Open Science Matters!

The second day of the ISPRS Congress in Prague kicked off with a highly relevant keynote presentation by Ms Heide Hackmann of the International Council for Science (ICSU). She told the audience passionately about the urgency of open science. The world faces great challenges and the society expects science to solve these problems. On the other hand, science itself is under pressure to reinvent itself and to re-energize its contact with the society.

Hackmann calls for a global response and a significantly enriched collaboration within and between the scientific community. And beyond that, as the world of policy and business, and the public at large are also involved. This necessitates the scientists' engagement with the open science imperative. Hackmann signals that the scientific community is responding to this imperative. A difficult job is waiting for those who determine policy of science – including international bodies like ICSU – to create the conditions of possibility that will allow the science to better support and strengthen that response.

Open access and open data are key elements in increasing and having an impact on the influence of science on policy and practice. Hackmann envisions a shifting of the ethos of how we practice and value science, moving from competition towards collaboration. Not surprisingly, capacity building is vital in achieving this shift – scientific capacity building will be the route to follow in the decade(s) to come. Are we walking the talk? At least there are some excellent international examples such as Future Earth and Science International. Multi-stakeholder approaches it is!

Heide Hackmann faced the audience with a reality check and observed that there are still many burdens to overcome: budgets for international collaborations are often not global in scope, frequently the first to be cut in times of constraint, excellence is still largely measured in numbers, metrics and institutional rankings and national policy for science is primarily about national economic growth and competitiveness. We need to transform science and the success of this process will determine whether and what kind of role science plays in shaping the future of humanity on planet Earth.

https://www.gim-international.com/content/news/open-science-matters