This paper is based on identification of the pattern of the upper level of the world city network of knowledge as published in a series of papers. It is our aim to update the findings and relate to the general world city discussion. The structure of the world cities of knowledge network has changed over the last decade in favour of south east Asian and south European cities and in disfavour of the traditional centres of North America and north-western Europe. The analysis is based on bibliometric data on the world’s 100 largest cities measured in terms of research output. Then level of co-authorships between researchers in different cities is an indicators of links and respect, and the number of citations to papers produced by researchers located in each city is an indicator of respect. Finally, one research discipline is selected for an experiment in forecasting future hot spots of research.