

# 1 International Surface Temperature Initiative (ISTI)

## 3 Steering Committee Terms of Reference

5 Version 2. 1/8/14

### 7 *1. Initiative background*

9 The International Surface Temperature Initiative, endorsed by the WMO  
10 Commission for Climatology at its 15<sup>th</sup> session, was launched at a meeting at the UK  
11 Met Office, Exeter, in September 2010. To meet the requirements placed on climate  
12 science in the 21st Century, it is necessary to create a suite of high quality and high  
13 resolution data-products, with openness, transparency, verification, and user tools.  
14 Such a range of estimates, and common framework, would aid decision-making at  
15 national and international scales and inform adaptation strategies. Crucially, this  
16 Initiative is envisaged to be international and interdisciplinary - involving climate  
17 scientists, statisticians, metrologists and software engineers from around the world.  
18 The Initiative should encompass: data rescue and digitisation; an open, transparent  
19 and comprehensive databank with versioning and provenance tracking; a data-  
20 portal for multiple products estimating local, regional and global scale changes; a  
21 common benchmarking and assessment exercise; and platforms for data download,  
22 intercomparison and visualization.

### 24 *2. Steering Committee purpose*

26 2.1 The Steering Committee exists to promote the International Surface  
27 Temperature Initiative and to provide scientific oversight and technical input to  
28 the working groups under its oversight.

30 2.2 The Steering Committee is responsible, along with the working groups, for  
31 drafting an Implementation Plan for the Initiative; for assessing progress against  
32 this Implementation Plan; and for updating the Implementation Plan as required.

34 2.3 The Steering Committee has ultimate responsibility for the Initiative website  
35 (<http://www.surface temperatures.org/>) and other communications undertaken  
36 under the auspices of the Initiative.

38 2.4 The Steering Committee acts as the point of contact to the Initiative sponsors.  
39 Initiative sponsorship does not imply financial support. Sponsors are rather  
40 responsible for providing expert guidance and support from their relevant field  
41 of expertise. Current sponsors are:

- 42 ○ The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) through its
- 43 Commission for Climatology (CCI),
- 44 ○ International Statistical Institute (ISI) through its environment
- 45 section, The International Environmetric Society (TIES).

- International Office of Weights and measures (BIPM) through its Consultative Committee on Thermometry (CCT)

### 3. Reporting

3.1 The Steering Committee shall report to sponsors through an annual report prepared by January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. This report shall:

- Highlight progress in the prior year
- Provide a detailed plan for the coming year and indicative plans thereafter
- Highlight substantive issues where sponsor input is required

3.2 The report should be as short as possible whilst being comprehensible to a lay audience and highlighting all salient issues.

- The report will be *published without restriction on the web* at time of submission to sponsors and moderated public comments solicited through a blog or similar forum.

3.3 If requested every reasonable effort shall be made to report in person to the sponsors at their meetings.

- Any member of the Steering Committee is allowed to represent the Committee as a whole at such meetings to reduce costs, travel, and overheads.
- Remote reporting by the chair through e.g Webex or Skype shall be considered adequate in lieu of in person attendance by a Committee member.

3.4 The Committee will be expected to respond in a timely manner to additional reasonable reporting requests from sponsors raised on an ad hoc basis.

3.5 The Committee will also make all reasonable efforts to report to other interested parties and stakeholders outside the principal sponsors if requested to do so as time and resources permit.

3.6 Defined outputs from the Implementation Plan will be reported to sponsors and posted on the web upon completion.

### 4. Oversight of coordinated Initiative activities

4.1 The Steering Committee shall instigate as required and provide oversight to working groups under its purview. At the present time these consist of:

- Databank working group
- Benchmarking and assessment working group

4.2 The chair of the Steering Committee will have ex-officio membership on these groups. Chairs of these groups will be members of the Steering Committee.

1  
2 4.3 The Steering Committee will consider verbal or written reports from working  
3 group chairs at each meeting.

4  
5 4.4 Working group chairs will produce reports annually by December 1<sup>st</sup> for  
6 consideration and incorporation into the main overarching report to sponsors.

7  
8 4.5 These reports will be published on the web in a timely manner.

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11 *5. Mode of operation*

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13 5.1 The Steering Committee will communicate primarily through regular  
14 teleconferences occurring at least on a quarterly basis or as deemed necessary  
15 by committee members.

- 16 ○ Approved minutes from these calls will be posted as soon as possible  
17 thereafter and at a minimum within four weeks through  
18 [www.surfacetemperatures.org](http://www.surfacetemperatures.org) or another web based portal without  
19 restriction.
- 20 ○ Bi-annually these calls will be open to working group members and  
21 other active ISTI participants to partake in. Such calls will discuss  
22 more strategic matters.

23  
24 5.2 Where a quoracy (one third) of Steering Committee members are in attendance  
25 at a scientific meeting a side-meeting may be deemed to be in lieu of a  
26 teleconference of the committee as a whole.

- 27 ○ Regardless, side meetings are encouraged and a brief summary from  
28 any such meeting should be reported to the Committee as a whole at  
29 its next meeting.

30  
31 5.3 If deemed necessary by a simple majority vote, funding will be sought for a  
32 dedicated meeting of the Committee.

33  
34 5.4 An email list exists to facilitate discussion and will be maintained by the chair.

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37 *6. Membership*

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39 6.1 Membership will consist of at a minimum ten individuals at any time with  
40 representation from:

- 41 ○ at least four countries in at least three WMO regions (effectively  
42 continents)
- 43 ○ the climate science, statistical and metrological communities.

44  
45 6.2 Chairs of groups that answer to the Steering Committee will be members.

46

1 6.3 Additional members are considered at the discretion of the Committee or under  
2 the advisement of Initiative sponsors.

3  
4 6.4 One senior representative from each Initiative sponsor is welcome to sit on the  
5 Committee and encouraged to attend meetings on an ex-officio basis.

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7 6.5 Membership will be reconsidered on a bi-annual basis or at the request of  
8 individual Committee members or the Initiative sponsors.

9  
10 6.6 Individual members may request to resign from the committee by writing to the  
11 chair. They are encouraged to suggest suitable replacements who may be able to  
12 fulfill the role that they took.

13  
14 6.7 To ensure meaningful collaboration with initiatives and projects with similar  
15 aims members from these activities are encouraged to serve as affiliate  
16 members. Affiliate members should abstain in the unlikely event of a vote being  
17 held but otherwise carry the same rights as ordinary members.

18  
19 6.8 Members (regardless of their role) are expected to make all reasonable efforts to  
20 attend teleconferences and provide relevant input by email or other electronic  
21 means in advance in the event of non-attendance.

22  
23 6.9 The Committee is an entirely voluntary commitment so there are no explicit  
24 workload requirements, beyond reasonable expectations of discharging the  
25 activities detailed in these terms of reference or efforts volunteered and minuted  
26 in agreed meeting notes.

27  
28 6.10 Current membership is detailed in Annex A.

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30 *7. Terms of reference revision*

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32 7.1 Terms of reference and membership will be revised no later than three years  
33 from the version date of this document.

- 34 ○ Revision can be requested by a 1/3 vote of Committee members or by  
35 any single Initiative sponsor.

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1 **Annex A**

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3 **Membership (current 12/09/13)**

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5 **Full**

6 Peter Thorne (NERSC, Norway, Chair)

7 Jay Lawrimore (NOAA NCDC, USA, Chair Databank working group)

8 Kate Willett (Met Office Hadley Centre, UK, Chair Benchmarking and Assessment working  
9 group)

10 Peter Stott (Met Office Hadley Centre, UK)

11 Xiaolan Wang (Environment Canada)

12 Matilde Rusticucci (Buenos Aires University, Argentina)

13 Blair Trewin (Bureau of Meteorology, Australia)

14 Akiyo Yatagai (RISH (Research Institute for Sustainable Humanosphere), Kyoto University,  
15 Japan)

16 Richard Chandler (Department of Statistics, University College London, UK)

17 Rob Allan (Met Office Hadley Centre, UK, International [ACRE](#) Project Manager)

18 Jayashree Revadekar (Center for Climate Change Research, Indian Institute of Tropical  
19 Meteorology, India)

20 Michael de Podesta (National Physical Laboratory, UK)

21 Antonio Possolo (National Institute of Standards & Technology, USA)

22 Gregory Strouse (National Institute of Standards & Technology, USA)

23 Albert Mhanda (ACMAD, Niger)

24

25 **Affiliate**

26 Chris Merchant (University of Edinburgh, Lead, Research Network in Surface Temperature)

27 Andrea Merlone (L'Istituto Nazionale di Ricerca Metrologica, Italy, Lead, [Meteomet](#))

28

29 **Ex-officio**

30 Thomas Peterson (NOAA NCDC, USA, President WMO Commission for Climatology)

31 Marian Scott (University of Glasgow, Board Member of The International Environmetrics  
32 Society)

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