



HIGH ALTITUDE OBSERVATORY

NATIONAL CENTER FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH

P. O. Box 3000; Boulder, Colorado 80307-3000
3080 Center Green Drive, Boulder, Colorado 80301
Telephone: (303) 497-1587; Fax: (303) 497-1589
Internet sgibson@ucar.edu

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Re: WDC-SILSO Endorsement

In 1981, the World Data Center for the sunspot number was transferred from the Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, Switzerland to the Royal Observatory of Belgium (ROB), Brussels, Belgium. The International Astronomical Union (IAU) together with the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) and International Union of Radio Science (URSI) endorsed the transfer of this data center.

Despite their apparent simplicity, the sunspot number time series represent a continuous record of direct observations of solar activity over more than 400 years. Nowadays, the sunspot number is used to represent the energy input from the Sun to Earth's climate models, as a benchmark for modern stellar dynamos, in solar-stellar research, modeling the geomagnetic and heliospheric activity, space weather (research and operations), space climate, and other research areas.

Given the importance of solar activity monitoring for Solar Physics and Astrophysics and the central role of the World Data Center – Sunspot Index and Long-term Solar Observations (WDC-SILSO) for maintaining a long-term record of the solar activity cycle, as President of IAU Division E (Sun-Heliosphere) I confirm here the continued endorsement by the IAU of WDC-SILSO in respect to the scientific usefulness and quality of the sunspot data produced and archived by this data center in Brussels.

The WDC-SILSO mandate from the IAU is to continue the production, preservation and dissemination of the international sunspot number including: the determination and prompt distribution of the estimated sunspot number, the (final) total sunspot number (daily, monthly, yearly, and 13-month smoothed monthly), and the hemispheric sunspot number. The IAU also sees the development of new data products and the data analysis leading to improvements of sunspot number time series and the characterization of its uncertainties as important contribution of WDC-SILSO.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Gibson', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Sarah Gibson
IAU Division E (Sun-Heliosphere) President