

IAOS Presidential Address by Shigeru Kawasaki

Hong Kong World Statistics Congress
August 27, 2013



My fellow IAOS members,

I am honored to serve the IAOS as its President for the next two years. Although challenging, I will pursue the objectives of the IAOS with passion and commitment, knowing that much will be possible with cooperation and support from all of you.

1. Appreciation to outgoing president

First of all, I want to thank Stephen Penneck for his enormous contributions to the IAOS during his term as President. Under his outstanding leadership, the IAOS has moved forward on several fronts, as he reported earlier in this meeting. I also want to thank the rest of the outgoing Executive Committee for their exceptional contributions. Please join me in applauding their considerable achievements. Thank you!

Now it is my turn to work with the members of the incoming Executive Committee, following the excellent example set by Steve, who developed a team that worked closely together. I also want to take this op-

portunity to ask for the cooperation and support of all IAOS members.

Let me quickly introduce myself, before turning to the work plan that I would like us to carry out in the next two years.

2. Introducing myself – Encountering the IAOS through the ISI

My first participation in an ISI Conference dates back to 1985, when the 45th ISI Session was held in Amsterdam. Then in 1987, when the 46th ISI Session was held in Tokyo, I served on the Local Organizing Committee, just as now I helped with a satellite conference in Macau before the Hong Kong World Statistics Congress.

Although I was not much involved with IAOS governance when it was established in 1985, I had many occasions to work with statisticians from around the globe at various meetings sponsored by the ISI, the IAOS and the UN.

Through such experiences, I came to understand the importance of international exchange among official statisticians for advancing official statistics in individual countries, as well as for sharing professional developments that could be applied worldwide. I also recognized that I personally gained a great deal from these activities.

At the same time, I realized that IAOS activities, such as holding international conferences and publishing journals, were made possible by the enormous efforts and contributions of some highly dedicated people, especially the Presidents, Executive Committee members and participants in specialized committees.

So, when I was nominated as President-Elect two years ago, I wanted to help repay those dedicated people for the many rewarding experiences I gained from the IAOS by continuing their tradition of service, even

though my contributions may not be as large as those of some of my predecessors.

I will be very happy if the younger official statisticians of today benefit from IAOS' activities, just as I did over the past quarter century.

3. Work plan for 2013–2015

Now, let me brief you about my initial thoughts on the 2013–2015 Work Plan, which may be modified slightly based on discussions with the Executive Committee and others.

I have drawn heavily on the work program developed by my immediate predecessor, because the 2011–2013 targets remain appropriate, with some updating in content and emphasis to accommodate the current environment.

The four main target areas remain:

- (1) delivering successful conferences and workshops
- (2) developing and supporting the membership
- (3) delivering successful publications and communications
- (4) improving our effectiveness

Today, I can touch only on some highlights of the Work Plan. Further details will be posted on the IAOS website later in the year.

(1) *Delivering successful conferences and workshops*

We envision three conferences at this stage:
IAOS 2014 Conference in Da Nang, Vietnam

It will be described as part of another agenda item later in this meeting.

2015 Rio WSC – Contributions to the Scientific Program

The IAOS will propose and organize about 10 Invited Papers. We would appreciate your input on possible topics and authors.

IAOS 2016 Conference

We will begin the planning process now, under the leadership of the President-elect.

(2) *Developing and supporting the membership*

Two main activities fall under this target.

Young statisticians prize

This program is designed to encourage younger statisticians to pursue careers in official statistics.

Membership campaign

To expand our professional networks and to make the organizational basis of the IAOS more solid, we plan to continue our efforts to attract both individual and institutional members.

(3) *Delivering successful publications and communications*

Publishing the Statistical Journal of the IAOS is our main activity under the third target.

I am happy that Fritz Scheuren became the Editor-in-Chief in April 2013. Under his editorship, two issues have already been published, both rich in content, and we expect two more to be released this year. Please help us encourage more IAOS members to submit quality papers for consideration to be published in the Journal.

Because the current publishing contract with IOS Press will expire in July 2015, our second activity is to consider the publishing arrangements for 2015 onward. For this purpose, we are setting up a new Publishing Committee, which will report to the Executive Committee.

(4) *Improving our effectiveness*

It is important for the IAOS to have as broad professional networks as possible. For this purpose, I want to continue and strengthen efforts to have stronger relationships with other associations and academic societies, such as IASE, IASS and possibly several more.

4. Emphasis in the Work Plan for 2013–2015

In the new term, I want to place special emphasis on three points:

(1) *Encouraging more active engagement from all the regions*

We plan a strong focus on increasing membership from the countries and regions having fewer members, such as in Africa and Latin America. Active engagement of new members will bring a fresh breeze into the IAOS, and contribute to strengthening our global network.

(2) Strengthening relationships with other associations and academic societies

The perception of the IAOS is not always what the IAOS strives to be – an association *for official statistics*, not one *of official statisticians*. Official statistics has broad range of stakeholders and we need to involve more of them – people who are not directly engaged working in official statistics. By taking into account the views of stakeholders such as users, data providers and educators, official statistics agencies can improve the quality and usefulness of their products and enhance their contributions to their societies.

The IASE/IAOS Joint Satellite Conference held in Macau last week is an example of such efforts – it was a collaboration between official statisticians and statistical educators. I hope to expand such collaborative opportunities with other ISI associations and academic societies.

(3) Improving communication among IAOS members through the web site

While efforts have been made to disseminate information about the IAOS, the current design of the IAOS website has many weaknesses and needs an overhaul.

I am not expert in this field, and some aspects of the technical environment may limit what can be accomplished. However, significant upgrades are necessary if

we are to share information with IAOS members more effectively and disseminate information about IAOS activities to a broad range of stakeholders.

5. Conclusion

Working as a member of the Executive Committee over the past two years, I was overwhelmed by the amount being done, especially by the President. I look forward to taking up the challenges of my new tasks.

The highly capable and enthusiastic members of the Executive Committee, who have committed to working together closely as a team, will enable the IAOS to build on the strong foundation left by the previous President and Executive Committee to advance its goals even further.

But active support and contributions from IAOS members will also play an essential role in making the IAOS better.

Please give us your support in any way you can, and I will do my best to communicate with you effectively and often.

Thank you!
Shigeru Kawasaki
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IAOS President (2013–2015)