders Funds-in-Trust

for the Support of UNESCO's activities in the Field of Science

Eleventh Meeting of the Steering Committee

24 May 2006 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris
Salle V

Minutes
(Draft of 20 June 2006)

The eleventh meeting of the Steering Committee of the UNESCO/Flanders Trust Fund for the support of UNESCO's activities in the Field of Science (FUST) took place on 24 May 2006 at UNESCO Paris. The list of participants is enclosed as Annex 1 and the Agenda as Annex 2.

I. Introduction and general policy discussion.

UNESCO fully recognized the importance of the unique and stimulant support by Flanders for the activities of UNESCO in the field of science, for which the organization is very grateful.

The cumulative contribution of the Government of Flanders reached USD 8 M in 2005 and recently Flanders approved 1.4 M Euros for the contribution of the year 2006 as well as five new large scale projects (four water related projects and one Outreach project), for a total sum amounting to USD 3,522,330, which will be financed through the Flemish government's contributions in 2006, 2007, and 2008 within the framework of the current phase of FUST.

According to the estimation calculated, by the end of 2008, the leftover budget will be 1.3 M Euros (regardless of continuation of the Agreement), and during 2007 the future Committees will have the possibility to discuss new future projects.

UNESCO explained the new rotation system for the Science Sector's focal point for FUST cooperation and the Flemish representative proposed that the mandate of the focal point for this cooperation should be for 2 years.

Mr. Arata informed the Meeting that Mr. Peter Pissierssens (SC/IOC) had been nominated as the Science Sector's focal point.

UNESCO also mentioned that the "overhead cost" is the subject of internal discussions and that a clear indication of a new policy was expected during this year. The implementing units, notably Field Offices, according to the Bureau of the Budget, would receive a relatively

fair share of FITOCA resources. Dr. Herman expressed his satisfaction with this new development. Mr. Arata said that the new policy will be reflected in the next framework agreement of FUST. Mr. Schaaf called attention to the situation at Headquarters where substantial human resources are also used for the management and implementation of FUST activities.

The Flemish representative, Dr. Herman congratulated the establishment of the new Website (<http://www.iode.org/fust>), which was developed by Mr. Peter Pissierssens, SC/ IOC. The Meeting thanked Mr. Pissierssens for his efforts and noted that the site will serve undoubtedly as an excellent mechanism for communications between all colleagues involved in the FUST cooperation.

II. Report on the Phase I and II on-going projects

513RAB2001: Secondment of Prof. Willy Bauwens

√ The request for the extension of the project until end January 2007 was accepted.

513RAB2041: Capacity Building and Training on Environmental Planning and Management

It was noted that the difficulties in Palestine have slowed down the project. The implementation rate of the project now is approx. 58%. The project should be implemented by the end of 2007.

It was noted that a request for a next (3rd) phase had been submitted. Dr. Herman expressed his concerns about the problems with the project and requested more reports and discussions with the counterparts. It was reported also that there will still some funds left from Phase 1.

√ The UNESCO Cairo office is kindly requested to prepare detailed report concerning the implementation of this project, notably information on the time schedule of the project.

513RAB2042 Phase I: Support to flow regimes from International Experimental and Network data Nile Project FRIEND/NILE project.

Progress of the project is quite satisfactory as it nears completion. The Sixth Project Management Meeting of the Project took place in Cairo in February 2006 in which progress was reviewed and the prospective structure and activities of the following phase were discussed. The Final Report of the Project needs to be presented.

√ In order to have a proper transition to the following phase, it was agreed to extend the operation period of the FRIEND/Nile First Phase budget code (513RAB2042) until the end of August 2006, allowing to finalize all related payments, and transfer the saved amount to the Friend Nile Phase 2 budget.

513SAF2040: Capacity Building and Networking for Water Resources Management 2000-2003 Phase 1

No report available.

√ Dr. Herman requested a final report of Phase 1

a. Large-scale Projects -approved-

513GLO2002: ODIMEX

The project is progressing as planned. The system was migrated from UNESCO HQ to the IOC Project Office for IODE (Ostend, Belgium) in November 2005. The new content management system, developed by the University of Western Cape (South Africa) has been implemented. Content of the digital library has been migrated. Content of the lectures will be migrated in the next few months. Interest for OceanTeacher as an integrated training tool has further increased. Collaboration is being established with WMO in the framework of JCOMM to use OceanTeacher also for marine meteorology training materials.

To further improve penetration of the IODE/ OceanTeacher training experiments are now being undertaken with multimedia presentations that allow video+PPT. The experiments are well received.

A full progress report is available on the FUST web site on http://www.iode.org/fust/reports/513glo2002%20odimex_fust11.doc

513INT2000: Sustainable Management of Marginal, Drylands: SUMAMAD

The project is in full swing. Several annual workshops have been held: the latest one took place in Pakistan in January 2006 (postponed from 2005 due to the earthquake that had struck the country); the next workshop is planned to be held in Syria in November 2006.

The international scientific conference on "The Future of Drylands" (Tunis, June 2006) will be an excellent showcase for the project.

513RAF2003: ODINAFRICA III

Mr. Pissierssens informed the Meeting that the project implementation is going according to plan. There are slight delays in the equipment installation (sea level stations) due to the delays in funds availability in 2005 and 2006. However it is planned that all planned stations will be installed by the end of 2006.

It was recalled that the focus in terms of outcome of the project will be on (i) the establishment of an operational and real-time sea level observation network; (ii) the development of an African Coastal and Marine Atlas contributing to coastal management (NEPAD).

He reported that the 2006 ODINAFRICA Seminar (Ostend, Belgium, 24-26 April 2006) had been very successful. To improve linkages with other activities in Africa, several Organizations and Projects (GEF LME) had been invited for the first day of the seminar. This had proved to be most useful and it is expected that these projects will use ODINAFRICA NODCs for their data and information management requirements.

The Seminar also received a visit from Minister Fientje Moerman. She was able to visit a special exhibition on the products and services development within the framework of ODINAFRICA-III and she was able to talk to many of the African experts.

Dr. Herman informed the Meeting that the Minister had been most impressed with the achievements of the project. She had also witnessed that the facilities in Ostend, provided and funded by the Government of Flanders, are well used.

A full progress report is available from the FUST web site on http://www.iode.org/fust/reports/513raf2003%20-%20ODINAFRICA3_fust11.doc

513RAF2004: Development of an African Repository of Electronic Publications

Mr. Pissierssens informed the Meeting that the project was progressing according to plan.

√ However, it had been requested to extend the duration of the project for a few months (September 2006) to compensate for the fund delays of 2005 and 2006.

Mr. Pissierssens further informed the Meeting that the results of the African e-repository had attracted the interest of other regions. It was for this reason that a small scale project was being submitted during this Session of the FUST Steering Committee.

A full progress report is available from the FUST web site on http://www.iode.org/fust/reports/513raf2004%20odinpubafrica_fust11.doc

513RAF2005: Geosphere-Biosphere Coupling Processes in the Ocean: the Training-through-Research approach towards Third World involvement

√ SC/CSI and SC/IOC were requested to identify the project officer after the retirement of Mr. Suzyumov.

b. Small-scale projects financed by the accrued interest of the Trust fund -approved-

Ocean Forum series on the Marine Environment (513GLO2005)

Mr. Pissierssens explained that there have been some delays in completion of this project due to the retirement of the responsible officer (Gary Wright). Mr. Pissierssens also requested Dr. Herman to provide a short text that could be included in the publication to acknowledge the support provided by Flanders to publish this book.

Eco-Hydrological and Socio-Economical Approach for the Restoration of the Lagoon Merja Zerga in Morocco (513MOR2000)

It was reported that the workshop originally planned for October 2005 had been held in January 2006. There are some funds remaining. It was decided that through the e-mail exchange, the concrete modality of the realisation would be defined to use the balance of the funding available after holding the project workshop.

√ More clarification was required from Mike Bonell.

III. New project proposals: which have been approved by the Flemish authorities.

Support to Flow regimes from International Experimental and Network data Nile Project FRIEND/NILE project Phase II:

Dr. Herman reported that the EU had been present during the Phase 1 Conference. The EU had requested the CVs of the experts and one of the experts had been appointed for the advisory board of the thematic programme of the DG research. It was further noted that the workshop report was not yet available.

Dr. Herman pointed out that there was a problem in the budget table.

Conference of EU emphasizes the importance of DG research and the final version of the project document within the budget approved is urgently needed.

The revised work plan, which would develop the thematic involvement of the project reflecting the results of the preparatory and brainstorming session of 19-22 February 2006, would be very positive for future international cooperation.

√ It was decided that through the e-mail exchange, the concrete modality of the realisation would be defined.

Water Centre for Arid Semi Arid Regions of Latin America and Caribbean CAZALAC project Phase II:

Though the Phase II project has been approved, in the Final Report of Phase I there is the need to clearly differentiate between two Flemish financial sources:

- i) through the FUST cooperation proper
- ii) directly from the Flemish International Department of International Cooperation to the CAZALAC project in the framework of bilateral supports separately FUST cooperation.

FET-WATER project Phase II:

The project will expand the work done in South Africa to nine SADEC countries, mainly in capacity building networks for integrated water resources management. The South African Government will contribute significantly to the funding of this project.

Remote Sensing Application in the framework of FETWATER SIMDAS and GOOS-
AFRICA Programmes based on the UNESCO Crosscutting Project on the Remote Sensing
in Africa (FET-REMSENS)

It was noted that a meeting on the project would be held in Brussels on 1 June to identify Flemish partners. Mr. Pissierssens was invited to this meeting.

IV. The Outreach Project

This project consists of five different components. It was decided that Mr. Thomas Schaaf (SC/EES) will be the overall responsible officer for the project within UNESCO for administrative reasons, while two project components will be decentralized to the UNESCO offices in Montevideo and Cairo respectively, once the funds have been transferred to UNESCO and have been allocated to the project budget. Three other components of the project will be implemented by Mr. Schaaf directly.

√ Mr. Schaaf requested more information on OceanTeacher and expertise used in this project.

Two small scale project proposals

Workshop for the establishment of a pilot project to collect in real-time metadata from
SST and temperature profile data, and a DBCP users and technology

To follow up decisions made during JCOMM-II, the WMO-IOC Data Buoy Cooperation Panel (DBCP) and JCOMM Observations Coordination Group (OCG) had organized two workshops back to back from 27 to 29 March 2006 at the European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), Reading, United Kingdom. These are:

JCOMM/OCG workshop on the establishment of a pilot project to collect real-time metadata from SST and temperature profile data: to establish a Pilot Project for real-time distribution of metadata regarding SST and sub-surface temperature profile data. This followed recommendations by the Ocean Observing Panel for Climate (OOPC).

DBCP users and technology workshop: to establish better links between drifting buoy data users on one hand (e.g. NWP, Ocean modelling, science), and buoy operators, manufacturers, and satellite data telecommunication providers on the other hand. The goal is to design drifting buoys in such a way that they last longer and still meet user requirements.

As the ODINAFRICA project wishes to build bridges between the IODE data and information centres and operational oceanographers, IODE provided support to a few participants from Africa in view of extending participation of developing countries in the DBCP programme. This was accomplished through financial support from the Government of Flanders, as a build-on support activity to ODINAFRICA-III.

There were about 25 participants in each workshop. It was recommended during the workshops, to organize a training course for African and Western Indian Ocean region, in close cooperation with ODINAFRICA, on application and management of the data from in situ oceanographic and marine meteorological observations

The Workshop was also a good opportunity to share information on current activities in each panel and programme, regarding metadata collection and transmission in the era of ocean observation. The Participants then identified users' requirements for real-time metadata, and then it was followed by categorization of required metadata, and produced a first version of Matrix for users' requirements and metadata category. The Participants made a successful step to launch the Pilot Projects: it was noted with appreciation that the National Marine Data & Information Service (NMDIS, China) kindly offered to host metadata servers.

A Brainstorming Meeting on Water Management in Nile basin Countries

The final report was submitted during May 2006 and was available for the meeting.

Small scale projects which have been recently submitted in the framework of the 11th Steering Committee

Support to the Organization of Erosion Modelling Training Workshop for the FRIEND/Nile Research Team

√ The Steering Committee approved the proposal, allocating the requested budget of US\$ 12,870

Mapping Applications and Integrated Information Systems for Coastal Area Management

The proposal was introduced by Dr. Herman as the responsible officer (Mr. J. Barbieri was not available). The proposal encompasses the following activities:

In Activity 1 '*Mapping Applications and Integrated Information Systems for Coastal Area Management*' the development of an "Integrated Modular Information System" (IMIS) and a Mapping tool to visualise very fast a diversity of information.

Both tools have a more generic nature, which will be of use for IOC, IHP and MAB. Also a special training will be foreseen in December 2006, to test these new developments.

Therefore the representative of the Flemish government proposed to link these entire requests from the different FUST-projects and add on the second activity dealing with Marine Spatial planning (MSP). In fact this MSP-workshop will benefit from the developments under activity 1. As the title of this clustered SSA, the Flemish representative also proposed 'ISSTOCAM' = Integrated Services and Spatial Tools for Ocean and Coastal Area Management.

√ The Steering Committee approved the proposal, allocating the requested budget of USD 92,194

Development of an “easy-to-install” deployment package of an electronic repository of marine science publications (e-repository in a box)

Mr. Pissierssens referred to the success of the African e-repository project and the interest shown by other regions. Accordingly it would be advisable to “package” the used software solution and to provide training for institutions that would like to host a national or regional e-repository.

The ProDoc is available from the FUST web site on <http://www.iode.org/fust/prodocs/erepository%20SSA%20IOC.doc>

√ The Steering Committee approved the proposal, allocating the requested budget of US\$ 33,000.

√ The Steering Committee concluded that the submitted SSAs would cost US\$ 138,064. Accordingly approx. USD 100,000 would be remaining in the account for SSAs.

One generic tool in form of one package of platform through three or four languages, which will contain all kinds of needs for different projects: CAZALAC, FETWATER, FRIEND/Nile as well as SUMMAD were discussed.

V. Financial and administrative matters

√ It was reconfirmed that the official members of the Steering Committee consist of two from

The Government of Flanders:

Dr. Rudy L. Herman, Senior Researcher, Technology and Innovation Division, Ministry of Flanders,

Ms. Karen Groffils, Assistant to the Director General, Ministry of Flanders,

And two from UNESCO:

Mr. Akio Arata, Chief, Section for Bilateral Governmental Funding Sources

Mr. Peter Pissierssens, Chief, Ocean Services Section

In addition relevant staff from each side as observers

VI. Any other business

The representative of the Government of Flanders expressed serious concerns over the fact that, in spite of two invitations addressed by the Government of Flanders to the Deputy Director-General of UNESCO (the DDG had been invited to the opening in April 2005 as well as to the Celebration of the first anniversary of the IOC Project Office for IODE), neither the Deputy Director-General of the Organization nor any senior representative of UNESCO attended either event.

In view of the concerns expressed by this important donor government, the UNESCO representatives agreed that it was sincerely hoped that one high-ranking official could represent UNESCO on future similar important events organized by the Government of Flanders.

The representative of the Government of Flanders informed that next such occasion would be towards the end of 2008.

The new focal point of FUST cooperation UNESO, Mr. Pissierssens mentioned that the support of FUST for IOC is crucial, and the timing of future events would be hopefully not coincide with the General Conference or the Executive Board sessions of UNESCO in order to ensure UNESCO's participation in such important events.

√ Mr. Pissierssens recommended that templates for proposals and reports be prepared and distributed to facilitate the work of the Steering Committee. ERC was requested to prepare such documents.

√ Mr. Pissierssens further called to define clearly what is a "standard project" and what is an SSA. The Steering Committee decided that the maximum budget of an SSA should still be limited to USD 15,000 but that several proposals could be combined into one, provided there are clearly linkages.

√ The Steering Committee decided that the 12th Session of the FUST SC would be held on 11 December 2006 and agreed with the offer by Mr Pissierssens to host the Meeting at the IOC Project for IODE in Ostend, Belgium.

The Meeting was adjourned at 13h00.