

## The Geneva Lake Workshop

7-9 March 2018  
@EPFL, Lausanne  
Switzerland

### Report



THE GENEVA LAKE WORKSHOP – 7-9 MARCH 2018

## I. Context

The **Geneva Lake Workshop** (EPFL, Lausanne, 7-9 March 2018) was organized by UNESCO with the support and cooperation of:

- the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), which hosted the event and provided technical, material and intellectual resources;
- the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), which provided essential financial, strategic, logistical and human resources;
- the Swiss Commission for UNESCO, which notably made available financial resources, and funded ticket flights for three UNESCO Chairs from emerging or developing countries;
- the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), which provided intellectual resources for the workshop.

The Geneva Lake Workshop developed the discussions held in Geneva during the Conference 'Mobilizing UNESCO Chairs in the Natural Sciences for Policy Action towards the 2030 Agenda' and on the Geneva Milestone outcome document endorsed on that occasion.

The [Geneva Conference](#) marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chairs Programme, and gathered, for the first time, more than 100 representatives of the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks related to the Natural Sciences in a common reflection on their contribution to the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Geneva Milestone outcome document, endorsed on that occasion, contributed to highlight avenues to strengthen the contribution of Science, Technology and Innovation, and more particularly of the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

## II. Main goals

Building upon the Geneva Conference, the **Geneva Lake Workshop** aimed at fostering joint reflections and identifying the most pertinent actions needed in order to:

- (i) put in practice the 'Geneva Milestone' recommendations,
- (ii) elaborate a follow-up strategy that reflects the needs and perspectives of both UNESCO and the UNESCO Chairs / UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences,
- (iii) promote stronger collaborations with, and ownership of, the latter on the whole follow-up process.

The Workshop was also the occasion to (iv) build capacities on how to communicate science and all activities linked to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda to the general public / international organizations / Members States, via presentations by communication experts from our project partners' institutions.

## III. Reference documents

Two main reference documents have nourished the overall discussions during the Workshop:

- A [draft Action Plan](#), guiding, throughout a list of concrete areas, the future endeavours of the UNESCO Chairs in the Natural Sciences, in close cooperation with the UNESCO family and possibly other stakeholders, for a stronger contribution to the 2030 Agenda;
- A [draft proposal for the creation of a communication and outreach Platform](#) aimed at facilitating synergies, information exchange and contacts between the UNESCO Chairs, UNESCO and possibly other stakeholders.

Such reference documents have been shared, prior to the Workshop, with all the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences in order to foster their ownership and to collect their inputs, remarks and suggestions.

#### IV. Participants

The Workshop saw the participation of:

- **12 members of the Scientific Committee** of the project, composed of representatives of the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences, selected on the base of their engagement and of gender / theme / regional representativeness, together with those having expressed their interest to be actively involved in the follow-up of the Geneva Conference;
- **3 representatives of the UNESCO Category 2 Centers (C2Cs)**, one from each SC/Division, in order to foster broader discussions and to provide specific needs and perspectives linked to the overall UNESCO scientific networks;
- **8 members of the Steering Committee** of the project, composed of representatives of the main project partners: Swiss FDFA, EPFL, CERN, University of Geneva;
- **6 UNESCO staff members**, including 2 members of the Project (Project Coordinator and Project Consultant) and 4 Focal Points in charge of the coordination with the Chairs / C2Cs.



➤ **Total number of participants: 29**

See **Annex 1** for the full list of participants.

#### V. Proceedings

**DAY 0 - Wednesday 7 March 2018**

##### 1. Welcome cocktail

The evening before the Workshop was the occasion to gather all participants at the Montreux Jazz Café, on the EPFL Campus, for a welcome cocktail, where the main partner institutions held a brief opening speech. This was followed by an introductory presentation by **Pierre Vanderghyest** (Vice-president for Education at EPFL) on Open Science, which highlighted important elements for the discussions of the following day.

## DAY 1 - Thursday 8 March 2018

### 1. Introductory discussions

This first session, moderated by Giuseppe Arduino (Chief of Section on Ecohydrology, Water Quality and Water Education at UNESCO), was the occasion to remind the main objectives of the meeting and to launch the **discussions on the workshop's reference documents**: draft Action Plan & draft Platform proposal. A particular attention was given to present and valorize the feedbacks received, prior to the Workshop, by the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences.

This session also allowed to evaluate the perceptions of all participants on the main needs and priorities to be addressed by these documents, and to orientate the following discussions according to these.

### 2. Session “The communication of Science”

This session, dedicated to the communication of science, saw the intervention of Professor Dr **Janet Hering** (Director of the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology – EAWAG-EPFL), who stressed the importance of communicating applied research in order to promote uptake in policy and practice. It was followed by Mrs **Kate Kahle**'s presentation (Head of the Editorial Content Development Section at CERN) on curiosity-driven content.



### 3. Session “Tools for the communication of Science”



This session intended to present examples of pertinent tools and practices for the communication of Science. To this effect, Mrs **Kate Kahle** (Head of the Editorial Content Development Section at CERN) analyzed CERN's social media strategy, while Dr **Dimitrios Noukakis** (Chief of MOOCs for Development Programme at EPFL) presented EPFL's MOOCs for Development Programme as a useful tool for sharing knowledge and pooling competencies in higher education.

### 4. Platform proposal - Working session

This interactive working session, moderated by Mr Léo Trembley (Programme Specialist in the Science Policy and Partnerships Section at UNESCO), allowed to review and discuss a **draft proposal for the creation of a communication and outreach Platform**. One of the main objectives of the Platform would be to support UNESCO scientific networks, including UNESCO Chairs, UNITWIN Networks and Category 2 Centres in the Natural Sciences, to better network and communicate their academic and scientific expertise for the implementation of the SDGs.

This session was also the occasion to jointly identify the main needs to be addressed by such tool. A particular attention was also given to finding viable solutions in order to ensure the governance, management and sustainability of the Platform on the long term.



In this context, the International Knowledge Centre for Engineering Sciences and Technology (**IKCEST**) presented a proposal for the creation of an information and outreach platform related to the Category 2 Centres as well as to the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences, largely aligned with the proposal previously circulated by UNESCO/SPP. IKCEST's readiness to support the establishment of such a tool was also stressed, notably through the provision of technical assistance and maintenance.

On this occasion, **EPFL** indicated its interest to be included as a privileged partner in the project, and the possibility to make available its network of students and PhDs for the animation of the Platform. On its side, **CIMNE** indicated the possibility to make available its Open Science Platform, called SciPedia, to other UNESCO Chairs, UNITWIN Networks and Category 2 Centres, while two representatives of a UNESCO Chair and a Category 2 Centre shew their availability to contribute to eventual initiatives linked to **Science Communication**.

At the same time, the need for **UNESCO's** ownership on such a Platform was stressed.

## **DAY 2 - Friday 9 March 2018**

### **1. Platform proposal – Finalization**

This interactive working session, moderated by Mr Léo Trembley (Programme Specialist in the Science Policy and Partnerships Section at UNESCO), aimed at finalizing the proposal and concrete structure of a potential communication and outreach Platform, based on the discussions previously held.

In this context, it was agreed that the following main elements should be included in the Platform:

- **Directory and map** of all UNESCO Chairs / UNITWIN Networks / C2Cs in the Natural Sciences.
- **Core information** dedicated to each UNESCO Chair / UNITWIN Network / C2C in the Natural Sciences, including documentation, reports, main activities, on-going projects, events.
- **UNESCO Natural Sciences Sector section**, including main information such as: contacts, documentation, main programmes and activities, on-going projects, publications, events, reference documents linked to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

- **Search filters:** main categories (SDGs, region, responsible NatCom, discipline / theme / field of expertise, UNESCO Division) and complementary keywords / tags to be provided.
- **Dynamic news / updates tab:** upcoming events, projects, calls for contribution, activities.
- **Links to external resources:** MOOCs, other Platforms or websites, existing social media, Open Science tools.
- **Interactive workspaces:** chat (internal users only) + Q&As and forums (open-access).

Moreover, it was agreed that the entry point to the Platform should be made **through UNESCO's website**, in order to foster the visibility of the Platform and to ensure UNESCO's ownership on it. It was also agreed that the Platform itself should however be externalized, in order to avoid UNESCO's responsibility on the contents, which should be mostly developed by the UNESCO Chairs / UNITWIN Networks / C2Cs in the Natural Sciences, and therefore under their direct responsibility.

## 2. Action Plan – Working session

This session, moderated by Professor Gabriela Tejada (Swiss Commission for UNESCO), fostered in-depth and interactive discussions on the draft Action Plan, with a particular attention given to identifying one priority action for each area of intervention addressed by the Action Plan, to be considered as a first step for the implementation of the Geneva Action Plan.

## 3. Action Plan – Finalization

During this session, a consolidated Action Plan was agreed and finalized in collaboration between UNESCO, the project partners and the UNESCO Chairs, UNITWIN Networks and C2Cs in the Natural Sciences represented in the Workshop.

## 4. Visits to EPFL laboratories

After the Workshop, the visits organized to the **Rolex Learning Center** and to the **MOOCs Factory** allowed the participants to discover EPFL's unique premises as well as its overall innovative potential in the field of higher education, science and technology.



See **Annex 2** for the full agenda of the Workshop.

## VI. Results

a. The Workshop contributed to ensure the finalization of the **Geneva Action Plan** and to identify, in collaboration with selected representatives of the UNESCO Chairs, UNITWIN Networks and C2Cs in the Natural Sciences, one priority action for each area of intervention, to be considered as first, concrete steps for the implementation of the Geneva Action Plan.

b. The second result of the workshop is the validation of a project proposal aiming to develop a **Communication and Outreach Platform**, whose objective would be to support UNESCO scientific networks, including UNESCO Chairs, UNITWIN Networks and C2Cs related to the Natural Sciences Sector, to better network and communicate their academic and scientific expertise for the implementation of the SDGs. To this effect, the Workshop allowed to agree on the possible structure and governance of such a Platform, by identifying the main needs and priorities to be addressed, as well as the specific responsibilities and tasks to be attributed to each of the partner institutions having expressed their will to contribute to its development (UNESCO, EPFL, IKCEST).

## VII. Next steps

The Geneva Action Plan will be shared for consultation and validation internally, as well as with the project partners and with all participants to the Geneva Lake Workshop. Once validated, the document will be shared with all UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences for feedbacks, as well as with the UNESCO Education Sector and with all Focal Points dedicated to the UNESCO Chairs in the Natural Sciences Sector.

As far as concerns the Platform proposal, a phase of negotiation and discussions will be launched as soon as possible with the main partner institutions involved (UNESCO, EPFL, IKCEST) in order to agree on effective means and modalities of implementation, as well as on a specific division of tasks and responsibilities:

- *As of now*: Each partner institution designates a privileged contact person dedicated to the exchanges and coordination with UNESCO, IKCEST, EPFL.
- *By the end of April 2018*: Hold a teleconference on the current project proposal with EPFL, IKCEST and UNESCO.
- *In the following six months*: Agreement on specific Terms of Reference, with clear mention to each institution's expected contributions and tasks.
- *By the end of the next semester (December 2018) if possible*: Preparation by EPFL of a draft design, format and graphic chart proposal for the platform.
- *By the end of March 2019 at latest, if possible*: Implementation by IKCEST and launch of the Platform.

Moreover, the collaborative finalization of the abovementioned documents, and the validation of specific tasks, contributions and objectives for the development of a Platform related to the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences, will allow to ensure a sustainable continuation for the project ("Mobilizing UNESCO Chairs in the Natural Sciences for Policy Action Towards the 2030 Agenda"), whose end is foreseen for 31 May 2018.

## VIII. Annexes

- Annex 1: List of participants
- Annex 2: Agenda of the workshop

## ANNEX 1 - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### Enlarged Scientific Committee

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#### Representatives of UNESCO Chairs in the Natural Sciences:

**Cecilia Soriano**

UNESCO Chair on Numerical Methods in engineering, Spain

**Elizabeth Miles**

UNITWIN Cooperation Programme in Humanitarian Engineering, United Kingdom

**Géraldine Pflieger**

UNESCO Chair on Hydropolitics, Switzerland

**Janusz Szpytko**

UNESCO Chair on Science, Technology and Engineering Education, Poland

**Jean-Claude Bolay**

UNESCO Chair in Technologies for Development, Switzerland

**Jelal Ezzine**

UNESCO Chair on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy, Tunisia

**Joana Cabral Oliveira**

UNESCO Chair on Biodiversity Safeguard for Sustainable Development, Portugal

**Lucio Ubertini**

UNESCO Chair in Water Resources Management and Culture, Italy

**Luis Aragon**

UNESCO Chair on South-South Cooperation for Sustainable Development, Brazil

**Sinerik Ayrapetyan**

UNESCO Chair on Life Sciences, Armenia

**Sylvie Adoté Hounzangbé**

UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Reasonable Water Management in Western Africa, Togo

**Tobias Matusch**

UNESCO Chair on World Heritage and Biosphere Reserves - Observation and Education, Germany

#### Representatives of UNESCO Category 2 Centres in the Natural Sciences:

**Cathy Liu Chang**

International Knowledge Centre for Engineering Sciences and Technology (IKCEST), China

**Johan Aad van Dijk**

Institute for Water Education (IHE), The Netherlands

**Roser Maneja**

International Centre for the Mediterranean Biosphere Reserves under the auspices of UNESCO, Spain

## Steering Committee – Project partners

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**Bobir Tukhtabayev**

UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva

**Christof Bareiss**

Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)

**Elmar Vatter**

Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)

**Gabriela Tejada**

Swiss National Commission for UNESCO

**Gérard Escher**

Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL)

**Maurizio Bona**

European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN)

**Nicolas Mathieu**

Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)

**Pierre Willa**

University of Geneva

## UNESCO staff members

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**Ernesto Fernandez-Polcuch**

Chief of Section, Science Policy and Partnerships (SC/PCB)

**Gifty Dlouhy**

Senior Programme Assistant, Programme Coordination and Evaluation Unit (SC/EO)

**Giuseppe Arduino**

Chief of Section, Ecohydrology, Water Quality and Water Education (SC/HYD)

**Peter Dogse**

Programme Specialist, MAB Research and Policy: Ecology and Biodiversity (SC/EES)

**Léo Trembley**

Project Coordinator, Science Policy and Partnerships Section (SC/PCB)

**Roberta Magherini**

Project Consultant, Science Policy and Partnerships Section (SC/PCB)

## ANNEX 2 - AGENDA - THE GENEVA LAKE WORKSHOP

Wednesday 7 March 2018

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Arrival of all participants in the afternoon / evening.

**19:00: Welcome cocktail @Montreux Jazz Café**  
(Artlab, EPFL, Place Cosandey, 1015 Lausanne)

- ❖ Introductory presentation by **Pierre Vandergheynst** (EPFL, Vice-president for Education), on Open Science.

Thursday 8 March 2018

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**General rapporteurs:** Peter Dogsé  
*UNESCO, Programme Specialist, Section on MAB Research and Policy: Ecology and Biodiversity, Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/EES/ESP)*

Roberta Magherini  
*UNESCO, Consultant, Science Policy and Partnerships Section, Policy and Capacity-Building Division, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/PCB/SPP)*

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### 09:30-11:00: Introductory discussions

**Moderator:** Giuseppe Arduino  
*UNESCO, Chief of Section, Ecohydrology, Water Quality and Water Education, Division of Water Sciences - International Hydrological Programme, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/HYD/EQE)*

This session will allow the participants to have a **first interactive discussion on the workshop's reference documents: draft Action Plan & draft Terms of Reference of the Platform**. The members of the Scientific Committee's role will be to represent the perspectives of all UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in the Natural Sciences concerning the reference documents, notably by valorizing the feedbacks received and needs / priorities expressed by them prior to the workshop.

11:00-11:15: *Coffee break*

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### Session "The communication of Science"

**Moderator:** Léo Trembley  
*UNESCO, Programme Specialist, Science Policy and Partnerships Section, Policy and Capacity-Building Division, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/PCB/SPP)*

### 11:15-12:00: "Communicating Applied Research to Promote Uptake in Policy and Practice"

**Speaker:** Janet Hering  
(20 minutes) *EPFL, Director of the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (EAWAG)*

**Commentator:** Cecilia Soriano  
(5 minutes) *UNESCO Chair on Numerical Methods in engineering, Spain*

**Questions & Answers**  
(15 minutes)

## 12:00-12:45: “Curiosity-driven content”

Speaker: Kate Kahle  
(20 minutes) CERN, Head of the Editorial Content Development Section - Education, Communication and Outreach Group

Commentator: Sinerik Ayrapetyan  
(5 minutes) UNESCO Chair on Life Sciences, Armenia

Questions & Answers  
(15 minutes)

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12:45-14:00: Lunch break

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## Session “Tools for the communication of Science”

Moderator: Léo Trembley  
UNESCO, Programme Specialist, Science Policy and Partnerships Section, Policy and Capacity-Building Division, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/PCB/SPP)

## 14:00-14:45: “CERN Social Media: An Overview”

Speaker: Kate Kahle  
(20 minutes) CERN, Head of the Editorial Content Development Section - Education, Communication and Outreach Group

Commentator: Joana Cabral Oliveira  
(5 minutes) UNESCO Chair on Biodiversity Safeguard for Sustainable Development, Portugal

Questions & Answers  
(15 minutes)

## 14:45-15:30: “MOOCs - A tool for Sharing Knowledge and Pooling Competencies in Higher Education”

Speaker: Dimitrios Noukakis  
(20 minutes) EPFL, Chief of MOOCs for Development Programme

Commentator: Jejel Ezzine  
(5 minutes) UNESCO Chair on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy, Tunisia

Questions & Answers  
(15 minutes)

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15:30-15:45: Coffee break

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## 15:45-17:15: Platform proposal - Working session

Moderator: Léo Trembley  
UNESCO, Programme Specialist, Science Policy and Partnerships Section, Policy and Capacity-Building Division, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/PCB/SPP)

This interactive working session aims at **discussing the draft proposal for the creation of a communication and knowledge-sharing Platform**, based on the information acquired during the previous presentations, as well as on the needs identified jointly by UNESCO and the Chairs. A particular attention will be given to the governance, management and sustainability of such tool, and to ensuring its integration into long-term perspectives. The possibility for such tool to be managed directly by a Chair, by a UNESCO academic partner institution, or on a rotating principle should also be analyzed on this occasion.

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18:30: Cocktail

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**Friday 9 March 2018**

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**General rapporteurs:** Gifty Dlouhy  
*UNESCO, Senior Programme Assistant, Programme Coordination and Evaluation Unit, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/EO/PCE)*

Roberta Magherini  
*UNESCO, Consultant, Science Policy and Partnerships Section, Policy and Capacity-Building Division, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/PCB/SPP)*

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### **9:30-10:00: Platform proposal - Finalization**

**Moderator:** Léo Trembley  
*UNESCO, Programme Specialist, Science Policy and Partnerships Section, Policy and Capacity-Building Division, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/PCB/SPP)*

This interactive working session aims at **finalizing the proposal for the creation of a communication and knowledge-sharing Platform**, based on the discussions previously held.

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### **10:00-11:00: Action Plan – Working session**

**Moderator:** Gabriela Tejada  
*Swiss Commission for UNESCO*

This session fosters **in-depth and interactive discussions on the draft Action Plan**, with a particular attention given to effective impacts, sustainability and long-term perspectives.

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*11:00-11:15: Coffee break*

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### **11:15-12:45: Action Plan – Finalization**

**Moderator:** Ernesto Fernandez Polcuch  
*UNESCO, Chief of Section, Science Policy and Partnerships, Policy and Capacity-Building Division, Natural Sciences Sector (SC/PCB/SPP)*

This interactive working session aims at **finalizing a consolidated Action Plan** and at discussing on the long-term perspectives of the 'Geneva Milestone'.

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*12:45-14:00: Lunch break*

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### **14:00-15:30: Visits to EPFL laboratories**

ArtLab/Rolax Learning Center  
MOOCs Factory

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*15:30: Departure of all participants.*

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