WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION (OF UNESCO)

EXPERT TEAM ON SEA ICE – FIFTH SESSION

STEERING GROUP FOR THE PROJECT GLOBAL DIGITAL SEA ICE DATA BANK (GDSIDB) – THIRTEENTH SESSION

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WMO INFORMATION SYSTEM (WIS)

Summary and Purpose of Document

This document provides a brief introduction of the WMO Information System, providing background information for the discussion at ETSI-5.
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ACTION PROPOSED

The Team is invited to:

(a) note information contained in this document.

References:

Website on WMO Information System: http://www.wmo.int/WIS

DISCUSSION

1. WIS, the WMO Information System, is intended to be the primary method used by WMO Programmes for exchanging information. Information registered in the WIS is automatically registered in the GEO portal.

2. WIS expands on the Global Telecommunications System (GTS) in three significant ways. First, it provides a standard catalogue that describes all the information that are offered for international exchange under WMO and partner Programmes. Second, it provides mechanisms for information to be accessed using the information in the catalogue. Third it retains the capability of the GTS to support managed distribution of critical information but extends this beyond the traditional World Weather Watch information. The key component of the new functionality is the WIS Discovery Metadata catalogue.

3. From an organizational perspective, there are three classes of WIS centre. Global Information System Centres (GISCs) publish the WIS Discovery Metadata catalogue, coordinate the global exchange of information (and provide a cache of at least the past 24h of information routinely exchanged globally), and ensure that the telecommunications systems in their area of responsibility are functioning appropriately. Ten GISCs are operational, with a further five nearing operations.

4. Data Collection or Production Centres (DCPCs) have international roles defined by WMO Programmes or Regional Associations. They may either provide specialized products (such as EUMETSAT) or manage distribution of observations and products for a specific region or topic (such as the Arctic Data Centre in Finland).

5. National Centre (NCs) have a primarily national role, and in terms of the WIS are responsible for ensuring that observations and products originating in their territory that are intended for international exchange are included in the WIS catalogue and that national users have access to the WIS products they require. All WIS centres are responsible for making sure that the GISCs have up to date descriptions in the WIS Metadata Catalogue of all the information they wish to make available internationally.

6. Because the WIS no longer relies solely on the architecture of the GTS, it is possible for data providers and users to negotiate with NCs, DCPCs or GISCs methods of supplying information to the WIS that rely on standard internet technologies (including the internet itself), and for users to download or request regular delivery of information using standard methods that include ftp and email.

7. Whether part of a national programme or an international one, producers of information about sea ice are encouraged to produce WIS Core Metadata records describing the information and publish this through the GISC associated with their national centre, so that users who may be able to benefit from the information are able to discover and request it.

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