

# **Annual report of the International Sustainable Development Research Society (ISDRS): 2020-21**

**February 15, 2022, Stockholm, Sweden**

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## Summary

The purpose of this annual report is to provide members an overview of ISDRS activities during the year since the last conference (July, 2020, online but organised in Budapest, Hungary), focusing on the activity of the executive committee. It also provides a summary of our accounts for the calendar year 2020.

The number of institutional members has increased substantially since last year, albeit more effort is required to encourage the individuals involved to become active members. Our number of partnerships and other collaborations continue to increase, with the second book in the Routledge series out, a further two in draft. Networking activity this year has been impacted by the Coronavirus outbreak but has nonetheless been ongoing.

We have clarified the structure of the board work in that sense, that Executive board meetings since January 2021 have been held prior to ISDRS Board meetings in order to prepare for them.

I am very grateful to all those who have contributed to ISDRS activities and enriched the expanding ISDRS community in the past year.

Prof Peter Dobers  
President ISDRS  
Stockholm, Sweden, February, 2022

## Mission

- To generate research and knowledge about sustainable development. As a research society, we have an obligation to facilitate the work of those who labour to create new knowledge regarding sustainable development, as broadly defined.
- To disseminate knowledge about sustainable development. Consistent with knowledge generation, the Society also obligates itself to the task of spreading knowledge worldwide for the benefit of those with a similar interest.
- To educate others about sustainable development. Sustainable development places multiple and urgent demands upon global and local societies who will eventually determine the degree to which the Earth's resources are sustained. Thus, the ISDRS feels compelled to become involved in the practical work of sustainable development.
- To establish an information exchange for sustainable development. Given the proliferation of sustainability entities and venues, the Society will strive to provide a coordinating role for linking all these efforts together.

## Executive Committee and Board

The executives of ISDRS have changed since January 2021 when all executives have new roles. We are happy to see the first full year of the new Director for Membership; an attempt to keep current individual and institutional members and and increase the membership base in both categories.

*Table 1: Executive committee membership and roles*

Executive role	2020 holder	2021 holder
President	Pauline Deutz	Peter Dobers
Vice president	Peter Dobers	Volker Mauerhofer
Secretary	Volker Mauerhofer	Olawale Olayide
Treasurer	Sigurd Vildåsen	Hanna Ahlström
Communications Officer	Olawale Olayide	Janaina Macke
Memberships	(new role since January 2021)	Shainesh G

The previous presidents, or president emeritus, Walter Vermeulen and Pauline Deutz, continue to provide support, Pauline now in the official function as “Past President”. The board assistant provided a critical continuity over the previous transition, and ideally will do next time as well.

## ISDRS Board Membership

Two board members stepped down at the end of 2020, namely Rupert Baumgartner and Cecilia Soler. Both had reached the end of their six-year term of office. Three board members were re-elected: Roberta Salomone, Sigurd Vildåsen and Marc Wolfram, whilst Rasyikah Md. Khalid, Sjors Witjes and Gyula Zilahy were welcomed to the board for the first time (see Table 2). This takes the number of women to seven and number of people based outside of Europe to eight, albeit mostly from upper-middle- and high-income countries. We are grateful to the Election Committee for their work identifying potential new board members and preparing the elections.

*Table 2: Composition of the ISDRS board*

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Function 2020 / 2021</b>	<b>(Re-) election</b>
1	Peter Dobers	Vice President / President	VP 19-20; P 21-22; PP 23-24
2	Pauline Deutz	President / Past President	P 19-20; PP 21-22
3	Volker Mauerhofer	Secretary & PhD student workshop, Election Committee / Vice President	Elected as Vice-P for 2021-22
4	Sigurd Vildasen	Treasurer/ board member	Stepped down as Treasurer Re-elected 2021
5	Olawale Olayide	Communications officer; Best Article Award Committee / Secretary	
6	Gyula Zilahy		Elected 2021
7	Sjors Witjes		Elected 2021
8	Roberta Salomone	Best Article Award Committee	Re-elected 2021
9	Rasyikah Md. Khalid		Elected 2021
10	Janaina Macke	Best Article Award Committee/ Communications	
11	Marc Wolfram		Re-elected 2021
12	Marlen Arnold	Co-editor newsletter; Best Article Award Committee	Re-election 2021
13	Roberto Merli		Re-election 2021
14	Francisco Comín		Re-election 2021
15	Alexandra Franklin	“Sustainability Committee”	Re-election 2021
16	Eduardo Wills Herrera		Re-election 2021

17	Hanna Ahlström	New Professional Group/ treasurer	Re-election 2021
18	G. Shainesh	New membership secretary (2021)	Re-election 2021
19	Simon Lockery	Communications	Re-election 2021
20	Sebastian Thomas	“Sustainability Committee”	Re-election 2021
21	Zengwei Yuan	Best Article Award Committee	Re-election 2021
-	Richard Welford	Hon. Member	Life membership

Charlotte Mummery continues throughout entire 2021 as the assistant to the board, having begun in March 2018. The Society is very happy to note, that Charlotte has defended her thesis during spring of 2021. Congratulations Charlotte!

## **Election Committee**

The activities of the Election Committee will commence officially after the annual conference, and be concluded by the third quarter of 2021 with elected Board members assuming duties by next January. The Election Committee consists of two or three members of the Board and the Executive Secretary as chair (this year: Wale Olayide as chair, Sigurd Vildasen, Janaina Macke). The Election Committee ensures that eligible members are invited to stand for nomination to the Board, prepares a proposal to the Board aiming at a balanced selection of nominees, reflecting the diversity, considering the required size of the Board and formally required executive functions (making a total of 21 members and an honorary member). It is instructive to note that 10 members of the Board are currently due for re-election. There will be call for nominations. The Board, after considering the advice of the Election Committee will determine the final list of nominees eligible for election by the members. The election will be held by means of an online balloting process.

## **Membership**

Membership: G Shainesh

The number of paying members joining directly through the ISDRS website appears to have declined this year (Table 3). This reflects on going issues in determining the precise number of members. The number estimated at the time of the conference last year was subsequently determined to be an overestimate, as some of those remaining in the database had in fact not renewed their subscriptions. Having discovered this anomaly, the database has been corrected. Following discussions at the Nanjing board meeting, the Assistant has changed the process of sending reminders, but unfortunately without significant results. This year, however, (as also agreed in Nanjing) we have rephrased the registration rubric for the conference so that the non-member fee explicitly includes membership for the 12 months following payment (also estimated in Table 3). Although this will require some administration following the conference, the newly paid members will be registered within the ISDRS website without having to take further action themselves. They will, therefore, receive the newsletter and other announcements, which may increase they likelihood of them returning to subsequent conferences and retaining their

membership. In previous years those paying the non-member conference fee have been offered membership after the conference, but with a limited response.

Note that the number of individuals shown as green or green + members includes 12 members benefiting from an institutional membership (see below).

The discount rate for the conference was changed from its previous basis of whether the country of residence is a member of OECD to whether or not it is a high-income country in the World Bank classification. This will also be changed on the ISDRS website for those joining/renewing directly as individuals or institutions.

The number of followers (registered on the website but not paying) has increased. This is good of course, but we need to be careful to avoid calling followers ‘members’. There is confusion amongst the followers as to whether they are or are not members. For example, non-members have volunteered for roles (such as the audit committee), despite the call for volunteers explicitly stating that only paying members were eligible.

*Table 3: Membership levels from 2017-2020 (June 2021)*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Green Full Fee</b>	<b>Green Reduced Fee</b>	<b>Green + Full Fee</b>	<b>Green + Reduced Fee</b>	<b>Board Full</b>	<b>Board Reduced</b>	<b>Followers</b>
2017	39	53	14	12	16	2	1 731
2018	49	46	9	3	18	2	2 362
2019	47	28	22	9	16	3	2 439
2020	22 (43)*	17 (45)*	7	4	17	4	2 658
2021* (to June)	30	27			17	4	2 889

*\* since 2021 no longer distinguish between Green and Green+ members, totals reported in ‘Green’ column (this year they are indicated still as “Green” due to the transition and from next year 2022, these categories will be all simply called “Members”).*

### **Institutional members**

Currently ISDRS has 16 institutional members (Table 4). This is a record number and reflects in part the efforts of the Assistant to send reminders for renewals (as discussed at last year’s board meeting). A few of these institutions benefit from current research projects with close ties to ISDRS; a couple are more unexpected approaches from institutions hitherto having little known contact with ISDRS. Only one institution (Ibadan) is in a non-OECD country.

If the maximum number of individuals at each institution took up their right to register on the ISDRS website, this would provide 57 members. In practice only 12 individuals have so far registered (five of those from one institution). More than 12 have claimed the members’ discount for the conference, however. It will in due course be possible to identify those individuals and either contact them to encourage them to register, or (if allowable under data protection rules), manually register so that they have to opt out rather than opt in to receiving the newsletter and other communications. At the

moment these institutional memberships look like a good source of income for ISDRS, but it would be highly preferable if they also yielded active members.

*Table 4: Current institutional members (as of summer of 2021)*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Membership level</b>	<b>OECD</b>
Copernicus Institute, UU, NL	Large	Y
Södertörn University, Sweden	Large	Y
University of Hull, UK	Medium	Y
Universidad de los Andes, Colombia	Medium	Y
Mid Sweden University, Sweden	Medium	Y
Centre for Sustainable Development, U Ibadan, Nigeria	Small	N
Department of financial Accounting Faculty of Finance and Law, Cracow University of Economics, Poland	Small	Y
SERI Institute, Germany	Small	Y
University of Navarra, Dept of Industrial Organization, Spain	Small	Y
Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (IOER), Germany	Small	Y
Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, Switzerland	Small	Y
NTNU Norway	Small	Y
University technology of Troyes, France	Small	Y
Dipartimento di Economia Università "G.d Annunzio" Chieti" Pescara, Italy	Small	Y
Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Hungary (complimentary membership for 2020)	Medium	Y

## **Changes to the charter**

Green plus members have approved changes to the charter and also approved the by-charter. This change was discussed at the members meeting in Nanjing in 2019, allowing individuals within institutional memberships to have the same rights as other members (e.g., to stand for election to the board). It is hoped that these changes will encourage more members to become and remain active in the Society. Furthermore, the addition of a Director of Membership may enable more time and effort to go into liaising with institutional members and refining the membership systems.

## Financial information

Treasurer: Hanna Ahlström

The board discussed the financial situation for 2020 during its meeting at the online Budapest conference. It was decided that all costs that was planned for (a backup plan in the case of being able arrange an onsite conference) running up to the conference were to be financed by the ISDRS. This decision was taken despite the relocation to an online version of the Budapest conference. However, the 2020 conference became less expensive than anticipated, in comparison to the estimates for the 2020 budget.

The total annual ISDRS surplus is €6,499.81, this includes the conference income and costs in addition to the ISDR Society income and costs. The *conference surplus* will be €8,538.26 once BME has been paid.

Table 5: 2020 opening and closing bank balance

<b>Balance 01-01-2020</b>	
NOK account DNB	€ 48 566,0558
Eur Account DNB	€ 0,00
	<hr/>
	--> <b>€ 48 566,0558</b>
<b>Balance 31-12-2020</b>	
NOK account DNB	€ 39 133,7907
Eur Account DNB	€ 23 731,64
	<hr/>
	--> <b>€ 62 865,4307</b>

Table 6: Income and expenses related to 2020 activity

Category	Income €	Expense €
Individual membership	2815	
Institutional membership	5800	
Total income conference	40 308,26	
Publishing sponsorship and fees	2128	
Other income (interest)	11.60	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,062.86</b>	
Office support costs (Assistant) and expenditures executive board		18 500
Transaction/banking costs		278.05
Website and office supplies		700
Conference costs (Ex Ordo and OA)		9,425
Payment to Diamond and BME		15,455
Conference refund		205
<b>Total</b>		<b>44,563.05</b>



<b>Surplus</b>	<b>6,499.81</b>
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The real costs of the ISDRS Budapest conference of 2020 relates to costs for a boat trip (that could not be cancelled), arranged by Diamond (event organiser): €2.445, as well as €4.000 for their early work to support the conference host; the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME). There were no additional factual costs by Prof. Gyula Zilahy and his team, but a lot of labour time had to be spent to re-allocate the conference to an online platform (ExOrdo) instead of arranging the conference on site. While the Hungarian Innovation Ministry promised a sponsoring of €9.000 to BME, for long it remained unclear whether the sum was to be paid out to BME. Prof. Peter Dobers agreed with Prof. Gyula Zilahy that BME can keep the sponsoring if it will be paid out. After two annual conferences with rather small turnout of paying participants, BME receives a share of the surplus of €9000. In sum, BME can invoice ISDRS a total of €9.000<sup>1</sup>. This reduces the total annual ISDRS surplus to €6,499.81

In terms of the conference income and costs, as detailed in table 6, the total income was €40,308.26 (after handling fees). Conference costs, Ex Ordo and Diamond totalled €14,380, non-members fees for ISDRS were €8185 (€3245 discounted non-member plus €4940 full non-member). The total conference surplus €17,538.26, less €9000 ring fenced for BME<sup>1</sup>. This makes the final conference surplus €8,538.26.

The new procedure of collecting all conference fees directly and consequently paying the conference host a large sum is still deemed as the most practical solution. However, it does indeed create more administrative work for ISDRS, which in turn demands practical support systems to track transactions but this is the only solution that we have at the moment.

As reported in the 2019 annual account, the accounting system Zoho was fully implemented in 2019. The main advantages are that the system tracks and documents invoices. While it was then noted that reporting of aggregated numbers is best done through Excel since it gives flexibility when naming categories and describing the end balance, additional problems have occurred: Zoho registers all of the imports from the DNB EUR account in NOK but does not convert the numbers into NOK. The EUR account was opened in connection to the choice to changing from Paypal to Stripe due to the benefits of having the conference transactions easily identifiable (as non-conference payments are through paypal) and since it also provides a simpler experience for delegates when registering to the conference. Unfortunately, it is not possible to change the Zoho 'base' currency from NOK into EUR, which is a problem now but presents an even bigger problem when the bank changes to Sweden. This is because transactions are already recorded in NOK. This in turn means that ISDRS is stuck with the Zoho accounts being in NOK for as long as we have this system, even after moving to Sweden, which will result in switching to a Swedish bank account.

The advantage with being able to track and document invoices is still deemed very useful, as it sends reminders to institutional members etc., which has resulted in us keeping Zoho for now. However, unfortunately, all booking and accounting needs to be done manually in Excel through downloading the account numbers from the DNB website.

We are grateful to this year's auditors Romana Rauter and Santiago Perez.

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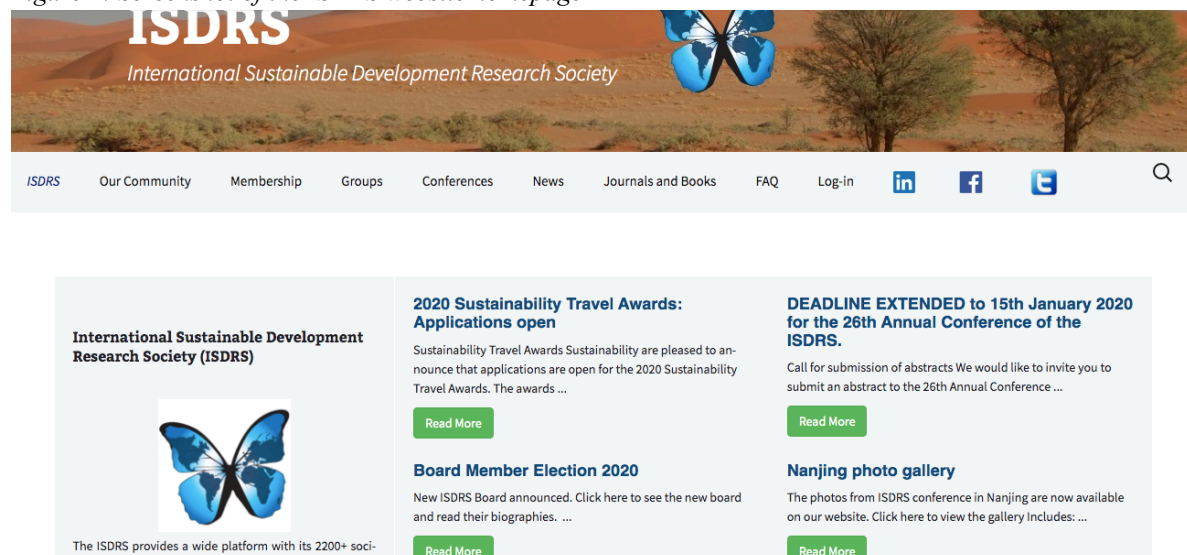
<sup>1</sup> However, we are still waiting for the invoice.

## Communications

Communications: Janaina Macke

This section highlights the activities of the communications section of ISDRS since the last conference. The communications channels engaged during this period include the quarterly newsletter, LinkedIn group, Facebook, Twitter, website posts (Figure 1) and blogs.

Figure 1: Screenshot of the ISDRS website homepage



The quarterly newsletter goes to all members and followers has continued consistently with four issues released in 2020 (Table 4). The editorial committee members (Olawale Olayide and Marlen Arnold) continued with overseeing and supporting the making of the quarterly newsletter with assistance from Charlotte Mummery. The ISDRS Twitter and Facebook platforms were used more than previously for promotional purposes, and for eliciting feedbacks from readers. With slightly increased membership (including followers), we would be able to significantly increase and improve on our outreach without much expense.

Table 7: Newsletter Statistics 2020 - 2021

Item	2020				2021	
	Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Issue 4	Issue 1	Issue 2
All Sent	1 036	1 860	1 993	1 830	1 750	1 716
Unsubscribe	2	13	8	5	3	7
Clicked	17.8%	22.2%	4.8%	2.8%	5.6%	3.9%
Opened	179 (17.3%)	401 (21.6%)	360 (18.1%)	300 (16.4)	343 (19.6%)	324 (18.9%)
Unopened	858	1 461	1 633	1 530	1 407	1 392

*Note: Individuals clicking more than once are not counted in the % count, only the number of clicks.*

The number of subscriptions to the newsletter has remained static while the proportion of active engagement (clicked and opened) fluctuated, 2021 subscriptions are slightly down compared with 2020. The entry point for 2020 reduced from the closing of 2019 due to some changes on the website and removal of inactive recipient email addresses. Issue 1 2021 represents a marginal drop in total sent. The number of recipients unsubscribing remains low, though a significant number is rejected as undeliverable, suggesting that people are not updating the email address registered with ISDRS.

The ISDRS LinkedIn group has continued to increase from **2 089** in 2018 to **2 479** in 2020, and to an impressive **2 734** in 2021. The increase of 201 new members between 2019 and 2020 was due to a change in policy regarding LinkedIn requests, however the increase of 255 from 2020 - 2021 is most likely due to improved social media activities by the board and interactions with posts.

The Facebook membership count is increasing slightly, from **1 548** in June 2020 **1 571** in June 2021. ISDRS has not focused on Facebook in the 2020-2021 period, and no paid promotions were carried out. A few paid promotions were used in 2018, however the interactions from Facebook followers was considered less useful compared to LinkedIn and Twitter. ISDRS is about to launch a new Instagram page before the end of 2021. The number of members in the ISDRS New Professionals Group has also been increasing since 2019. The NPG facebook page will be managed by the new group leaders from July 2021.

Similarly, the number of Twitter followers increased from **402** in June 2019 to **505** in June 2020 and further to **614** in June 2021. The total number of tweets as at June 2020 was **618** with **86** likes which increased to **673** tweets and **531** likes in June 2021. There has been a continued focus on Twitter and LinkedIn in 2020-2021, compared with 2019. The growth of LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter reflects, especially reflects the potential to get more promotional value when pursuing this more actively. We could do better with Twitter, however, if members (especially board members) could demonstrate more support by 'liking' and retweeting messages, and targeting tweets they send @ISDR\_society. This has improved significantly in the last 12 months. The board assistant would retweet these messages so that our Twitter followers will see them, and ideally retweet to their own followers. It is possible to have more than one account (e.g., personal and project). Comments can be added or original Tweets composed if desired, but simply liking and retweeting takes only seconds by clicking on the buttons.

## Topic groups

ISDRS has Topic Groups, which are clustered in 10 Themes closely related to the UN-SDG's. In total we have about 30 Topic Groups. Scholars in these Topic Groups collaborate in exchanging experiences, identifying new developments and facilitating discourse at the conferences, including writing of Calls for Papers. Most groups are represented by tracks at the Conference; some others (such as some tracks within theme 7) are still not attracting sufficient contributions to run a conference session. It is difficult to assess the activity of these groups outside of the conference. Thanks to the efforts of new board members, and other active ISDRS members, there are now only a handful topic group webpages with little or no content. Several others have limited or out of date content, but that is less conspicuous to the casual viewer. Overall there is always more to do but a vastly improved situation and we are very grateful for all contributions received.

## Conferences

### ISDRS 2020 online, Budapest

Owing to the disruption associated with Covid-19, the 2020 year's conference was entirely online. This was the first time we have had more than a very token online presence (a small number of keynote or delegates have presented online in the past; keynote presentations have also been streamed online). This has been an instructive experience and should be maintained, albeit ideally alongside a face to face conference. We are highly grateful to Gyula Zilahy and his team for his work on the conference under the most challenging circumstances.

### ISDRS 2021 online, Mid Sweden University

The ISDRS conference was 12<sup>th</sup> till 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 organized for the 27<sup>th</sup> time and gathered researchers from around the world within the field of sustainability. The theme for the 2021 conference was “Accelerating the progress towards the 2030 SDGs in times of crisis?”, taken over by the originally planned organizer from California. Mid Sweden University took over date and theme as host when the intended organizer in Los Angeles withdrew due to the difficulties arranging a large digital event during the pandemic. The registered researchers represented 47 countries from almost every continent. Researchers from low-income countries could participate at a reduced cost. A detailed conference website has been created (<https://2021.isdrsconferences.org/>). Furthermore, this interactive online program has been the first time created by means of Oxford Abstracts (accessible for registered participant via the above-mentioned link).

By end of 11<sup>th</sup> July the conference has 463 registrations, 337 participants had already paid, 86 are invoiced and 40 registrations are in progress. The day before the actual conference, workshop for all kinds of early career researcher (“PhD workshop”) takes place. Out of 117 original expressions of interest, 60 PhD students have been admitted and finally 49 will present in and are being supervised by professors and senior researchers. This is a largest number of students since ISDRS started with such workshops during the Conference in Hull.

ISDRS2021 covered ten different themes with 32 different tracks. 400 research articles will be accepted for oral or poster presentation. There were a total of 47 sessions arranged using Zoom. In addition, 12 keynote speakers and plenary speakers participated in the joint program sessions. The twelve guest speakers came from Asia, Europe, North- and South America as well as Africa. These keynote and plenary speakers were in alphabetical order:

- Ranjula Bali Swain, Professor of Economics, Södertörn University,
- Hans Brunynckx, Executive Director, European Environmental Agency – EEA
- Joji Carino, Ibaloi-Igorot from the Cordillera, Philippines. Senior Policy Advisor of Forest Peoples Programme
- Professor Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger, Leverhulme Trust Visiting Professor, University of Cambridge
- Mark Elder, Director of Research and Publications at the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) in Japan.
- Jane Kabubo-Mariara, Professor at the University of Nairobi, Executive Director of the Partnership for Economic Policy.
- Elizabeth M. Mrema, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity – CBD.

- Hien Ngo, Biodiversity and pollination expert at the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, FAO/United Nations
- Åsa Persson, Research Director and Deputy Director at the Stockholm Environment Institute.
- Marcos Regis da Silva, Executive Director Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research
- Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, USA.
- Professor Richard Welford is Senior Advisor to the ELEVATE group of companies, a global sustainability consultancy based on Hong Kong and Chairman of CSR Asia

The conference was between the 13–15 of July broadcasted from a studio at Campus Östersund, Mid Sweden University. All researchers participated online and present their lectures digitally. During the conference,

- the ISDRS board meetings and the membership meeting is held in two parts respectively in order to allow participation in different time zones.
- A ISDRS mentorship program mingle event was also held. This activity and the above-mentioned PhD-Workshop were developed in close collaboration with the ISDRS New Professional Group

With the help of a sponsor, the Organizing Committee was able to support the free participation of 9 persons from low income economies (8 tickets for all three days, 1 ticket for one day).

#### ISDRS 2022, Stockholm

Preparations continue for the planned conference in Sweden co-hosted by a consortium of six universities led by Peter Dobers. Their hope is it to offer a face-to-face conference with a parallel online presence of some tracks and events.

#### ISDSR 2023

The board has decided to follow up the interest of a previous bidder to the 2021 conference and nurture the relationship with the potential conference chair and their home university.

## Best Paper Award 2020

This year's Best Paper Award committee was once again led by Marlen Arnold with the assistance of Charlotte Mummery. The committee continued with the new procedure from the 2019 Best Paper award so that only 4 papers were shortlisted, to increase the likelihood of voters having read all papers before making their decision. Given the distribution of votes (a very clear winner and the next papers close with each other) we are awarding first place and joint runner up (to be announced during the conference). Non-board members on the committee were Joachim H. Spangenberg, Walter Vermeulen, Ayla Esen and Marcia Vaclavik. We are grateful to all the committee for their work.



## Partnerships including with publishers and publications

### Partner Organisations

Secretary: Olawale Olayide

ISDRS newest partner organisation is the League of Professional Women (LPW), Ukraine. The LPW was established 1997 for the common goal of expanding the social and economic opportunities of women in Ukraine. The mission is promote active role of women in the economic and society's life of Ukraine, through learning and professional development; advocacy and networking; informational and cultural support (<http://www.lpw.org.ua>).

ISDRS existing partner organisations are: World Sustainability Forum (WSF), Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI), UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), International University Network on Cultural and Biological Diversity (IUNCBD), World Student Community for Sustainable Development (WSCSD), and Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI).

There are ongoing discussions with potential partners and other third-party organisations. For more information on how to be a partner organisation, please contact the Secretary via [secretary@isdrs.org](mailto:secretary@isdrs.org).

### Routledge ISDRS Book Series on Sustainable Development Research

The first and the second book have been published in our sustainable development research series:

1. Keitsch and Vermeulen (Eds) (2020): *Transdisciplinarity for sustainability: aligning diverse practices*

2. Mauerhofer (Ed.) (2021): *The Role of Law in governing Sustainability*

Two more books are in progress:

3. Skjerven and Fordham (Eds.) (Forthcoming): *Gendered Sustainability by Design: Social Innovation for Resilience*
4. Khalid and Maidin (Eds.) (Forthcoming): *Good Governance and the Sustainable Development Goals in Southeast Asia*

We should also this year be receiving £1,000 from Routledge.

### **Wiley**

Two Wiley journals have been closely linked to the ISDRS community since the founder of both these journals and the conference is Richard Welford. While a formal partnership between ISDRS on the one hand and Wiley / ERP Environment on the other hand has been dropped after negotiations for a new contract stranded, ISDRS scholars are encouraged to promote special issues at the Wiley journals.

### **MDPI**

We have been approached by two journals last year (Sustainability, Land), had some discussions, in part related to the WSF event, as well as email contact with MDPI in this regard. By years end of 2021, it is expected that the Board has made up its mind.

### **Featured Journals**

Other journals have approached us as well. This may lead to some advantageous connections, although a significant amount of time is involved in discussion. Our current strategy is to feature a smaller number of journals as “Featured Journals” that ISDRS features in its community.

## **Networking activity**

Secretary: Olawale Olayide

Geneva World Sustainability Forum September 2020: The President, Secretary, Communications Officer and three of our other board members ((Roberta Salomone, Eduardo Wills Herrera and Marc Wolfram) proposed two tracks for this conference, with which we signed a collaborative agreement. The conference has been postponed to 2021, with an online conference this year have a vastly reduced scope. The reduced scope effectively precluded our participation in the online event. The timing and accessibility/affordability of next year’s event remains to be seen.

Images Africa seminar series on Covid-19 impacts on sustainability – organised by Olawale Olayide (ISDRS Communications Officer) as part of his role at the University of Ibadan. The President and Past President of ISDRS participated in the first of these seminars on the 27 May which address Covid-19 and the circular economy.

This event replaced a face-to-face conference on the Circular Economy which had been planned for May, which the past president had planned to attend (primarily as a result of research connections, but this would also have been fortuitous for ISDRS).

EU Association in New York is now a partner of the ISDRS. They put us in touch with the organisers of an event to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN (comprising a representative of the UN and NYU, which is the organiser). Unfortunately, the event was postponed before the nature of contribution was confirmed; no date has been fixed (involving ISDRS at any rate).

#### *Other networking*

There are various ongoing communications with journals, potential partner organisations (in some cases led by other board members).

## **Role of the assistant**

ISDRS Assistant: Charlotte Mummery

In 2020 the Assistant's role has expanded from 1.5 (in 2019) to 2 days per week. Charlotte's time in 2020 was divided as in Table 8. Responsibilities in 2020 have included more support for the conference organising committee, this will be reflected more in the time of the assistant in 2021.

*Table 8: The proportion of the Assistant's time spent on her various duties (2020)*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time (%)</b>
Other, including assistance with conference ISDRS2020	19
Website	18
Bookkeeping	13
Newsletter	13
Awards	13
Email admin	7
Board meetings	6
Institutions and partners	6
Meeting with president	2
Social media	2
Member mailings	1

The duties listed are all vital activities in our given style of operation; ideally there would be more updates for the website/social media posts. The only way to maintain operations more



economically would be for exec members to take on more of the responsibility for day to day activities. We have tried to do this on a small scale this year 2021, for example with the chair of the Best Paper Award Committee taking on some of the communications. The newsletter in 2020 was edited by Olawale Olayide and Marlen Arnold. Charlotte circulates announcements, receives and compiles contributions as well as finalising and circulating the newsletter. There is also work on the website and social media. Much of the day to day financial transactions, are done by the assistant. The accounting duties are more onerous and complex than in the past. We have a lot more transactions now in 2021, receiving the conference payments.

## **Sustainability of ISDRS**

Whilst our activities are flourishing, membership levels are precarious. Our partnership-building activities have not so far generated additional members/conference delegates albeit the number of institutional memberships is growing. Thus, we are very happy to see our executive board strengthened by the new role of Director of Memberships, having Shainesh G as the first to fill this role.

We need to continue to work hard at promoting the annual conference, which is both our most conspicuous activity and can be an excellent source of revenue. We also need to continue to refine the membership systems to enhance/protect income and to enhance our communications with members to enhance our retention rate. However, we cannot avoid looking closely at expenditure. Our largest expense has been the Ex Ordo (online conference management system) and the assistant. While we are heavily reliant at the assistant, we have for ISRDS 2021 moved away from the costly Ex Ordo conference management system to the more affordable Oxford Abstracts version, reducing that cost by more than 75%. After the conference, we will see what still needs to be improved in their system, and if it is possible to keep improvements and developments that the conference team for ISDRS 2021 has developed, for future conferences.