UNESCO Regional Consultations on Open Access
In cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO and the Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO

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Final Report

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Welcome

- Jānis Kārkliņš, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information of UNESCO welcomed participants. He explained that the goal of the consultation was to exchange information on Open Access and revise UNESCO’s Open Access strategy. The meeting was intended to identify how UNESCO can assist national
organizations in implementing Open Access. He thanked the co-organizers of the meeting for the support.

- Verena Metze-Mangold, Vice President of the German Commission for UNESCO, also welcomed participants to Berlin and thanked them for their willingness to contribute to the consultation, to develop partnerships on Open Access and further shape UNESCO’s Open Access portfolio. She underlined that UNESCO is dedicated to assist in building knowledge societies by fostering universal access to information and knowledge through ICTs. Open Access should be at the heart of the overall effort by the organization to strengthen and spread the use of ICTs in education, science, culture for sustainable development. She explained how open access in Germany is slowly becoming a reality. She ended by thanking UNESCO and the Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO for the fruitful partnership.

- Vincent Wintermans, Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO, underlined that UNESCO has adopted an ambitious Open Access strategy which shall be under scrutiny throughout the meeting. He explained that in his view UNESCO’s added values were global outreach, easy access to governments, a human rights based mandate, and the power of its logo. Against this background he encouraged participants to develop recommendations on how to further implement the UNESCO OA strategy in the coming years. He thanked UNESCO and the German Commission for UNESCO for the good partnership.

Session 1: Open Access at UNESCO – Goals and Activities

- Jānis Kārkliņš explained that UNESCO works for Open Access on the basis of universal principles. He underlined that profound changes in how information flows were taking place, breaking down distances worldwide and enabling the sharing knowledge in an unprecedented way. UNESCO promotes Knowledge Societies with its four pillars of access to information and knowledge, the protection of cultural diversity, education for all and freedom of expression. The organization was the first one to engage with the open movement and has for example coined the term Open Educational Resources. It also deals with issues of digital heritage preservation within its Memory of the World Programme which are of relevance to Open Access. Kārkliņš reminded participants that in 2009 UNESCO started mapping Open Access initiatives worldwide within the framework of the Global Open Access portal (GOAP). Two years later the UNESCO General Conference approved UNESCO’s strategy for promotion of Open Access to scientific information and research. The organization published policy guidelines on open access and since 2013 is an Open Access organization itself. He underlined that UNESCO’s role is that of facilitator, and as a communication platform inter alia to establish partnerships.

- Bhanu Neupane continued by explaining that Open Access can be an enabler of development and that the Rio+20 meeting, the report of the High Level Panel on the post 2015 agenda and the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review releasing the Global Innovation Index have shown this. He informed participants that OA activities of UNESCO have been divided into the following three core areas: Provision of upstream policy advice and building partnerships; Strengthening capacities to adopt Open Access; Serve as a clearing-house and informing the global OA debate. He
explained which activities the Secretariat has been able to implement in these areas so far.

- In the following discussion Kārkliņš underlined that the interest of many states for Open Access needs to be raised and that this could be done with economic arguments. Norber Lossau emphasized that many academics look at research councils when dealing with Open Access and that there was a need for UNESCO to relate to these and identify interfaces with their work.

Session 2: Human Rights Based Approach to Open Access

- Yvonne Donders, Chair of International Human Rights and Cultural Diversity at the University of Amsterdam explained that although included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, Article 27) and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, Article 15(1)) the human right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications hardly received any attention. She underlined that so far, the drafting of science policies, including Open Access policies, is hardly ever guided by a human rights framework which, however, could be a useful. Such a human rights approach would not only concern rights or claims, but it would imply some important basic principles to be respected, giving Open Access a normative dimension, which could increase its sustainability. Within the UN system, a human rights based approach has been promoted for a number of years. UNESCO and other Specialized Agencies and Programmes are a suitable platform to promote a human rights approach to Open Access. Elements of the right to enjoy the benefits of science, such as access without discrimination, as well as responsibilities of states and non-state actors, may feed and strengthen the debate.

- During the following discussion it was underlined that the right to enjoy the benefits of science is also relevant to the WSIS process wherein a human rights approach must be made more explicit. It was further explained that the right to enjoy the benefits of science can at times interfere with the right to privacy, for example when considering open data. It was further noted that Copyright is also included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which might hence mean that mandatory Open Access mandates can be problematic.

Session 3: Open Access in Europe – Horizon 2020 and cooperation possibilities

- Jean-François Dechamp from the European Commission (EC) explained that from the perspective of the EC putting research results in the public sphere makes science better, helps innovation and strengthens the knowledge-based economy. That is why one of the European Commission’s key aims in developing the European Research Area is to optimize the circulation, access to and transfer of scientific knowledge. The European Commission is promoting open access in Europe (see the 2012 Recommendation to Member States, then their statement in 2013), including for the results of its own research funding, as Open Access will be the default setting for Horizon 2020, the EU’s new research and innovation programme. He informed participants that national points of reference for Open Access have been identified in the ministries of Member States. He further explained the funding conditions of
Horizon 2020 and underlined that an open data pilot will be launched shortly. The EC inter alia cooperates with the G8 Science Ministers, UNESCO, the Global Research Council and contributes to the Berlin Conferences. Challenges in Dechamp’s view are to develop new business models for publishing activities, alternative metrics, open data, text and data mining and copyright issues.

- In the following discussion Dechamp explained that also EC-co-funded projects must be published under Open Access. He informed participants that it was difficult to control if funding obligations are implemented but the OpenAire Portal contributes to the endeavor in some ways.

Session 4: Open Access – Trends and Emerging Challenges

- Professor Renn from the Max Planck Society provided an overview of the Open Access Movement by explaining the motivation for Open Access and the chronology of the movement and went on to explain activities of the Max Planck Society. Renn underlined challenges and trends such as Open Access to publications and sources, bridging the Digital Divide, and creating Knowledge Networks. He explained that in light of the rapid ICT development new publication systems are needed but that currently there is still a tendency to map the old publication cycle into the new ICT world. He said that new ideas for a multi-stage open peer review are required. In his view UNESCO needs to contribute to Open Access implementation at a broad scale with a particular view to structuring the debate, setting standards, and providing tools for the transition to Open Access.
- In the following discussion Renn explained that a detailed monitoring of the Berlin Declaration implementation by individual signatories would be difficult but that the open access community is monitoring very closely how signatories are acting in regard to open access. In the future, the Max Planck Society might initiate that signatories install monitoring committees themselves.

Session 5: Open Access and the Publishing Industry

- Michael Mabe explained that the responsibility of publishers was to manage peer-review processes, develop brands, produce articles, host and distribute content, archive and preserve publications, discover the undiscovered, invest in authors, and support publishing in developing countries. He indicates that in regard to the global article authorship China was rising and Europe declining. Mabe explained that there are different estimates in regard to Open Access implementation. In any case, implementation degrees vary largely by the thematic areas of publications. He emphasized that it was difficult to find an agreement in regard to Open Access among publishers. Mabe said that effective green Open Access needed the publishers support. In the future STM will seek to support the development of self-supporting Open Access business models, the resolution of gold infrastructure issues and further develop TDM standards. Also Open Access in regard to research data will be on the agenda.
- In the following discussion it was underlined that transparency was needed in regard to who pays for what in the publishing process.

Session 6: Open Access at National Level
During session 6 participants presented the level of Open Access implementation in their individual countries (see attached overviews). In addition Niels Stern from the Nordic Council of Ministers explained that the Council has achieved a closer cooperation on Open Access among Nordic countries for a few years now. The Council is not focusing on new policies for individual countries but focusing on connecting ongoing activities and initiatives to each other. It has its own Open Access policy. Stern underlined that a monitoring system was needed in regard to Open Access implementation. He informed participants about an interview by the Secretary General of the Nordic Council of Ministers [http://issuu.com/07interaktiv/docs/nfm_en/60](http://issuu.com/07interaktiv/docs/nfm_en/60).

**Session 7: Group work at Stakeholders level and on Regional Situation of Open Access**

During session 7 participants worked in three working groups and developed recommendations for the final consultation recommendations. The working groups were structured as follows:

a) Guidelines for governments and funders/ key issues for policy development, Green and/or Gold Road ((Alma Swan (Key Perspectives Ltd), Lars Bjornshauge (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition), Jean Claude Guédon (University of Montreal))

b) Licensing and Copyright (Izaskun Lacunza (LIBER))

c) Regional Network in Europe and North-South Cooperation (Leslie Chan (University of Toronto Scarborough), Jean-François Dechamp (European Commission), Melissa Hagemann (Open Society Foundation))

**Session 8: Report on workshop outcomes and joint way forward**

During the final session workshop leaders reported on outcomes to the plenary. Bhanu Neupane asked for specific suggestions to UNESCO in regard to Open Access implementation. It was underlined that UNESCO should put focus on South-South cooperation and within this framework involve its Regional Offices for work on the ground. It was furthermore underlined that continuity in regard to Open Access needs to be ensured within UNESCO. Lastly, it was suggested that UNESCO should act as a convening platform for potential partners willing to sustain Open Access initiatives that are until now only financed with project funds.

Katja Römer and Vincent Wintermans presented the draft recommendations to participants and explained that they will be circulated for comments after the meeting. Bhanu Neupane explained the Open Access workplan until 2017 and expressed the hope to cooperate with many of the present in the near future.

The organizers thanked all participants for their excellent contributions and emphasised that they look forward to further cooperation.