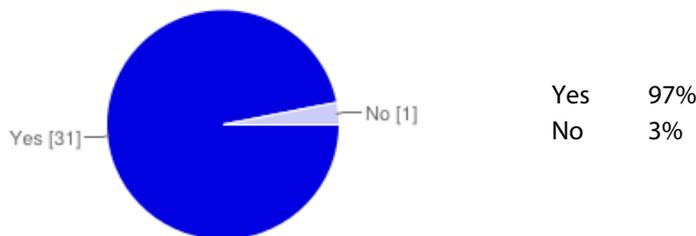# Results Summary of WDS Members Survey

In January 2013, the WDS International Programme Office (WDS-IPO) conducted an online survey of all current WDS Members—plus a number of candidates thought to be close to completing the application process—to gauge opinion on the Action Items proposed during the 7th Meeting of the WDS-SC (WDS-SC#7) held in Taipei on 1–2 November 2012. Thirty-two* representatives of WDS Member Organizations kindly answered the survey, and an overview of the results is given below. These results were presented to the WDS-SC during its recent 8th Meeting (17–19 April 2013, Paris), and comments by the WDS-IPO on behalf of the WDS-SC are also given below.

General thoughts

Q1. Do you in general concur with the WDS-SC's proposed actions?

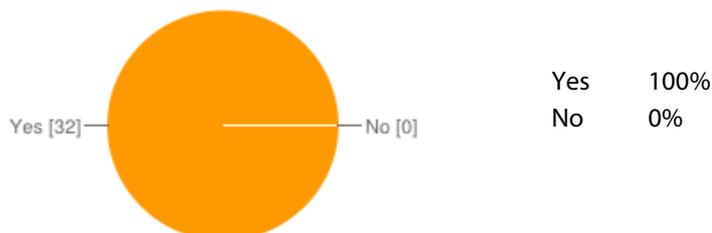|	
Yes	97%
No	3%

The larger majority of WDS Member Representatives were satisfied with the Action Items proposed in WDS-SC#9. However, one respondent was concerned that existing efforts were not being recognized in the Action Items.

Response: The WDS-SC's position is to work with initiatives in order to build on, rather than duplicate, existing work.

Recruitment & 'community building' strategy

Q2. Do you think that the WDS-SC's 'community building' strategy is correct?

Yes	100%
No	0%

All WDS Member Representatives were highly positive about the WDS-SC's community building strategy. In addition to collaborating with groups such as the new Research Data Alliance (RDA), it was suggested that ICSU-WDS should facilitate Members to naturally form networks through workshops, and so on. In particular, WDS is in a position to encourage interaction in those regions where it might be difficult to do so otherwise.
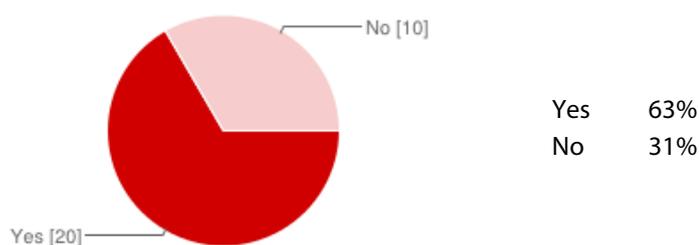
*Note: Participants in the survey were not required to respond to all questions.

Response: As can be seen on the WDS website, the WDS-SC is making every effort to engage with RDA, and after identifying areas of mutual interest, two RDA/WDS Interest Groups (IGs) have now been established: 'Data Publishing' and 'Certification of Digital Repositories'. Furthermore, an exchange of ideas has taken place between the WDS Knowledge Network Working Group (WG) and proposed RDA 'Contextual Metadata' WG.
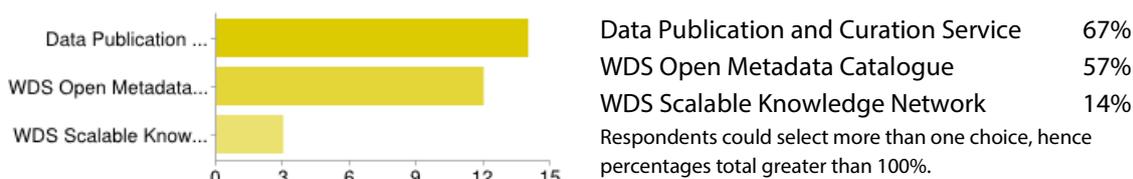
See Question 6 for more details on the potential for WDS Workshops.

WDS Tools and Services

Q3. Would you be interested in participating in one (or more) of the Working Groups aimed at bringing the three tools proposed by the WDS-SC to bear?

Yes	63%
No	31%

If so, which one(s)?

Data Publication and Curation Service	67%
WDS Open Metadata Catalogue	57%
WDS Scalable Knowledge Network	14%

Respondents could select more than one choice, hence percentages total greater than 100%.
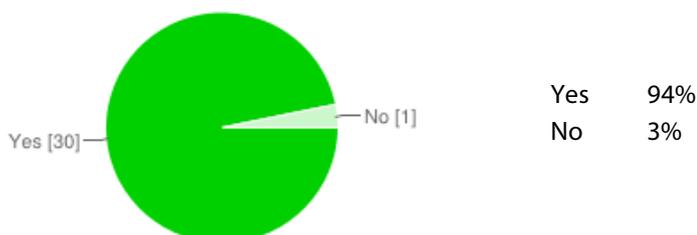
The results from this section were passed on to the Co-chairs of the WDS-WGs immediately after the close of the survey resulting in the recruitment of some WDS Members' representatives on the WGs. Around two-thirds of WDS Member Representatives expressed interest in participating in at least one of the WGs, with the Data Publication WG being most popular. Similar to Question 1, the largest concern expressed was repetition of existing work and the extra effort required by centres to participate in multiple similar endeavours. Hence, WDS-WGs were urged to collaborate with existing groups. Opinions on the relative importance and feasibility of the three tools differed largely between respondents.
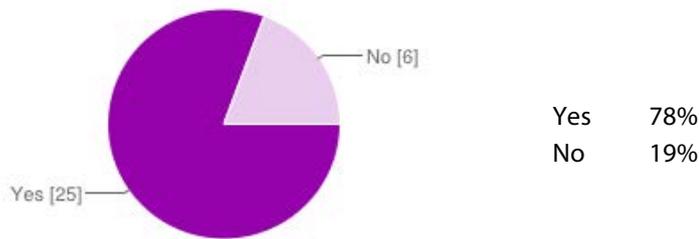
Response: See Question 1.

Joint WDS-CODATA Conference

Q4. Do you think that WDS and CODATA coming together from 2014 onwards to hold joint International Conferences is the correct approach for ICSU-WDS?

Yes	94%
No	3%

Q5. The venue for this Conference is most likely to be New Delhi, India. Are you satisfied with this choice?
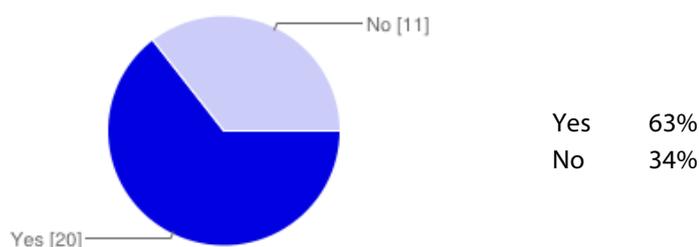

Yes	78%
No	19%

WDS Member Representatives were almost unanimously in favour of a joint WDS/CODATA Conference. There was a caution, however, that ICSU-WDS must maintain its independence because the goals of the two organizations are different. As a result, co-location of separate WDS and CODATA Conferences was seen as a better model than a single merged Conference. The WDS-SC's suggested Conference thematic (*A Science-driven Global Framework for Multidisciplinary Data Integration*) was positively received but seen as rather general. Questions were raised over whether the use of 'multidisciplinary' was appropriate, and whether 'science-driven' might dissuade social scientists, for example, from attending.

Over 75% of Member Representatives felt that New Delhi is a reasonable location for the Conference. The main downsides expressed were the financial and environmental aspects of travelling to India; especially, European- and US-based WDS Members will be required to travel to Asia for the third time in a row (after Kyoto and Taipei).

Response: ICSU-WDS and CODATA are to co-host a joint Conference series—'SciDataCon'—the first of which (SciDataCon 2014) will be held around early November 2014 in New Delhi, India. The general thematic and sessional themes of the Conference are currently under discussion between the WDS and CODATA Executive Committees, but will revolve around the ICSU-sponsored 'Future Earth' programme (www.icsu.org/future-earth). In particular, that programme aims to bring together researchers across the gamut of sciences; from the Natural Sciences to the Social Sciences. To ensure that WDS-related business and activities is also a primary focus of the joint Conference series, a WDS Members' Forum is currently planned immediately prior to SciDataCon 2014.

WDS workshops in 2013/2014

Q6. Would you be interested in participating in a WDS Workshop in 2013/2014, if one were to take place?

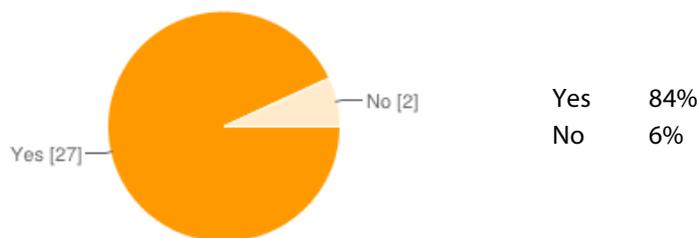

Yes	63%
No	34%

About two-thirds of WDS Member Representatives would be keen to attend a WDS Workshop in 2013/2014 (at least in a virtual way). Although no consensus was reached regarding the timing of any workshop, nearly a quarter of respondents mentioned Europe as the preferred location if one were to take place. Topics connected to data publication/citation were very much at the forefront of peoples' thoughts, followed

closely by ICSU-WDS' role/links when it comes to other data-related organizations, funding opportunities, and development of standards.

Response: With a preference given by WDS Member representatives for a virtual presence at workshops, the WDS-SC has adopted this idea wholeheartedly and elected that a series of WDS Webinars should he held leading up to SciDataCon 2014 (and beyond). Thus, WDS Members will be encouraged to host webinars on topics of their choosing in order to find synergies between themselves and the broader community (and so underpinning the WDS-SC's community building strategy in Q2). These webinars will be technically supported by the WDS-IPO.

WDS bylaws

Q7. Do you agree that ICSU-WDS needs a set of bylaws?

No [2]

Yes [27]

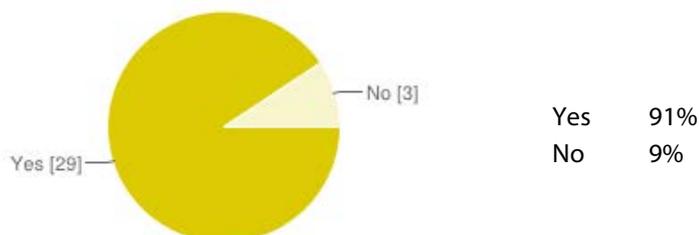| Yes	84%
No	6%

A large majority of WDS Member Representatives agreed that bylaws are needed. Although few proposals for the content of the bylaws were given, six respondents expressed a willingness to be included in their formulation.

Response: The WDS-SC has been shown an initial draft of proposed ICSU-WDS bylaws, which is currently being altered and supplemented according to its recommendations of the WDS-SC. A final draft is expected to be presented to WDS Members later this for feedback. A final version incorporating suitable Members' comments will then be submitted for formal approval at the planned WDS Members' Forum to take place before SciDataCon 2014.
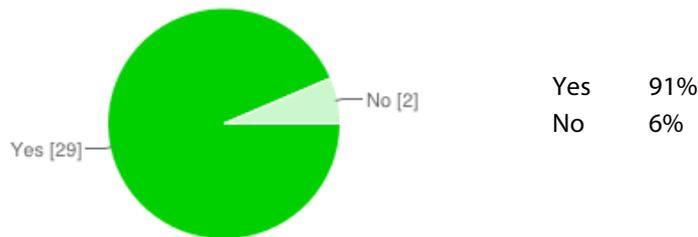On a related note, one respondent mentioned the need for the WDS accreditation process to hold up in the face of (public) scrutiny. This is considered by the WDS-SC as a valid point and will also be addressed within the ICSU-WDS bylaws.

Conducting reviews

Q8. Do you think that representatives of WDS Members should be allowed to review new applicants?

No [3]

Yes [29]

Yes	91%
No	9%

Q9. What about other external experts? Should these be called upon by the WDS-SC, if deemed appropriate?

Yes	91%
No	6%

Q10. If called upon, would you be interested in conducting such reviews?

Yes	84%
No	16%

Over 90% of WDS Member Representatives believe that both WDS Members and relevant external experts should be called upon by the WDS-SC to review the applications of candidate organizations for WDS Regular and Network membership. The main worry is the time and effort involved. Since WDS Partner and Associate Members do not go through the certification process, but are instead co-opted, these Members were less keen to conduct reviews than Regular and Network Members.

Response: On the basis of the above feedback from WDS Member Representatives, the WDS-SC has on several occasions called upon WDS Members and external experts to act as a second reviewer. This extension of the 'pool of reviewers' for WDS Regular and Network applications is considered to have been largely successful. However, the extra time required to interact with such reviewers can cause slight delays to the overall process; especially, if they are ultimately unable to perform the review.
With the ultimate goal of making the WDS certification process more efficient for all parties, the WDS-SC is also starting to work with other initiatives such as the Data Seal of Approval through the joint RDA/WDS Certification IG mentioned in Question 2. A proposed RDA-WG associated with the IG will attempt to merge and streamline the applications of the two organizations, as well as reduce/spread the burden of the review process.