

ICSU REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Directors Overview	1
Vision, Mission and Objectives	2
Governance: The ICSU Regional Committee for Africa	3
Management and Office Operational Guide.....	4
Activities of the Regional Office	5
..... Establishment of the Office at the NRF Building	5
..... Inauguration Ceremony	5
..... Meetings of the Regional Committee	5
..... Development of the 2005/2006 Business Plan.....	6
..... Financial Resources.....	6
..... Advocacy and Africa's ICSU National Membership	7
..... Strategic Partners	7
..... 28 th ICSU General Assembly in China	8
..... Activities of the ICSU family in Africa	8
..... Database and Networking of African Scientists.....	9
..... African Diaspora Project.....	9
..... 2005/06 Financial Report: Audited Accounts	9
..... Concluding Remarks.....	9
List of Acronyms	10
Attachment I Agreement between ICSU and NRF	
Attachment II Scoping Group Members	
Attachment III Scoping Group Generic Terms of Reference	
Attachment IV Business Plan 2005/06	
Attachment V Promotional Flyers (3)	

DIRECTOR'S OVERVIEW



Welcome to the first (2005/06) Annual Report of the International Council for Science (ICSU) Regional Office for Africa.

The first meeting of the ICSU Regional Committee for Africa (ICSU RCA) was held in Pretoria (South Africa) on 4-5 April 2005. It was during this meeting that this interim Committee, which was elected in Harare (Zimbabwe) in October 2004, was formally established. This process was followed by the election of Prof Gabriel Ogunmola (Nigeria) as Chairperson of ICSU RCA. The newly appointed Director of the Regional Office, Prof Sospeter Muhongo (Tanzania), who assumed office on 6 June 2005, was introduced to the Regional Committee. The 2005/06 Annual Report of the ICSU Regional Office (ICSU ROA) deals with the activities of this office for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006, coinciding with annual financial calendar of the host institution, the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa.

Throughout this financial year ICSU ROA has been at the forefront of promoting the activities of the ICSU community in Africa (i.e. national and scientific union members, scientific associates, affiliated bodies and partners of ICSU). The major activities of the newly established office included the setting up of the office within the NRF building, staffing of the office, defining the annual activities, preparation of the first budget and business plan (2005/06), and establishing working partnerships with national, regional and international organizations. The Hon. Mr. Mosibudi Mangena (MP), Minister of Science and Technology of the Republic of South Africa, officiated at the inauguration ceremony of the Regional Office on 1 September 2005 in Pretoria (South Africa).

The generous and core financial support from the Department of Science and Technology (DST), channeled through the NRF, underpins ICSU ROA's successful work programmes. Additional support came from the ICSU Head Office in Paris and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The impact of the presence of an ICSU regional office in Africa can be gauged by the increased number of ICSU activities on the continent (e.g. research projects, high-level scientific conferences) and the increased number of ICSU national members from Africa in 2006. Much work remains to be done in order to realise the objectives of the Regional Office and those of ICSU (global).

It is undisputable that science provides the critical basis for technological development and innovation. It provides necessary, although not sufficient, input to ensure sustainable socio-economic development of societies. At the same time, science provides a vital base for rational and prudent public policy formulation and decision-making. Thus, accelerated development of scientific knowledge and skills are key factors in the reduction of poverty and improvement of the quality of people's lives in Africa and elsewhere. A road map for the accelerated socio-economic development of Africa through the application of science, technology and innovation (STI) has been defined by ICSU RCA. This map is characterized by realistic and achievable targets; and thus this is the opportune time for African scientists and their counterparts in other continents to be involved in the activities of ICSU. Let us move forward at full throttle.

Sospeter Muhongo

Director, ICSU Regional Office for Africa

FGSAf, FASSAf, FGIGE, FTWAS, FGS, CGeol, EurGeol

1. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

The long-term **ICSU VISION** is for a world where science is used for the benefit of all, excellence in science is valued and scientific knowledge is effectively linked to policy-making. In such a world, universal and equitable access to high quality scientific data and information is a reality and all countries have the scientific capacity to use these and to contribute to generating the new knowledge that is necessary to establish their own development pathways in a sustainable manner.

ICSU's MISSION is to strengthen international science for the benefit of society. To achieve this, the Council mobilizes the knowledge and resources of the international science community to:

- (a) Identify and address major issues of importance to science and society;
- (b) Facilitate interaction amongst scientists across all disciplines and from all countries;
- (c) Promote the participation of all scientists – regardless of race, citizenship, language, political stance or gender – in the international scientific endeavour;
- (d) Provide independent authoritative advice to stimulate constructive dialogue between the scientific community and governments, civil society and the private sector.

In delivering this mission ICSU is heavily dependent on its extensive network of National Members (104), Scientific Union Members (29), Interdisciplinary Bodies (21) and Scientific Associates (23). The Scientific Unions provide perspectives from different scientific disciplines whereas the National Members provide an interdisciplinary perspective from individual countries. The Interdisciplinary Bodies focus on specific areas of international science. The combination of knowledge from these three groupings provides a very powerful tool for delivering ICSU's mission.

The Executive Board of ICSU adopted a number of **GENERIC OBJECTIVES** for all Regional Offices. These, therefore become the core objectives of ICSU ROA. It is as these objectives are translated into activities that they become more region-specific as indicated below:

- (i) Collect information on locally developed strategies and priority needs, and scientific expertise within the regions and share this information with ICSU and its partners;
- (ii) Assist ICSU and its members in their strategic planning for activities in the regions and ensuring that their plans and activities are well linked to the science community in the regions, relevant networks and organizations and reflect regional priorities;
- (iii) Develop and maintain links with national and regional scientific institutions, societies, academies and governments, including current National Members, in order to strengthen ICSU collaboration with them;
- (iv) Help facilitate the adherence as ICSU National Members of institutions in countries of the region, where these do not yet exist. This would preferably be done in close collaboration with the Inter-Academy Panel for International Affairs (IAP) and the Academy of Science for the Developing World (TWAS);
- (v) Facilitate the free flow of scientists and scientific knowledge across borders;
- (vi) Provide support and help with co-ordination, if needed, to scientific networks in the region and initiate new networks, where this has been identified as a regional priority;
- (vii) Assist the ICSU family in identifying scientists for membership of committees and participation in activities within the ICSU family through the establishment of a database of experts;
- (viii) Upon request, act as focal point for regional programme activities of ICSU and its members;
- (ix) Ensure efficient information transfer from ICSU and its family members to the scientific community in the region; and

- (x) Share information and develop collaborative partnerships with UNESCO Regional Offices for Science as well as with other major ICSU partners such as TWAS, the Third World Network of Scientific Organizations (TWNISO) and the Third World Organization for Women in Science (TWOWS).

2. GOVERNANCE: THE ICSU REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

The ICSU Executive Board appoints the ICSU RCA based on the nominations received from the African National Members. The Chair of the Regional Committee is appointed by the Committee itself. Thus, following this ICSU Board's directive, Prof Gabriel Ogunmola (Nigeria) was elected in April 2005 during the first meeting of the ICSU RCA which was held at NRF in Pretoria (South Africa). The Executive Director of ICSU (Prof Thomas Rosswall) and the Director of ICSU ROA (Prof Sospeter Muhongo) are *ex officio members* of the Regional Committee. Table 1 and Figure 1 give names of the current ICSU RCA.

Table 1: Members of the ICSU Regional Committee for Africa (by December 2005).

<p>Gabriel B. OGUNMOLA (2005-2007) - Chairman Chairman: Institute of Genetic Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine 14 Osuntokun Ave, Bodija University of Ibadan, PO Box 22376 Ibadan, Nigeria Fax: + 234 2 810 7131 Tel: + 234 805 8861 474 M: + 234 802 307 9510 presidentnascience@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Ayite-Lo N. AJAVON (2005-2006) Atmospheric Chemistry Laboratory FDS/Faculty of Sciences Universite de Lome Box 1515, Lome Republic of Togo Tel. (+228) 225 50 94 x 1305 Fax. (+228) 221 8595 noajavon@tg.refer.org sossiyite@hotmail.com</p>
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<p>Dominic W. MAKAWITI (2005-2007) Chairman, Kenya National Academy of Science P.O. Box 39450 Nairobi, Kenya Tel. (+254 20) 272 5102 Fax. (+254 20) 272 5102/444 2841 M : +254 722 513 828 +254 733 633 393 dmakawiti@mail.uonbi.ac.ke knas@iconnect.co.ke</p>	<p>Khotso MOKHELE (2005-2007) President, National Research Foundation P.O. Box 2600 Pretoria 0001 South Africa Tel. +27 83 4500057 Fax. (+27 12) 481 4007 khotso@nrf.ac.za</p>
<p>Mary STRAVENS (2005-2006) Seychelles Centre for Marine Research and Technology - Marine Park Authority P.O. Box 1240 Francis Rachel Street Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles Tel. Office (248) 225114/115 stravens@seychelles.net</p>	<p>Vincent Pryde Kehdingha TITANJI (2005-2006) President: Federation of African Societies of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Biotechnology Unit University of Buea, Box 63, Buea, SW Province Cameroon Tel. (237) 332 2532 Fax. (237) 332 2272 M: 237 775 6389 vpktitanji@yahoo.co.uk</p>

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Figure 1: ICSU REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA



From left: Prof Ayite-lo Ajavon (Togo), Prof FP Gudyanga (Zimbabwe); Prof Thomas Rosswall (ex officio, ICSU Paris), Prof Gabriel Ogunmola (Chair) (Nigeria); Mr Manuel Chenene (Mozambique); Prof Sospeter Muhongo (ex Officio: ICSU ROA); Dr Khotso Mokhele (South Africa); Mrs Mary Stravens (Seychelles); Prof Dominic Makawiti (Kenya); Prof Vincent Titanji (Cameroon)

3. MANAGEMENT AND OFFICE OPERATIONAL GUIDE

The organizational structure of the Regional Office had not yet been finalised by the end of the 2005/06 financial year. This is partly due to the limited work-force (4 full-time employees; Dr. Enow Achuo joined the office at the end of this financial year, on 27 March 2006) at the Regional Office, as is shown in Table 2, below:

Table 2

Name	Position	Date of Employment
Masela Pillay (South Africa)	Programme Officer	1 April 2005
Kathy Potgieter (South Africa)	Personal Assistant	1 October 2005
Sospeter Muhongo (Tanzania)	Director	1 June 2005
Achuo Enow (Cameroon)	Programme Specialist	27 March 2006
*Robert Kriger (Manager, NRF) gave service to ICSU ROA on a part-time basis till 1 January 2006.		

Towards the end of the 2005/06 financial year, ICSU ROA advertised the positions of a Programme Specialist (PhD-holder) and a Communications Officer (degree graduate in journalism/mass communication). The filling of these two remaining positions would complete the ICSU ROA staff complement of six (6) full-time employees.

The management of the Regional Office is guided by the Agreement between ICSU and NRF (Attachment I) which was signed on 11 October 2004 in Harare (Zimbabwe). Article 6.1 of the Agreement, states, "A Regional Office for the Region shall be established and managed as an integral part of the NRF in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, for the duration of this Agreement. The functions of the Regional Committee have been established by the ICSU

Executive Board.” Consequently, ICSU ROA will be operating according to the policies and procedures, and conditions of service and guidelines of the NRF.

A draft Operational Guide for the Regional Office has been prepared and submitted (January 2006) to ICSU RCA for consideration. However, due to the unique set-up of this Office, i.e. between the ICSU Secretariat in Paris and its physical location in South Africa; and the concomitant agreement between ICSU and NRF; a careful approach is needed when spelling out the operational procedures of the Office. Hence, the Regional Committee has deferred the approval of the draft operational manual for the Regional Office. The approval of the proposed Organogram of the ICSU ROA has also yet to be approved by the same Committee.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL OFFICE

This section summaries the main activities of ICSU ROA which were carried out in the 2005/06 financial year which runs from 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

4.1 *Establishment of the Office at the NRF Building*

The NRF provided adequate office space for the establishment of the ICSU ROA Secretariat, then composed of 3 staff members, and acted expeditiously to install functioning telephone and fax facilities in June 2005. Office furniture and stationery (e.g. ICSU ROA letter-head, envelopes) were procured by the NRF staff. Other office facilities (e.g. desktops, laptops) were made available. The Office acquired a postal box address in Hatfield, Pretoria (South Africa). Personal e-mail addresses for ICSU ROA staff, a general e-mail address (secretariat@icsu-africa.org) and the website (www.icsu.org) were set up by end June 2005.

4.2 *Inauguration Ceremony*

At the 27th ICSU General Assembly which was held in Brazil in September 2002, it was decided to establish four ICSU Regional Offices for the developing world (i.e. sub-Saharan Africa, Asia & the Pacific, Latin America & the Caribbean and the Arab Region) and Africa was first to establish its Regional Office which is hosted by the NRF in Pretoria (South Africa).

The colourful inauguration of the Regional Office took place on 1 September 2005 on the NRF Grounds, immediately following the 2nd Meeting of ICSU RCA. The Hon. Mr. Mosibudi Mangena (MP), Minister of Science and Technology of the Republic of South Africa officiated at the inauguration ceremony. The Hon. Minister Dr. Pius Ngw'andu, Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education of the United Republic of Tanzania attended this important occasion. Several members of the Diplomatic Corps based in Pretoria also attended the ceremony. The President of ICSU, Prof Jane Lubchenco, the President of TWAS, Prof C.N.R. Rao, and the Executive Director of TWAS, Prof M. Hassan, were among the distinguished guests who participated in this event. Various United Nations organizations and ICSU unions sent their representatives and delegates from the host country's universities, research institutions were in attendance. A total of about 200 people took part in this highly successful inauguration ceremony. Broadcast and print media covered the occasion for the benefit of South African and international audiences.

4.3 *Meetings of the Regional Committee*

Within the period of the 2005/06 financial year, the ICSU RCA met thrice in Pretoria: 4-5 April 2005, 29-30 August 2005 and 25-26 January 2006. The April 2005 meeting was devoted to matters of governance and human resources, development of a work-plan, and a budget for the Regional Office. Extensive international collaboration has been crucial to the success of the ICSU family and a trademark of its activities. Consequently, ICSU ROA engaged UNESCO and TWAS, the traditional partners of ICSU, with the purpose of identifying areas of cooperation. It was also during this time that strategies for expansion of ICSU membership in Africa were established. The inauguration date for the Regional Office was decided upon during the April 2005 meeting of the ICSU RCA.

The August 2005 meeting was devoted mostly to defining priority areas of the Regional Office, planning for the inauguration ceremony and following up on the activities since the

previous meeting. The four priority areas selected for ICSU ROA to focus its activities on in the next 3-5 years (and beyond), are: (a) Sustainable Energy, (b) Health and Human Well-being, (c) Natural and Human-induced Hazards and Disasters and (d) Global Change.

The January 2006 meeting of ICSU RCA established four Scoping Groups (Attachment II) to prepare science/work plans on the four identified priority areas. The generic Terms of Reference (ToR) for this task (Attachment III) were approved during this meeting. It was further decided that the 2nd ICSU Regional Meeting for Africa would be devoted to evaluation of the suitability and workability of the individual science/work plans by a broader African scientific community. The date for this regional meeting was fixed at 25-27 September 2006. Consequently, preparations for this Regional Consultative Forum to be held in Pretoria (South Africa) began in this financial year.

4.4 Development of the 2005/06 Business Plan

The point of departure for this exercise was the conclusions of the 1st ICSU Regional Meeting for Africa which was held in Harare (Zimbabwe) on 9-11 October 2004 (the report of the meeting is available on request). 50 scientists and policymakers from 13 African countries and representatives of ICSU National Members, Scientific Unions (10) Interdisciplinary bodies (6), and other international organizations (e.g. UNESCO, TWAS) attended this meeting. It was organized by ICSU, NRF, the Research Council of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe's Department of Science and Technology. The second important document used for the preparation of the work plan for ICSU ROA was the Draft ICSU Strategic Plan 2006-11 which was at that time pending approval at the 28th ICSU General Assembly which was to be held in China in October 2005. In addition to these two documents, the Director of ICSU ROA prepared a list of Africa's paramount needs and challenges that call for the application of S&T.

ICSU ROA, in collaboration with NRF, prepared a Business Plan for the financial year of 2005/06 (Attachment IV) which was approved on 8 June 2005 by the Chairperson of ICSU RCA (Prof Gabriel Ogunmola), the Executive Director of ICSU (Prof Thomas Rosswall) and the President and CEO of NRF (Dr. Khotso Mokhele). The performance indicators for the 2005/06 activities are presented in this business plan. The requested activity-based budget for 2005/06 was estimated at ZAR 4,750,000.00 whereas in-kind contribution from the NRF amounted to ZAR 439,492.50. The 2005/06 Business Plan of ICSU ROA was submitted to the Department of Science and Technology (DST) of South Africa, via the NRF for consideration.

4.5 Financial Resources

The core funding for the 2005/06 budget of ZAR 4,750,000.00 came from DST (ZAR 4,500,000.00) and ICSU Head Office (ZAR 250,000.00). Additional funding came from UNESCO (US\$ 27,000.00 for joint activities between ICSU ROA and UNESCO Regional Office for Africa).

Initial fund-raising strategies have been developed by the Regional Office. These include the preparation and submission of two types of project proposals to the ICSU family, ICSU Partners and Funding Agencies. The first type of project proposals is a collaborative one and thus, does not have a direct financial gain. The second one requests funding for the implementation of specific large-scale and long-term (3-5 years and more) projects of importance to the development of STI in Africa and the concomitant economic growth on the continent.

It is envisaged that as from the next financial year (2006/07) some project proposals will be prepared and fund-raising will commence. It is also envisaged that the future maintenance of the Regional Office will have to be undertaken by financial contributions from several African countries (i.e. ICSU National Members). All projects initiated, prepared and coordinated by ICSU ROA will have to make financial contributions towards the maintenance of its Secretariat.

4.6 Advocacy and Africa's ICSU National Membership

The Regional Office sent e-mails around the world announcing its establishment in Pretoria (South Africa). The targeted destinations were the ICSU family, ICSU Partners (e.g. UNESCO, TWAS), African Academies, African Universities, Regional (Africa) and International Organizations (i.e. AU/NEPAD, ICIPE, ADB, SADC, ECOWAS, EAC, COMESA). The United Nations and its agencies (e.g. UNEP, UNU/IAS, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, FAO) have been duly informed of the establishment of this Regional Office.

The visibility of the newly established ICSU Office in Africa has been promoted through the participation of ICSU ROA staff and members of ICSU RCA in major conferences and workshops organized in Africa and elsewhere. Oral presentations on the objectives of the Regional Office were made at such gatherings. Four good examples to cite here are the IUPAP General Assembly which took place in Cape Town (South Africa) on 26-28 October 2005; the Conference of Vice-Chancellors, Provosts, Deans of Science, Engineering and Technology (COVIDSET 2005) held in Accra (Ghana) on 15-17 October 2005; the African Network on Global Environmental Change planning workshop which took place in Nairobi (Kenya) on 22-24 September 2005; and the TWAS/NASAC/AAS annual meeting which was held in Nairobi (Kenya) on 6-10 November 2005. Bearing in mind that ICSU ROA is not a funding agency, a limited financial support for organizing scientific meetings in Africa were provided by ICSU ROA in this financial year.

The promotion of national memberships in Africa is considered to be crucial for the realization of the objectives of ICSU on the continent. Currently, the national membership status in Africa is as follows: (a) Full Members (9) are, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo and Zimbabwe; (b) Associate Members (8) are, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Mozambique, Senegal, Seychelles and Uganda; and Observers (2) are, Sudan and Swaziland. ICSU ROA facilitated the membership of Ethiopia and Mauritius (September 2005) and facilitated the promotion of Nigeria and Togo from their observer status to full national membership status. In the 2005/06 financial year, the Regional Office worked hard to increase the ICSU membership on the continent. It approached Botswana, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia and urged them to submit membership application forms. Cameroon, Mozambique and Senegal are applying for full membership status. Three flyers (Attachment V) were prepared for the purpose of promoting the newly established office. All members of the Regional Committee and staff members of the Regional Office have been provided with business cards which were prepared by SAASTA in Pretoria. The Royal Society (UK) and TWAS have offered to assist in the payment of annual ICSU national membership fees for African countries which face difficulties in meeting this financial obligation. Some African countries have submitted their application to the two organizations for consideration.

4.7 Strategic Partners

During this financial year, the newly established ICSU ROA informed all major S&T stakeholders in Africa, ICSU family and others, as described above, of its establishment in Pretoria by means of electronic communication. This was followed, in some cases, by face-to-face meetings to identify avenues of collaboration. Organizations positively expressing their desire to collaborate with the Regional Office include, UNESCO (Regional Office for Africa), TWAS, AU/NEPAD, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD, Regional Office for Africa) and the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA & IFAS).

The two Regional Offices of ICSU and UNESCO have agreed to work together in areas of mutual interest, i.e. promotion of science education, research and publication in Africa. The UNESCO Regional Office for Africa has expressed interest in making a significant contribution towards the realization of the selected four priority areas of the ICSU ROA. The newly established TWAS Regional Office for Africa has also shown interest in collaborating with ICSU ROA and areas of partnership will be defined in the next financial year (2006/07). A similar scenario exists between ICSU ROA and NASAC (Network of African Science Academies).

The World Academy of Young Scientists (WAYS) originates from the ICSU-UNESCO World Congress on Science which was held in Budapest (Hungary) in 1999. WAYS has decided to establish Regional Offices around the world, and negotiations are ongoing to establish the WAYS African Unit (WAYS AFRU) within the Secretariat of ICSU ROA. ICSU ROA hosted WAYS AFRU's first planning meeting at the NRF in Pretoria on 9-10 February 2006. An interim governing council of WAYS AFRU was elected during this meeting. ICSU ROA considers WAYS AFRU as one of the organizations which will be actively involved in the implementation of its (ICSU ROA) objectives in Africa and more particularly its science/work plans; and hence a strong working partnership has to be established between the two organizations.

4.8 28th ICSU General Assembly in China

This GA was held in Shanghai and Suzhou from 17-21 October 2005, and ICSU RCA and ICSU ROA were represented by Prof Gabriel Ogunmola (Chair, ICSU RCA), Prof Francis Gudyanga (member, ICSU RCA), Dr. Khotso Mokhele (member, ICSU RCA) and Prof Sospeter Muhongo (Director, ICSU ROA). The GA focused on three key issues, namely, approval of the ICSU Strategic Plan 2006-11 (www.icsu.org), approval of the budget and election of new officials (2005-08). Two members of ICSU RCA, namely Dr. Khotso Mokhele and Prof Francis Gudyanga, were elected as Vice President and Ordinary Member of ICSU Board, respectively. The former will Chair the ICSU Committee on Scientific Planning and Review (CSPR). The report of the 28th ICSU GA is posted on the websites of ICSU ROA (www.icsu-africa.org) and ICSU Global (www.icsu.org).

ICSU ROA prepared a progress report (power-point presentation) of its activities which was presented to the GA by the Chairperson of ICSU RCA. The report, which was well received, dealt with the formation and growth of the Regional Office in the period April-October 2005. Through this report and promotional materials (banners), ICSU ROA enjoyed a high profile and visibility at the assembly. ICSU ROA is now a role model in the developing world for the realization of the objectives of the ICSU family, especially its Strategic Plan 2006-11.

4.9 Activities of the ICSU family in Africa

In the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006, the ICSU family and its partners organized numerous events which directly involved the ICSU ROA. These included the hosting of international conferences and workshops in Africa, for instance, UNESCO (Maputo, 12-13 May 2005), WHC/UNESCO (Durban, 10-17 July 2005), CODATA (Pretoria, 5-7 September 2005), IUNS (Durban, 18-23 September 2005), IUPAP (Durban, 26-28 October 2005), AICIMO (Maputo, 2-3 November 2005), ISA (Durban, 18-29 January 2006) and UNESCO/IUGS/IGCP (Paris, 25-26 February 2006).

ICSU ROA has written letters of support for ICSU Unions bidding to host and organize major international conferences in Africa. IUFOST requested the Regional Office to support its sister national organization, SAAFoST, in its bid to host and organize, its (IUFOST) 2010 world congress in South Africa. If this bid is successful, it will be the first time ever for IUFOST to hold its congress Africa. Similar support has been given to the Council for Geoscience's application to host the IASPEI general assembly in 2009 in South Africa. On 26 February 2006, the ICSU Regional Committee for Africa gave full support to the Associação de Investigaçao Científica de Moçambique (AICIMO) bid to host the 29th ICSU General Assembly in Maputo (Mozambique) in 2008. If this bid is successful, it will be the first time ever that ICSU holds its general assembly in sub-Saharan Africa.

ICSU ROA is playing a role in coordinating and promoting the ICSU-initiated and the UN-proclaimed global scientific ventures in Africa. ICSU ROA, in collaboration with ICSU South Africa, is promoting the ICSU-WMO International Polar Year (IPY, 2007-08). It is coordinating the UN-declared International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE, 2007-09) which was initiated by the Geo-Unions of ICSU (i.e. IUGS, IUGG, IGU, IUSS and INQUA).

4.10 Database and Networking of African scientists

ICSU has 29 well-established scientific unions and thus ICSU ROA has initiated a project for coordinating their activities on the continent and at the same time creating active networks around scientific disciplines for African scientists (including those in the Diaspora) and their counterparts outside the continent. The main objectives of this initiative are: (a) to maintain databases of scientists in Africa and those in the Diaspora working on STI projects/programmes conducted in Africa; (b) to document functioning research facilities that exist on the continent; (c) to promote and facilitate collaboration and reduce duplication of STI initiatives on the continent; and (d) to identify “science gaps” that have to be filled.

4.11 African Diaspora Project

ICSU ROA, in collaboration with the NRF, initiated a project on the African Diaspora during this financial year. The main objectives of this project are: (a) to identify African scientists, engineers and technologists based outside the continent (the African Diaspora) and build databases and networks of these experts for their involvement in the activities of socio-economic development of the continent; (b) to increase the utilization opportunities of STI infrastructure and capacity available outside the African continent; and (c) to mobilize the African intellectual capacity and infrastructure towards the realization of the science/work plans of ICSU ROA. This project will be implemented in the next financial year (2006/07), with an initial funding of ZAR 304,000.00 from the NRF. The AU, UNESCO, NASAC/TWAS and DST (South Africa) have shown interest in this project and negotiations for charting out avenues of collaboration are imminent.

4.12 2005/06 Financial Report: Audited Accounts

According to Article 10, Sections 10.4 and 10.5 of the Agreement between ICSU and the NRF (Attachment I), the Regional Office follows all the financial policies, procedures and guidelines of the NRF, and thus it has no independent accounting system. The 2005/06 financial report of the NRF incorporates all financial matters of ICSU ROA for the 2005/06 financial year.

5. Concluding Remarks

The first year of the existence of the ICSU ROA was highly successful. The purpose for the existence of the Office was well defined and the preparation of its science/work plans on the selected four priority areas (i.e. sustainable energy; health and human well-being; natural and human-induced hazards and disasters; and global change) is proceeding well and will be accomplished by December 2006. Consequently the long-term ICSU strategic vision of having a world where science is used for the benefit of all, excellence in science is valued and scientific knowledge is effectively linked to policy-making, will be unequivocally realized with great success in Africa.

List of acronyms

AAS	African Academy of Science
ADB	African Development Bank
AICIMO	Scientific Research Association of Mozambique
AU	The African Union
CODATA	Committee on Data for science and technology
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (South Africa)
DST	Department of Science and Technology (South Africa)
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN
GA	General Assembly
IASPEI	International Association of Seismology and Physics of the Earth's Interior
ICIPE	International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology
ICSU	International Council for Science
ICSU RCA	ICSU Regional Committee for Africa
ICSU ROA	ICSU Regional Office for Africa
IGCP	International Geological Correlation Programme
IGU	International Geographical Union
IPY	International Polar Year
ISA	International Sociological Association
IUFoST	International Union of Food Science and Technology
IUGG	International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics
IUGS	International Union of Geological Sciences
IUNS	International Union of Nutritional Sciences
IUPAP	International Union of Pure and Applied Physics
IUSS	International Union of Soil Sciences
IYPE	International Year of Planet Earth
NASAC	Network of African Science Academies
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NRF	National Research Foundation (South Africa)
SAAFoST	South African Association for Food Science and Technology
SAASTA	South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement
SADC	Southern African Development Community
STI	Science, technology and innovation
TWAS	Academy of Science for the Developing World
TWNSO	Third World Network of Scientific Organizations
TWOWS	Third World Organization for Women in Science
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNU/IAS	United Nations University / Institute for Advanced Studies
WAYS	World Academy of Young Scientists
WHC	World Heritage Centre
WHO	World Health Organisation
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation
ZAR	South African Rand