

2016 International Year of

# GLOBAL *understanding*

IYGU

Prof. Benno Werlen – Executive Director of 2016 IYGU



# Declaration of the Science Councils



Professor Benno Werlen  
Department of Geography  
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Germany

03 July 2015

Dear Professor Werlen,

We are writing to confirm that the International Council for Science (ICSU) is pleased to join the International Social Science Council (ISSC) and the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH) in endorsing the establishment of an International Year of Global Understanding (IYGU) in 2016. The announcement of this will take place on 14 September at the 2015 World Social Science Forum (WSSF) to be held in Durban, South Africa.

ICSU's mission is to strengthen international science for the benefit of society. It therefore supports the IYGU's goal of promoting global understanding through research, education, and information in order to address global sustainability challenges.

We are looking forward to cooperating closely with the IYGU network to make 2016 a success for the benefit of future generations across the world.

Yours sincerely,

Heide Hackmann  
Executive Director

Gordon McBean  
President

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Alberto Marínelli  
President of ISSC

Professor Benno Werlen  
Executive Director of IYGU  
University of Jena  
Germany

25 June 2015

Dear Professor Werlen,

RE: **Support for the International Year of Global Understanding!**

It is with pleasure that the International Social Science Council (ISSC) wishes to express its support for the implementation of the 2016 International Year of Global Understanding (IYGU) which will be formally launched during a dedicated session at the World Social Science Forum, on 13 September, in Durban, South Africa.

We in the ISSC believe in linking social science knowledge & policy with public policies & social needs & in order to improve the quality of people's lives. The 2016 International Year of Global Understanding (IYGU) is a unique opportunity for the ISSC to make a statement. We aim at mobilising scientists from various backgrounds to engage in interdisciplinary collaborations to achieve transformation, sustainability. We also wish to raise awareness of collective and individual capacity for action and responsibility for everyday decision-making. We also share with our colleagues from IYGU the belief in the importance of research that crosses national and regional boundaries. We mean to improve our knowledge & the global issues that affect the world and to be effective in our efforts to address them.

The ISSC fully endorses the IYGU and its goals. We therefore look forward to partnering with the International Council for Science (ICSU), the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH) and the International Geographical Union (IGU) in proclaiming the IYGU in Durban in September. We will do our very best to remain a useful partner throughout 2016.

Sincerely yours,

Alberto Marínelli

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CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DE LA PHILOSOPHIE ET DES SCIENCES HUMAINES  
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23/06/2015

Dear Prof. Benno Werlen,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Board of the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH), to confirm that, on September 14 at Durban, the CIPSH, together with the other two International sciences councils of the natural (ICSU) and the social sciences (ISSC), will proclaim 2016 as the International Year of Global Understanding (IYGU) at the 2015 World Social Science Forum (WSSF).

The CIPSH is itself in a process of re-structuring and growth, aiming at fostering the role of Humanities within interdisciplinary approaches to global challenges. In this process, its current international federation members are being joined by other networks of scholars, and we believe we must build together a bridge between the academic advances of knowledge in all domains and people's awareness of such challenges. This is precisely what IYGU was capable of designing: a framework of reference to bridge the local and the global into a common comprehensive understanding.

As an organization aimed at strengthening the human sciences in all its dimensions, CIPSH fully encourages the IYGU's initiative to promote global understanding through research, education and information. As you know, a World Conference of the Humanities will occur in 2017 in Liège, and we believe that IYGU fully converges with its aims, too.

We are looking forward to a close cooperation with the IYGU network to make 2016 a huge success for the benefit of society and all cultures today and in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Chao Gelin, President

Luis Oosterbeek, Secretary-General



# Why International Year?

## **To get a platform and a tool to**

- Draw attention to major issues relevant to the majority of the world population
- Encourage international action of global importance and ramifications
- Raise interest in scientific disciplines or scientific contributions to problem solutions of general concern.
- Best example: International Polar Year



# **Global Understanding: An essential Human Condition**



**In the face of global social and climate change,  
we must think globally.**

**But global thinking presupposes global understanding.**

**IYGU**

**clarifies connections between the local and the global.**

**Actions and decisions shall yield sustainable outcomes,  
every day,  
all over the world.**



# **Global Understanding: An essential Human Condition**



**Global Understanding is a bridge builder ...**

**... between the local and global,**

**social and natural,**

**science and everyday life.**

**Focusing on local action for global sustainability.**



# People's Politics



Everyday decisions depend on lifestyle.

All lifestyles are culturally differentiated.

Emphasizing the cultural dimensions of sustainability.

Local, individual choices shape global change.

Change must come from the bottom up.



# Science and Everyday Life :

## Focus on everyday activities



Eating/Drinking//Surviving



Moving/Staying //Belonging



Housing/Working//Urbanizing



Sports/Entertaining//Recreating



Communicating/Networking//Interacting



Wasting/Recycling//Preserving



# How to do it?

An aerial photograph of terraced rice fields, showing a series of curved, stepped terraces filled with green rice plants, separated by dark, earthen walls. The terraces follow the contours of a hillside, creating a rhythmic, wavy pattern across the landscape. The top of the image shows a flatter area with more vibrant green grass.

## Three Levels

### *Research*

Bringing together social and natural scientists

### *Education*

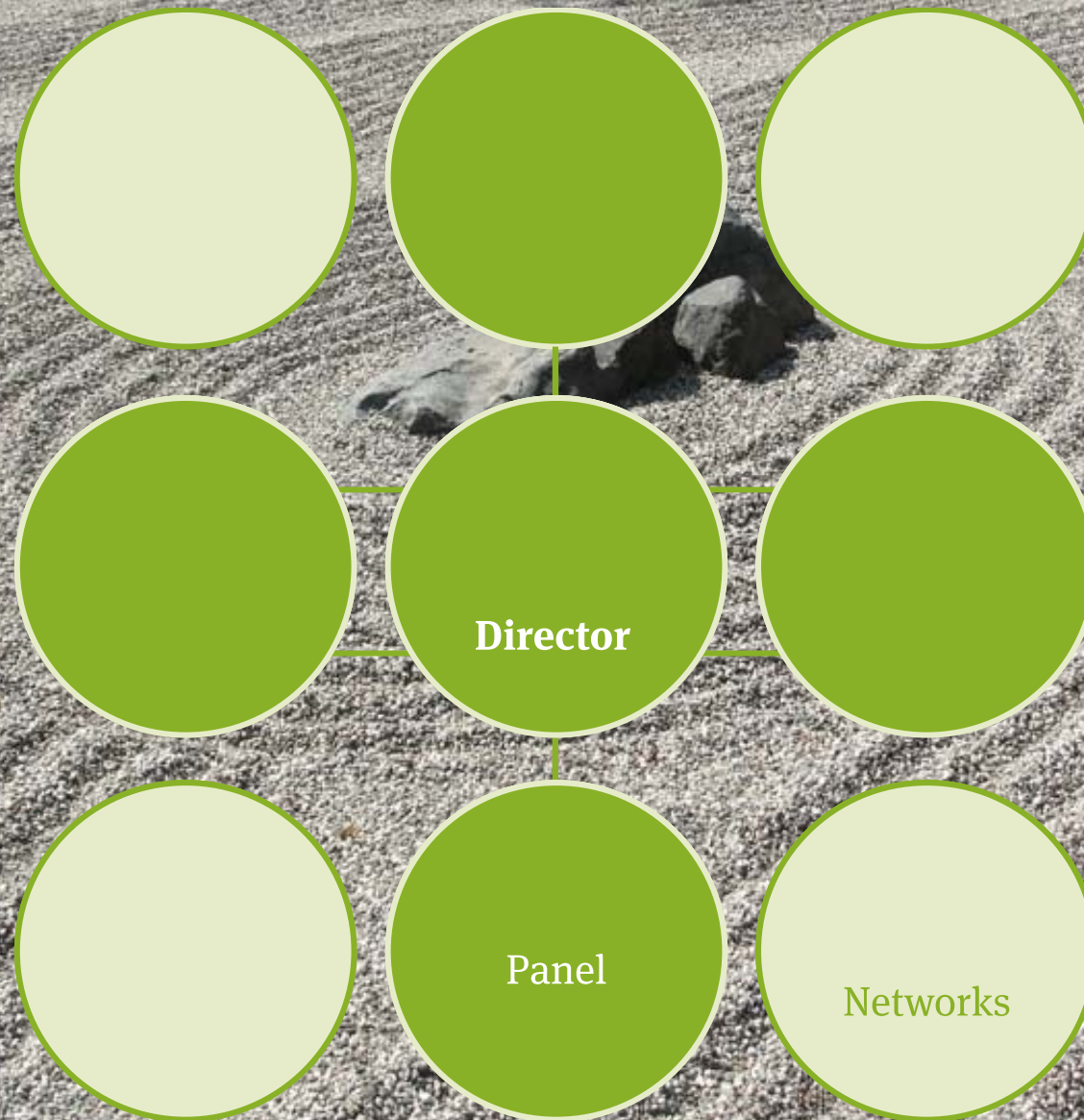
Bringing research results at all levels in classrooms throughout the world

### *Information*

Print media, social networks,  
internet platforms ([www.global-understanding.info](http://www.global-understanding.info)) and TV programs.



# Organization of IYGU





# Organization of IYGU

*Network of IYGU Regional Action Centers*





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**Thank you!**







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