

Report on the General Assembly of the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE)

The 13th General Assembly of the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE) met on 9-11 June 2009 at the Royal Society in London, United Kingdom. The business meeting was followed by a scientific symposium at Imperial College on "Finance, food and energy crises: consequences for the environment and land use change". The business meeting discussions primarily focused on the future directions of SCOPE to address the severing of formal ties with ICSU in October 2010. Members of SCOPE presented fundamentally new directions that are aligned with the rapidly changing needs of global science and the use of science in decision- and policy-making. Important results of the meeting, which are in line with a draft strategic plan, are:

- SCOPE will develop and implement an interdisciplinary science agenda of high relevance to decision makers. SCOPE will continue to undertake its credible and authoritative assessments and syntheses that address the priorities of specific regions while maintaining global relevance. Founded on partnerships, SCOPE will develop a range of products and services with and for its users.
- SCOPE remains open to historical partners, the academic, scientific and research institutions, scientific academies, research councils, or associations of such institutions, and international scientific unions. Potential new members will have a demonstrated interest in bringing the best science to bear on environmental stewardship.
- SCOPE will seek out and encourage active membership from businesses and associations and federations of business and industry, civil society organizations, and governmental and inter-governmental organizations.
- Membership in SCOPE offers opportunities with reciprocal rights and responsibilities. *Each Member has one vote and pays an annual subscription fee* that is used for operational core funding and seed funds towards project development.
- SCOPE will continue to undertake individual projects and serial collaborations with non-member organizations; the new approach will enhance and widen the spectrum of partnerships.
- SCOPE's finances in recent years have been beset by a host of problems that collectively have gravely imperilled its reactive capacities. The newly elected Executive Committee will give high priority to seeking alternative funding.
- The Paris Secretariat of SCOPE will require new premises as of October 2010, when formal ties are severed with ICSU. All aspects of this re-location will be explored by the Secretariat and the Executive Committee, taking into account the several overtures from possible host organizations in Paris and outside France.
- The SCOPE constitution now requires review and revision. The new constitution will be submitted to SCOPE Members by the end of 2009.

New officers: President: Paul Risser (USA); 1st Vice President: Lu Yonglong; 2nd Vice-President: Holm Tiessen, Treasurer: Ahmed M. Hassan (Egypt); Secretary General: Mary C. Scholes (South Africa); Members: Magdy Mahamed Attia (Egypt), Chang-Hung Chou (China-The Academy in Taipei), Carlos Alfredo Joly (Brazil), Annelies Pierrot-Bults (The Netherlands, SCOR), Jon Samseth (Norway, IUPAP)

Received from Norman (Jake) Peters, the IUGG liaison to SCOPE