A internet data portal for the World Data Center System

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The World Data Center (WDC) system was created to archive and distribute data from many scientific disciplines, especially those monitoring changes in the geosphere and biosphere. Its holdings include a wide range of solar, geophysical, environmental, and human dimensions data, covering timescales ranging from seconds to millennia.

The implementation of a internet portal allowing for retrieving data from at least part of the WDCs was identified as a feasible goal during the last WDC general meeting in Bremen. The first step will concentrate on metadata catalogues.

We introduce the first WDC data portal prototype which is online at http://world-data-centers.org, providing access to metadata as well as data of several WDCs contributing to the pilot. Their catalogues are harvested from the portal side and indexed by the Open Source metadata portal software package panFMP (http://www.panfmp.org.)

Metadata are supplied by the data providers (the WDCs) as catalogues through a metadata service based on standard protocols as Open Geospatial Consortium catalogue service (OGC-CSW) or the Open Archives Initiatives Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH - http://www.openarchives.org/). All portal components are Open Source and ready to use. They allow text and map based retrievals and displays of metadata. Metadata results can be visualized through an Internet Mapping Service. Usable content standards are ISO19115, DIF, FGDC, or any compliant metadata profile with a corresponding XML schema.

Candidates who wish to participate in the initial setup of the portal framework need to implement current standards in the field of Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDI) and can

generally use the resulting interoperability to network also with other communities and portals, e.g. the planned Ocean Data Portal (IODE), IPY DIS, or the Global Change Master Directory (GCMD). A major goal will also be to integrate the WDC Network into the GEOSS framework.