

# Enhancing the Joint Efforts on Data Sharing in Developing Countries

## Speech at the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting, New York, July 2, 2015

Liu, C.

Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing 100101, China

Dear President, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We recognize that science has a central role in the development of the Information Society. Sharing research data not only provides fundamental resources for research, but can be an accelerator for the knowledge economy and to achieve the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As we enter the big data era, data sharing in developing countries has become even more critical, since the digital divide is to expand even more in some regions, because of policy, infrastructure, capacity, culture and even language gaps.

I am geographer, and from geographer's point of view, every corner of the world should get benefit from the information society equally. I would like to suggest U.N. continue to pay more attention to and to call research communities, funding agencies, private sectors and all stakeholders to reduce the digital divide.

I will illustrate some activities, led by CODATA that have helped address these issues in the last decade. In 2002, CODATA, the Committee on Data for Science and Technology of the International Council for Science (ICSU), established the Task Group for Preservation of and Open Access to S&T Data in/for/with Developing Countries (PASTD). CODATA also promised at the WSIS Tunis 2005 that it would do its best to help reduce the digital divide and had convened a successful series of international workshops, training programs on data strategies and policies in the developing world. CAST, the Chinese Association for Science and Technology, immediately established the Consultant Committee on ICT for U.N. (CCIT/CAST) with a remit to demonstrate its achievements at the Internet Governance Fo-



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**Author Information:** Liu, C. L-3684-2016, Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, lchuang@igsnr.ac.cn

**Citation:** Liu, C. Enhancing the joint efforts on data sharing in developing countries [J]. *Journal of Global Change Data & Discovery*, 2017, 1(1): 117-118. DOI: 10.3974/geodp.2017.01.21.

rum (IGF) each year.

These collaborations have led to notable achievements which include: the Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya jointly established the Global Change Research Data Publishing and Repository; the National Research Foundation of South Africa established the World Data Center for Biodiversity and Human Health in Africa as well as the African Network Data Centre for Socio-Economic under the World Data System of ICSU; the National Geoinformatics Center of China donated the Global Land Cover datasets in 30 meters resolution to U.N.. Each of these achievements had become important part of the global research data sharing infrastructure for sciences and sustainability.

Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of CODATA-PASTD and CAST-CCIT, I would like to thank the many organizations that have worked with us and supported us during the last ten years.

In 2014 we developed the Nairobi data sharing principles and this year, at the GEO Plenary in Mexico we will finalize the data sharing guidelines that support these principles. In future years, we shall promote the infrastructures and the development of data sharing capacity and practices.

We understand the importance of this mission and we dedicate all our efforts to it, because it is not only our job, but our life, and it is not only for our generation, but for our children too.

Thank you very much!

## **Background**

On 2 July 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York, H. E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa, the President of the UN General Assembly has convened informal interactive consultations with stakeholders on the review of implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). These consultations are part of the preparatory process for the 15–16 December 2015 (Date TBC) UN General Assembly high-level meeting on WSIS+10, and follow a 1 July UN Member State preparatory meeting.

Around 200 participants joined the meeting. Dr. Liu, Chuang, Professor of Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences (IGSNRR/CAS), Founder and Secretary of CODATA Task Group Preservation of and Open Access to S&T Data in/for/with Developing Countries (CODATA-PASTD) and Member of Consultant Committee on ICT for U.N. of Chinese Association of Science and Technology (CAST-CCIT) was invited to be a member of the panelists.

There are three panelist groups in the meeting, the topics of the panels are: Panel 1: Progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society; Panel 2: Information and communications technology gaps and areas for continued focus, and challenges including bridging the digital divide, Panel 3: The way forward: Harnessing information and communication technologies for development. Professor Chuang Liu delivered her speech on enhancing the joint efforts on data sharing in developing countries at the Panel 2.