

The Digital-Environment System Coalition WSIS Activities 2023



The Digital-Environment System Coalition (DESC) is delighted to be convening two inter-related activities during the WSIS Annual Forum 2023, on 16th and 17th March 2023: a walk (session 403) departing from the CIGC at 16.00 on 16th March, and a thematic workshop (session 204) at 10.00 on 17th March in Room 14 CIGC. Both of these sessions are co-convened by DESC's partners and members: the UNESCO Chair in ICT4D at Royal Holloway, University of London), in association with INIT (the Inter-Islamic Network on IT), the WWRF (Wireless World Research Forum), [ICT4D.AT](https://www.ict4d.at/), and RC-DISC (the Research Cluster for Digital Inequality and Social Change at the University of Canberra). Please join us for both of these exciting and very interactive sessions.

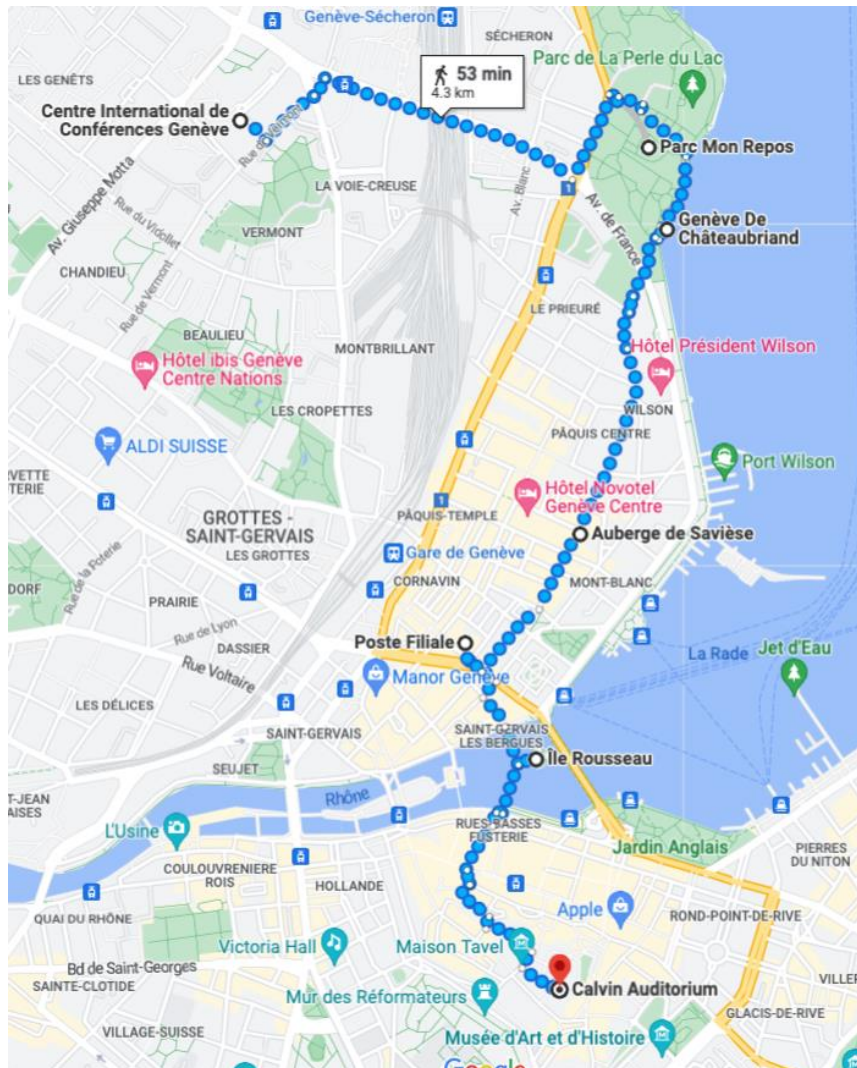
The DESC Walk Geneva, 16th March 2023: Experiencing digital environment interactions in the "place" of Geneva (Departing CIGC main entrance at 16.00)

We experience things differently when we walk, when we talk together, and when we interact with the real physical environment. We feel the fresh air on our faces, smell the vegetation, hear the noise of running water, and touch the rough rocks on the slopes. We interact differently with each other. We pause and contemplate where we are. Our minds engage in ways that are so, so different from when we sit in large conference halls.

This session really is a walk - but with a difference. It is being convened by the Digital-Environment System Coalition (DESC) in advance of its more formal WSIS session (204) on the morning of Friday 17th, in part to explore the session themes in the physical environment and place of Geneva, but also to help get to know each other better and to build networks for working together in the future. We will begin at

16.00 outside the main entrance to the CIGG in Geneva, where there will be a short briefing before we commence the walk. Our precise route may be influenced by the weather (do dress accordingly), but the intention is that we will stop to discuss specific themes, each led by a member of DESC, at varying points on our journey:

- Parc Mon Repos - the biosphere (led by Paul Spiesberger)
- Poste Filiale – YouthDESC (led by Tasfia Rahman)
- Pont des Bergues - the hydrosphere (led by Ahmed Imran)
- Ile Rousseau - the atmosphere (tbc)
- Auditoire de Calvin - the lithosphere (led by Tim Unwin)



At each "place" we will consider and reflect on both the positive and the negative impacts that digital tech can have on one of the four main elements of our physical world, with a fifth stop being led by a member of YouthDESC to consider youth perspectives on these issues.

The walk is only about 4 kms in length and would take less than an hour if done directly, but with 15 minutes of discussion in each "place", and permitting some

meandering on the way, we anticipate that we will conclude by 18.30. Those who cannot join at the beginning are most welcome to find us on the way and join the conversation.

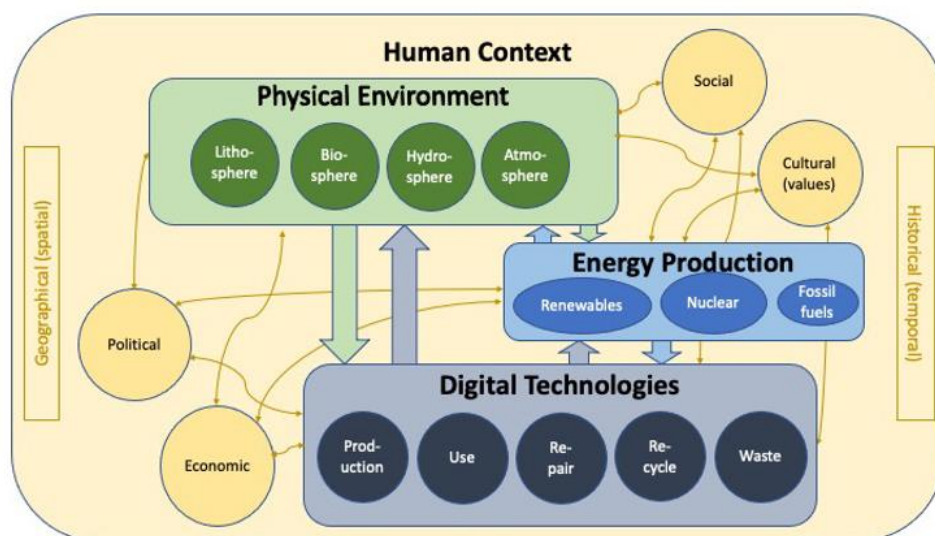
Reimagining the Interface between Digital Tech and the Physical Environment (DESC/UNESCO Chair in ICT4D, Royal Holloway, University of London, Session 204, **Friday, 17 March 2023 10:00–10:45** Room 14, CICG, 2nd Floor ICTs and Environment Thematic Workshop

This session is being convened by DESC (the Digital Environment System Coalition - Secretariat provided by the UNESCO Chair in ICT4D at Royal Holloway, University of London), in association with INIT (the Inter-Islamic Network on IT), the WWRF (Wireless World Research Forum), [ICT4D.AT](https://www.ict4d.at/), and RC-DISC (the Research Cluster for Digital Inequality and Social Change at the University of Canberra).

It has three main aims:

- to share an updated overview of DESC's emerging model that challenges much existing work being undertaken on digital tech and climate change;
- to provide an update on its ongoing activities since WSIS 2022; and
- to do this in a lively and interactive way.

The session itself will build on the outcomes of the walk on 16th March that precedes it, with each of the walk leads sharing 3 positive impact of digital tech on their particular aspects of the environment and 3 negative (in only three minutes). There will also be two brief interventions (max 5 minutes each) from online panellists, who will address indigenous perspectives on the digital-environment interface, and on the harms of deep-sea mining.



The DESC Conceptual Framework