

WInSAR Telecon – Jan 29, 2010

Attendance: Falk Amelung, Roland Burgmann, Yuri Fialko, Eric Fielding, David Schmidt, Shimon Wdowinski, Gerald Bawden, Matt Pritchard, Fran Boler

Minutes

Agenda: Acquisition of TerraSAR X, Cosmo-Skymed and RADARSAT-1,2 data for the Haiti earthquake area; UNAVCO Science meeting

Falk Amelung: Cosmo-Skymed data will be provided free through SuperSites (to large extent due to associate members of WInSAR, in particular R. Lanari)

Discussion of TerraSAR X data:

Shimon Wdowinski: contacted DLR, requested a collaboration with WInSAR (number of PIs of order 10-15 was mentioned in discussions with DLR) – this request was denied by DLR. Then proposed a project with Wdowinski as a PI, with a limited list of co-Is. DLR agreed.

Yuri Fialko: What's the DLR pricing formula for the TSX products, who will cover the costs, and can we ask DLR to make the co-I list open (so that any WInSAR member can join at a later time)?

Shimon Wdowinski: Price will be about 200 euros per scene, NSF will pay (through UNAVCO/WInSAR), co-I list needs to be limited and fixed, otherwise DLR will not agree to provide the data.

Yuri Fialko: this sets a bad precedent. How badly do we need TSX data and are they useful in the Haiti earthquake area?

Eric Fielding: TSX interferograms remain coherent between consequent acquisitions, at least now before the rain season started

Gerald Bawden: Use of pixel tracking will be important if there is another earthquake

Falk Amelung: Status of RADARSAT-2 data

Shimon Wdowinski: RADARSAT-2 data are commercially available for about \$3600/scene

Falk Amelung: Discuss whether the WInSAR EC should approve the purchase of TerraSAR X by Wdowinski as a PI as the "WInSAR data acquisition"

David Schmidt: There needs to be a mechanism to add more people

Gerald Bawden: Would be good to transfer individual PI's data sets to UNAVCO (difficult to maintain large data bases)

Yuri Fialko: WInSAR should not be purchasing or hosting data that cannot be accessed by all members of WInSAR

Fran Boler: WInSAR resources already stretched thin maintaining the existing archive; need more personnel time. Suggestion: a meeting for representatives of funding agencies and researchers, to discuss ways for funding WInSAR operations as well as WInSAR-related research.

Eric Fielding: Funding for the project needs to be indicated

(Yuri Fialko had to leave at 11 PST, David Schmidt volunteered to be a Secretary)

Results of a vote on WInSAR involvement in TerraSAR-X proposal for Haiti:

Yuri Fialko- No, unless data are available for the full membership

David Schmidt- No, unless we have a guarantee that co-PIs can be added in the future

Eric Fielding-Yes, in favor of routing funding and data through WInSAR

Roland Burgmann- No, unless we have a clear understanding of the data sharing policy with DLR and DLR is willing to work with WInSAR

Falk Amelung- Yes, to get our foot in the door at DLR

The consensus was split between getting TerraSAR-X data into the WInSAR archive in hopes of future changes to DLR's policy, versus ensuring that WInSAR funds are only spent on data made available to the broad membership.

The outcome of the discussion was that Shimon Wdowinski should move forward on his proposal and he is encouraged to include co-PIs who also have an interest in TerraSAR-X for Haiti. Falk Amelung will communicate with the funding agencies, and convey the EC's support of Shimon's proposal, but concerns of data access for the membership in light of DLR's data sharing policy. The EC's vote could change if more information is gathered from DLR on their willingness to add co-PIs.

Eric Fielding suggested that regardless of the outcome of the Shimon's proposal, WInSAR should host metadata about which members have DLR data so that the membership knows who to contact for collaboration or information.

Other topics.

Operational funding remains tight. Funding for tasking is unclear. A summit with the funding agencies is planned in the near future.

UNAVCO Science Workshop:

There will be a 90 minute topical session at the workshop. A variety of topics have already been suggested. We should encourage WInSAR membership to participate in the topical session.

An email sent by Falk Amelung to the EC following the telecon (requested to be added to the minutes):

Here are three afterthoughts after the telecon. I still have some hope that one of

the "no" voters (or those with reservations) changes their mind. I would say an e-mail to all of us would be enough.

(1) WinSAR started with 5-10 members focussing only on one area (southern California). If we had asked from the beginning that we want the data for 70 members and for the entire Western US we probably would still be buying ESA data from a commercial distributor.

(2) There will be pressure on DLR to find a solution to the issue of multiple users because of the Supersites. DLR agreed in principle to participate but details have not been worked out (and they were not able to do this for the Haiti earthquake).

(3) Soon WinSAR in its current form will not be needed anymore because all our ESA data will be available from ESA's virtual archive to everybody (and Sentinel will be free). The next challenge will be to find a way to gain access for our community to commercial/semi-commercial data. The Haiti earthquake is a very good opportunity to get started with this. Unless we reverse today's "decision" WinSAR will not be active in this direction any time soon.