ICSU Conference on Global Scientific Challenges: Perspective from a Young WCRP Scientist 28.08.2007

To celebrate 75 years of the International Council for Science (ICSU), 142 young scientists from 71 countries met for a Conference in Lindau, Germany, on 4-6 April 2007. ‘Global Scientific Challenges: Perspectives from Young Scientists’ was a truly unique event, focussing on the changing global context for the conduct of science underlining ICSU’s principle of the universality of science.

WCRP, as one of the ICSU programmes, sponsored the participation of Dr Kei Yoshimura from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, USA, and Dr Molly Helmuth from the Columbia University, USA.

“The Conference was a great opportunity for all the young scientists like me to build a large network of colleagues and friends within the international science community” reports Dr Yoshimura.

Including ICSU’s Executive Board members more than 160 Conference participants learnt about scientific challenges the world is and will be facing in the near future. ICSU is a non-governmental organization founded in 1931. ICSU members include 105 national scientific bodies and 29 international scientific unions. Each member had nominated a talented young scientist to attend the Conference.

The young scientists learnt about building bridges not only within the scientific community but also between science and the world. Fruitful and lively discussions focussed on the question: ‘how to ensure that new scientific discoveries are effectively and rapidly communicated and integrated into decision-making processes?’.

“It was challenging and tough to discuss these topics with such a variety of people coming from different disciplines and nations” says Dr Yoshimura. “However, it was a striking experience and I learnt a lot from every single participant!”

Being a hydrologist Dr Yoshimura has been active for many years in the WCRP/GEWEX Global Land-Atmosphere System Study (GLASS) and the Global Soil Wetness Project (GSWP).

"It was interesting to see that participants working in climate research were part of the largest group, reflecting the increasing importance of this discipline to society. I feel privileged to work in this prominent research area and encouraged to take on the challenges of climate research for a better future” says Dr Yoshimura. [c arndt]

Links
GEWEX http://www.gewex.org
ICSU Conference http://www.icsu.org/10_icsu75/75ANNIV_Young.html