

15 May, 2009

The IEEE Committee on Earth Observation Standards Working Group (ISWG) Quarterly Report

Introduction

The IEEE Committee on Earth Observation Standards Working Group (ISWG) is an assembly of international volunteers that share the desire to help the development and support efforts of GEOSS (Global Earth Observing System of Systems). This particular group focuses on the standards used to facilitate interoperability between the various GEOSS components and services.

Current Tasks

The current tasks that the ISWG are engaged in include:

SDO (Standards Development Organization) Maintenance: This task centers around maintaining correct information for the organizations that create, publish, and maintain the standards that GEOSS interoperability is based on. From the point of view of the Standards Registry, the names of these organizations are used in the entry of standards. The details for each SDO are maintained in the database and need to be current with respect to contact information, domain and scope of coverage, and other information.

Standards Taxonomy Development: This task deals with the development and maintenance of a taxonomy for standards which defines the categories that the standards fall into. This is developed and maintained to support, in general, an overall view and organization of the standards that GEOSS can utilize and make known to GEOSS contributors. In particular, this taxonomy is used to support well-defined entry of standards into the database, as well as supporting search and discovery of standards already in the database.

Earth Observation Portal Study: This task is responsible for generating a report on the study of Earth Observation portals. The purpose of the report is to study and objectively conclude, based upon supporting standards, what characteristics should be included or avoided in order to have an "acceptable" portal. These characteristics include usability features, technical features, and functional features. Since aspects of this can change over time, this report will be updated as necessary.

Standards Registry Site Maintenance: This task centers on the content management of this site. Menu maintenance, content modifications, HELP document maintenance, site testing, etc. are all performed by the volunteers of the ISWG. This is an ongoing task.

Accomplishments

To this end, the list of accomplishments and activities up to the first quarter of 2009 include:

- The ISWG is converging on new and broader standards taxonomy for the GEOSS Standards and Interoperability Registry. The ISWG has also worked on generating a controlled vocabulary for the Earth Observation Standards Taxonomy.
- A new version of the GEOSS Standards and Interoperability Registry is being tested for interoperability with the GEOSS Components and Services Registry.
- The ISWG published an Earth Observation Portal Report last year, and is working on a new version. The purpose of this report is to identify, using standards and best practices, the key characteristics that either provide for, or take away from, an "acceptable" portal. The new version of this report is attempting to develop an objective, quantitative metric for determining acceptable portals.
- Conducted Standards and Interoperability Forum (SIF) Workflow Training Sessions.
- The ISWG is about to publish a Call for Participation for the purpose of putting together a team of experts to develop a standard, guideline, or best practice for the creation of Earth Observation taxonomies and ontologies.

Call for Volunteers

If you desire to participate in the workings of this group, please go online at: <https://www.ieeecommunities.org/iswg>. You can then register for an IEEE web account to gain access to the ISWG site. The mission of this community is to support, through collaboration, the use of standards and special interoperability arrangements for GEOSS. This is accomplished through assisting other GEOSS groups, publication of articles and reports, and presentations given at scientific meetings. This mission is realized by choosing tasks that further the understanding and usability of standards and interoperability.

The ISWG has biweekly conference calls that last about an hour. The volunteers take on tasks as their schedules allow. If you wish to participate in the ISWG's support of GEOSS, please send an email to iceovolunteers@ieee.org. If you wish to look at the volunteer opportunities available with other ICEO groups, you can go to http://spreadsheets.google.com/pub?key=pGX1aV73g-bINoHP3N__qew .