



IGU E-NEWSLETTER

Quarterly

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New Series 14

April

2015

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This Newsletter is circulated to more than 1500 individuals and bodies. Announcements, information, calls for participation in scientific events, programmes and projects are welcome.

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1) REMARKS FROM PRESIDENT VLADIMIR KOLOSSOV

Dear friends and colleagues,

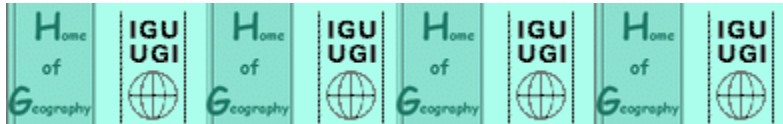
IGU is one of the oldest international academic associations and has well established traditions. It is the only really global geographical organization, and we are glad seeing that it is expanding. After Serbia and Kazakhstan, we just received Myanmar as new member; Bulgaria updated its membership, and we expect that a number of other countries of Asia, Latin America and Europe will soon join our union. However, despite of our efforts, we did not succeed yet in involving enough African and Latin American countries in our networks, and it only partly depends on inadequate funding. As our recent contacts with Latin American geographers show, our relations remain weak mainly because of language difficulties with English, but also because IGU is often seen as an elitist organization. We obviously do should carefully take into account the themes considered central for geographers from these countries (see the minutes of the IGU EC session below).

IGU has to compete for membership and attendance of its meetings with the growing number of other global and regional organizations which usually are more focused on particular sub-disciplines and problems. So far it copes more or less with this task: local organizers of the IGU Regional Conference in Moscow received more than 2,000 abstracts – much more than expected. But we need to analyse for whom this event turned to be attractive and why others decided for not coming. IGU should be definitely renovated, and it is the objective of its new Strategy. I summarized its main principles in the previous Newsletter. They were adopted by the Executive Committee but continue to be discussed. Our activity should be, on the one hand, more specialized and, on the other hand, more interdisciplinary. We should be more selective in including presentations to the programs of our major events. These apparently controversial objectives can be met by different kinds of events. A possible solution is the “Thematic Conferences”, which could partly replace Regional Conferences. The first one, devoted to energy and sustainable development, will probably be scheduled within two years. Its possible venue is Baku, Azerbaijan. There are also other proposals.

Trying to adapt our most important events to the new needs, we included to the program of the approaching Regional Conference in Moscow (www.igu2015.ru), besides the key notes, a number of interdisciplinary lectures on general themes, followed by discussions: to give some examples, the changing nature of geographical maps, integrated mountain development, urban challenges in the complex world, the future of geographical education, etc. These lectures will be offered by the world leading scholars. One of the most extensive parts of the agenda is devoted to climate change and to polar studies. A number of large international projects associate their meetings to the conference. We hope that panel discussions will be of interest to many participants. A special Day of Geography Teacher will be a media event and an occasion for sharing the best practice and debating international standards of geographical education. The publication of a number of special issues of academic journals’, based on papers submitted to the

conference, is planned. Several dozen participants from low income countries are receiving travel grants from both Local Organizing Committee and IGU. Of course, the conference will host the geographical Olympiad, which promises to become the largest ever. Welcome to Moscow!

Vladimir Kolosov
President of IGU



2) GEOGRAPHY AND TIBET EARTHQUAKE

Some important messages arrived some days ago in the Home of Geography, following the tremendous earthquake in Tibet. One, written by Vice President R.B. Singh, is a relevant contribute on the seismic situation in South Asia, with statistics and maps. I immediately posted this important article in the Home of Geography website, in the News 2015.

The second message was sent by Jörg Löffler, Chair of the IGU Commission on Mountain Response to Global Change, on behalf of Nepalese students of the Bonn University. In my opinion this message is important enough for the opening lines of this Newsletter. It demonstrates that geographers are not only able to tell name of capitals or population of cities: we are best fit to operate in the daily life of mankind. And such a call is, in my opinion, an example for all of us, because it arrives from a Commission not much considered for applied research.

IGU gathers a complete complex of competences in Earth and Human Sciences, and I hope to receive in the next future many others carefully thought opinions on the major key issues of the world (pollution, global change, poverty, migrations etcetera). I am sure that all our Commission knows in the respective fields the crisis of world importance, and will be able to propose ameliorating policies: we must try to make the mass media aware about the importance of Geography, so to obtain more time in the Schools for Geographical Education. After the Japan earthquake (known mainly because of Fukushima nuclear plant) in March 2011, 10 updates on the Japan's damages and remedial actions appeared in the HofG website, thanks to the activity in the field of VP Yukio Himiyama.

Waiting for the day when people will no longer ask "what do you do as geographer?" I leave the floor to the call of Jörg Löffler, asking everybody to inform about it, so to contribute to the initiative and to its diffusion.

*Jörg's address: Prof. Dr. Jörg Löffler, Department of Geography, University of Bonn
Meckenheimer Allee 166 - D-53115 Bonn, Germany*

Email: joerg.loeffler@uni-bonn.de

To conclude, I add a note of Mike Meadows, in memoriam of a Geographer who died on last 25th April in Tibet: he was leading a group of his students on Mount Everest.

*Thanks to R.B.Singh, Jörg and Mike, best wishes to all,
Giuliano*

Dear all,

Nepal has been seriously devastated by the 7.8 magnitude of quake on April 25, 2015 and following after- quakes, the largest earthquake since 1933. More than 5000 people have lost their lives, ten thousand injured and thousands became homeless. Some of our Bonner colleagues, friends and students from Nepal have also lost their family members and relatives. These are very sad moments for us and we are in deep sorrow including our friends like you, who love and care us. Your heartfelt messages have given us strength and encourage us to face the devastation caused by the last day's earthquakes.

The government of Nepal has declared a state of emergency and the families and friends of earthquake victims need immediate relief and support. Although the international community has been putting their efforts to help, we also feel to put some efforts to support from our site for those organizations, which are actively present in rural areas of the quake damaged regions. So, we agreed among ourselves to start collecting funds for organizations already working on the ground.

Since many of you have approached us offering to help, we would really appreciate your contributions. Your small contributions will definitely relief the affected communities. If you would like to join us in supporting those affected, please send your contributions as soon as possible, as help is really urgent, or latest by 6th May 2015. As we decided to collect the donations in one account (i.e. student association of University of Bonn „ARTS Club“) and then transfer to the following organizations, who are on the spots (Red Cross, Help-Nepal, Doctor without Borders eV.).

For Bank Transfer:

Account holder: VEREIN Z. FOERDERUNG V. ARTS EV.

Bank: Sparkasse Koeln/Bonn

Account No.: 1981008574

BLZ: 37050198

IBAN: DE78 3705 0198 1981 0085 74

BIC-/SWIFT-code: COLSDE33XXX

Reason for transfer: „Nepal Relief Fund“ (very important ! Please do not forget to put this while transfer)

For Cash deposit:

Please, use the donation box at the secretary office at your department or contact the secretary or a Nepalese representative at your department.

We will definitely provide feedback on your donations/contributions and keep you updated on the situation in Nepal. We heartily welcome your support.

Thank you very much in advance!

With love and peace,

Namaste !

Nepalese Students and Nepal Friends,

Bonn, Germany

(P.S.: If you want a "Donation Receipt", please contact us and provide your address.)

ARTS Co-ordination: Nussallee 1, 53115 Bonn (Germany).

e-mail: arts@uni-bonn.de

Internet: www.uni-bonn.de/arts

(From Michael Meadows)

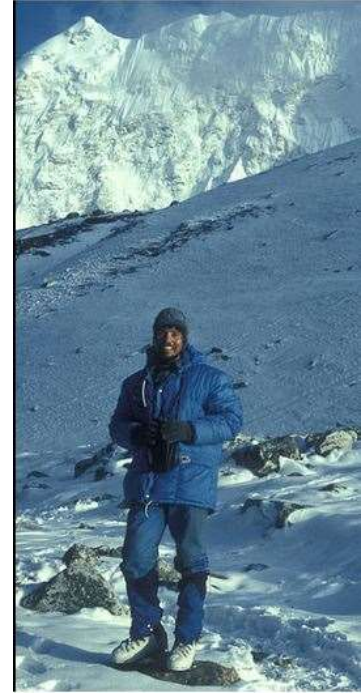
Dear Colleagues

Among the more than 7000 now known to have perished in the Nepal earthquake was Professor Matthias Kuhle, the world renowned glacial geomorphologist from the University of Göttingen. Kuhle was accompanying a party of students on a field excursion at the time of his death. The students themselves were unharmed but traumatised and have returned to Germany safely according to eye-witness reports.

Professor Kuhle completed his undergraduate studies at the Free University of Berlin and attended the University of Göttingen for his PhD, conferred in 1975 for a dissertation on the geomorphology and Quaternary glaciation of the southern Iranian high mountains. In 1980 he achieved his habilitation in Geography with a monograph entitled *Dhaulagiri and Annapurna Himalaya: A Contribution to the Geomorphology of Extreme High Mountains* and he was to become renowned for his field-based research on high Asia and Himalaya. He was appointed Professor of Geography at the University of Göttingen in 1983, and promoted to the chair of Geography and High Mountain Geomorphology in 1990. The IGU extends its condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Professor Kuhle

Mike Meadows

Secretary-General and Treasurer, International Geographical Union



3) DRAFT MINUTES OF THE IGU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HYATT REGENCY CHICAGO 19th to 21st April 2015

Welcome, Meeting Logistics and Introductions

The meeting was chaired by First Vice-President Dieter-Soyez, who was officiating due to the fact the President Kolosov was unable to travel to Chicago due to injury. He welcomed Secretary-General Mike Meadows and Vice Presidents Dieter Soyez, Joos Droogleever-Fortuijn, Jarkko Saarinen, Yukio Himiyama, Elena dell'Agnesse, RB Singh and Iain Hay. Past President

Ron Abler was able to participate only fleetingly due to an injury to his wife; Vice-President Zhou Chenghu tendered his apologies due to a family illness.

Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda, prepared and distributed in advance of the meeting, was adopted.

Minutes

The minutes of the Cape Town December 2015 meeting were previously approved via email, but were tabled for noting and reference.

Organization and Operations

Executive Committee Member reports. Members submitted written reports of their activities and there was brief discussion; relevant matters were referred to the item on portfolios and responsibilities.

Executive Committee Meeting Calendar 2015 onwards. The second EC meeting of 2015 is to be held in Yaroslavl, 280km from Moscow. The final schedule is as follows: Arrivals August 13th, 14th transfer to venue, return to Moscow 16th, thereafter attend the IGU Regional Conference. Departures from August 22nd 2015. There was considerable discussion regarding the need to visit Beijing ahead of the 2016 Conference and it was agreed that the President and Secretary-General should visit the local organizing committee during the first week of November. Soyez reported on his application for funding for the first 2016 meeting which has been awarded. The desirability of linking this meeting with some kind of international meeting or a ‘summer school’ was raised and Soyez agreed to follow up with appropriate colleagues. The second meeting of 2016 will be ahead of the 2016 Beijing IGC. Hay reported that he followed up on the idea of a meeting coinciding with the Institute of Australian Geographers in Brisbane in July 2017 and noted that there is to be a joint New Zealand Geographical Society, Institute of Australian Geographers meeting in New Zealand in early February 2018 which could be an alternative opportunity. Dell’Agnese suggested that there are options also for Italy and there is standing invitation from Singh for holding the meeting in association with the annual meeting of Indian geographers, usually held in November.

Executive Committee duties and responsibilities. There was further discussion about the approved list that was agreed to in the last meeting. In relation to offering publication opportunities in open access platforms, it was suggested that IGU explore the possibility of forging a relationship with an appropriate journal, and Meadows agreed to approach the editors of *Geo* in this regard. The suggestion of an *International Geography Day* will not be pursued at this stage.

Annual report 2014. The contents were noted, the report has been distributed along with the 2015 membership invoices.

IGU National Membership update. Meadows tabled the updated membership dues situation. Invoices for 2015 dues have been sent out and subscriptions are being credited to the account. Reminders are to be sent out during May-June. An application for full membership by Myanmar has been endorsed through a virtual General Assembly (email ballot). There have been renewed attempts by Vice-Presidents to make contact with National Committees that have proved difficult to communicate with. One notable recent success is Bulgaria who had not paid fees for several years but has now reestablished contact. Soyez has had very promising approaches from Oman. Luxembourg has also been approached and an application appears to be imminent. Dell’Agnese reported that there is renewed interest from the Latin American countries with the possibility of

several new members. The executive committee members were urged to continue to pursue connections with National Committees of countries falling under their responsibility, at the very least in order to ensure that the IGU membership database is kept up to date (All).

IGU Financial Report and Projection. Meadows tabled the IGU account statements for the year and a summary of expenditure and profit/loss over the last five years since he has been Secretary-General and Treasurer. The long-term financial situation appears to be reasonably sound.

IGU Commission reports. 40 of the 41 commissions and task forces submitted reports for 2014 and these are under scrutiny by the Commission Excellence Award committee. It was noted that there are some inconsistencies in the agreed criteria for the excellence award and the letter distributed to commissions requesting submission of annual reports. Droogleever-Fortuijn and Meadows agreed to resolve any discrepancies.

IYGU. Benno Werlen attended to report on recent developments with IYGU. There are many lessons that have been learned in the process, especially the significant challenge of obtaining funding, in particular due to the fact that there are so few organisations that are in a position to make a financial commitment to a global, rather than national, initiative. This means that the national and regional action centres will play a crucial role in sourcing funds. Ideally the national academies will need to be closely involved although these do not always easily operate beyond the national scale. Private sector contributions are very difficult to mobilise as these usually require personal contact to facilitate access and even then are only exceptionally able to finance international projects. In terms of the proposed study programme component of IYGU, there are emerging opportunities arising from the observed trend for universities to increase their commitment to internationalization and development of curriculum content related to sustainability. There is a clear role that geographers can play in taking the lead in global sustainability teaching. Werlen outlined the many challenges that have accompanied IYGU on the road to the UN and the year has not yet been adopted by the General Assembly. Since postponement to 2017 is not an option, alternatives now need to be considered and include the possibility of UNESCO supporting an International Science Year declared jointly by ICSU, ISSC, CIPSH and, possibly, the International Council for Engineering and Technology. There was discussion regarding how IGU can promote the activities of IYGU. The Moscow IGU Regional Meeting represents the last opportunity to mobilise support among geographers for this initiative.

IGU strategy. There was considerable discussion around the negative perception of the IGU that exists among geographers and what can be done to address this. The chair of one of the IGU national committees has made a number of critical observations and suggestions. There are several elements of the newly adopted strategy that can address some of these concerns; many of them related to the lack of communication. The EC agreed that IGU needs to take seriously criticism that it is outdated and the possibility of an additional meeting dedicated entirely to further development of the strategic plan was discussed. There was discussion regarding the need for an additional EC meeting to further develop the IGU strategy; the decision was held over to the Yaroslav EC meeting in August.

IGU strategy and primary education. The Commission on Geographical Education has made the suggestion that the IGU strategy document should also include reference to primary education. This was agreed; the Commission itself would continue to develop activities that include this as a focus.

Early career geographers. Following discussion of this matter in Cape Town, Droogleever-Fortuin outlined the need for formal recognition by the IGU. It is proposed that IGU establishes a Special Committee for Early Career Geographers, the focus of which should be those geographers who are aiming at an academic career (enrolled PhD students and postdocs and early career lecturers). Suggestions were made as to who could be approached in order to get the process underway and Droogleever-Fortuijn agreed to take the next steps.

Sesquicentennial and Centennial Task Force. In the absence of Abler, this item was held over to the next EC meeting in Moscow.

IGU Website update. The website remains fully operational and updates across to the Facebook page which attracts regular activity and ‘likes’. The imperative of ensuring that the IGU website is translated into French and Spanish was noted and Meadows agreed to follow this up urgently.

IGU Bulletin and eNewsletter update. The next issue of the Bulletin will be two volumes and should be ready in mid-2015 (Meadows). Former Vice-President Bellezza is currently compiling the next issue of the *eNewsletter*.

IGU publicity material. Three versions of the new ‘roll-up’ (retractable banners) are now available and will be on display for the first time at the AAG exhibit over the next few days. Three versions of the brochure are also now ready, English, French and Spanish.

IGU Thematic conferences. President Kolosov tabled a proposal for a thematic conference on Energy and Sustainable Development to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, at a 2017 date yet to be finalized (August is recommended) and this would be the first of its type. There was discussion as to which commissions would be interested and it was agreed to consult with all of them regarding this once the dates are finalized. IYGU should be added as a possible additional theme. Kolosov is requested to follow up on these issues with the local organizing committee. Dell’Agnese reported that Bolivia is organizing the next EGAL conference in La Paz in 2017 and that this would be an excellent opportunity for IGU involvement provided again that the commissions are consulted regarding sessions etc. In the same week, immediately before or after the EGAL conference, an IGU thematic conference on the theme of ‘Geography and Peace’ can be organized with the support of the local University. Steering Committee members of the Commission on Political Geography has already expressed its full support and several other commissions are expected to be involved. There is a need to develop more precise criteria as to how a ‘thematic conferences’ are organized.

Differentiated IGU meeting fees. The chair of the Gender Commission has highlighted the difficulties that some members of IGU steering committees, especially those from developing countries, experience in attending IGU conferences, congresses and other meetings. One solution would be to offer reduced fees but it was pointed out that the logistical and financial problems arising from differentiating registration fees are substantial. The existing conference travel grant programme does in part attempt to address the issue and consideration can in future be given to travel grant applicants who are chairs or members of commission steering committees if they are from low-income countries. Droogleever-Fortuijn agreed to consider this in future travel grant allocations and also the suggestion that the individual travel grant amounts could be lowered to facilitate the subsidy for a greater number of individuals.

IGU Africa initiative. Disappointingly, there is little to report on this matter. A recent communication from Soyez to geographers in francophone countries had elicited only a very few responses. Communication regarding the postponed conference is ongoing but without concrete results yet. It was agreed to take this matter up again in association with the Moscow Regional Conference as there are special sessions organized there both for African and Latin American geographers.

Cooperation and Outreach

Festivals (including *Festival International de Géographie FIG*). Soyez reported that the situation is unclear because repeated attempts by Kolosov to establish details of IGU involvement in the next festival have not been responded to. Since Australia is the designated country for the 2015 festival, Hay made contact with the Chair and Deputy-Chair of the Australian National Committee of the IGU and established that there has been no communication as yet from *FIG* to the community of geographers in Australia. It was agreed that Kolosov should try to follow up in person with the local organisers via telephone in an attempt to assess the way forward.

IGU Representatives on International Bodies

ICSU (incl. GeoUnions) and Future Earth. The nomination of Meadows to the ICSU Committee on Scientific Planning and Review was not successful. We await the outcome of the nomination of Rob Kitchen to the committee of the World Data System. IGU applications submitted for the 2014 ICSU grants call were not funded. Singh reported that he is closely involved with various key players in the Future Earth initiative from an Asian perspective. Himiyama noted that there is key involvement of geographers in the Japanese Future Earth Committee but this situation is not as promising in most other countries.

ISSC. The ISSC General Assembly and World Social Science Forum will be held in Durban in September 2015; Kolosov and Meadows will attend to represent IGU. The planned IGU panel, chaired by Etienne Nel, is on the programme.

EUROGEO, EUGEO. The joint project on education continues and chairs of both the EUROGEO and EUGEO will be in attendance at the Moscow Regional Conference. Dell'Agnese will be attending the EUGEO meeting in Budapest 29th August to 3rd September. There will be no formal IGU representation at EUROGEO this year.

ICA. It is not feasible for the IGU executive to be represented at the 2015 Rio ICA Congress. The joint commission/working group on Toponymy will participate.

AAG, RGS and other National Associations. EC members are meeting with the AAG council in conjunction with the annual meeting. In this regard, Dr. Thomas J. Bearwald, Senior Science Advisor and Director, Geography and Spatial Sciences Program, U.S. National Science Foundation, Professor Carol Harden, Professor of Geography, University of Tennessee and Chair, Geographical Sciences Committee, U.S. National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council, Dr. Mark D. Lange, Study Director, Geographical Sciences Committee, U.S. National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council and Dr. Douglas Richardson, Executive Director, Association of American Geographers attended for a general discussion. The RGS/IBG annual meeting will be held in September 2015 in Exeter, UK; IGU representation by Vice-President Himiyama is intended. Singh reported that the annual meeting of Indian geographers will be held this year in Pune in early November.

ISPRS. It was agreed that no formal representation is warranted at the upcoming meetings but that the publicity material should be circulated and the relevant IGU commission chairs should be informed in particular.

EGAL XV. Dell'Agnese attended the EGAL XV in Cuba and had tabled a detailed report. In summary: Latin American geographers are abundant (1836 participant only to this EGAL), active and well organised. Apart from a few cases (like Honduras), they work inside international associations (such as UGAL), national associations, regional associations (more than 50 in Brazil only) and international networks, like EGAL although they work largely at the "Latin American scale". Unfortunately, relations with IGU have proved difficult, quite possibly in part because of

the language difficulty and the perception that IGU is elitist and *primomundista*. There are positive signs regarding a change going forward as indicated by the expressed interest of existing Latin American members (Peru, Mexico) and possible new members: Cuba, Dominican Republic and Bolivia to officially join the IGU as well as the proposed La Paz thematic conference. It is essential that IGU attempts to open a dialogue with Latin American geographers (in Spanish) and that we stress the importance of topics such as poverty, sustainable development and critical analysis. A follow-up letter from the IGU President should be sent to the chair of the local organizing committee of XV EGAL indicating IGU support for continued liaison (Kolosov). Formal IGU EC representation at the next UGAL (August 2014) meeting is not possible because this coincides with the Moscow Regional Conference.

YES. Meng Wang has proposed a YES session at the Moscow Regional Conference; EC members have been invited to participate and should encourage colleagues to participate.

International Geographical Congresses and IGU Regional Conferences

Cologne, Germany, International Geographical Congress 2012. The final report is in the final stages of editing and is scheduled for publication within the next few months. It is a highly detailed documentation of all aspects of the event and is planned to be printed and distributed free of charge. The suggestion that a link we put from the IGU website to the YouTube channel was accepted and if the final report can be made into a pdf file of modest size this too can be hosted on the IGU site.

Moscow, Russia, Regional Conference 2015. In the absence of Kolosov the item was not discussed in detail. It is understood that the organization is well underway; the number of registrations reported suggests a vibrant regional conference awaits.

Beijing, China, International Geographical Congress 2016. The closing date for session proposals has been extended following representation from IGU. The congress website needs to be placed on the IGU website as soon as possible (Meadows). Zhou is to be asked specifically for a written report on progress for circulation to the Executive Committee meeting.

Quebec, Canada Regional Conference 2018. Publicity material will be available at the IGU booth at the AAG meeting for distribution. Abler and Soyez will be attending the Canadian Association of Geographers meeting in Vancouver in 2015 and will set up the IGU display and engage in discussion there with the local organizing committee.

Istanbul, Turkey, International Geographical Congress 2020. There is nothing to report at this stage. Meadows agreed to write to the local organisers to request a written progress report to be tabled at the next EC meeting.

Extraordinary International Geographical Congress 2022. Antoine le Blanc and Nathalie Lemarchand attended for this item and made a short and very well received presentation. The new logo received acclamation from the EC. The intended theme is ‘Time for Geographers’/‘Le temps des Géographes’. The suggested dates are July 18th to 22nd 2022 with the major venue being the Sorbonne; the Geo-Olympiad will be held in the previous week organized by Belgian colleagues. Letters of support have already been received from all French geographical societies and relevant societies in Belgium; support from several Parisian administrative authorities has been assured and further support is currently being sought. Le Blanc outlined plans for presentation of the congress at the Moscow Regional Meeting.

Other Business

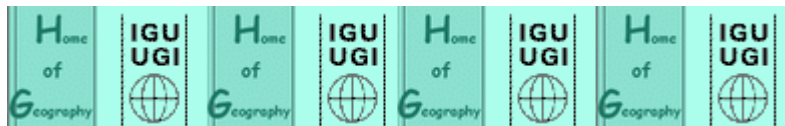
IGU Lauréats d’Honneur. Nothing to report at this stage. No report from the Awards Committee has been received.

IGU Planet and Humanity Award 2016. Fincher needs to be consulted regarding the status of this nomination.

Joint China, Korea, Japan Geography Conference. There has been an indication that this annual meeting be made more formal and to extend this to other countries in Asia; there is a plan to hold a meeting in Hokkaido following the Beijing IGU Congress. A report of the recent meeting is published in the eNewsletter.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11h45 on 21st April 2015.



4) ICSU NEWSLETTER APRIL 2015



(With *active links*)

Welcome to the April 2015 edition of the ICSU newsletter, bringing you highlights from ICSU's activities in the first quarter of the year. We've updated the format of this newsletter and hope you will find it useful.

To enter the ICSU website www.icsu.org.

What's in this e-mail?

- *The latest news from the International Council for Science*
- *The latest stories from Road to Paris, ICSU's blog on climate change, sustainable development & disaster risk reduction*
- *Jobs at ICSU and in the network*
- *News from ICSU's Regional Offices*
- *Upcoming events*

News

Highlights from ICSU's work in the first quarter of 2015.

Science and the Sustainable Development Goals. ICSU led a delegation to attend meetings in New York last week, as part of the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. Together with ISSC and Future Earth, ICSU

presented a statement which calls for a stronger role for science and technology in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and articulates responsibilities for the scientific community in the means of implementation and monitoring. *Nature* published a commentary highlighting five priorities for the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In February, ICSU had already published the report "Review of Targets for the Sustainable Development Goals – the Science Perspective," which assesses the draft of the UN Goals from a scientific perspective. The report attracted significant media attention, including an article in the journal *Science* (paywall), in Thomson Reuters AlertNet and in SciDev.Net.

ICSU at the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction: a successful week for science. For the event in Sendai, Japan in March, ICSU convened a delegation of almost 400 researchers and pushed for a strong role for science in the post-2015 DRR framework. David Johnston, chair of the ICSU co-sponsored Integrated Research on Disaster Risk programme (IRDR) Science Committee, delivered the official statement of the Science and Technology Major Group to the conference. A working session on "Applying Science and Technology to Disaster Risk Reduction Decision-making" attracted more than 350 participants. Allan Lavell, a key member of the IRDR community, won the prestigious United Nations Sasakawa Award for Disaster Risk Reduction. A review and synthesis paper of the basic knowledge of natural hazards, vulnerabilities, and disaster risks, which aims to highlight potential contributions of science to disaster risk reduction, was also released on the occasion of the conference.

More news in brief:

- [Call for Applications: The SCOSTEP Visiting Scholar \(SVS\) program](#)
- Former ICSU President Jane Lubchenco awarded Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement for Work in Changing Policy
- International symposium on science assessment and research integrity
- Tokyo Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience concludes

Road to Paris

See our favourite stories from [ICSU's Road to Paris blog](#) covering disaster risk reduction, sustainable development and climate change.

Jobs at ICSU and in the network

Science Officer at the ICSU Regional Office for Latin America & the Caribbean, Mexico City. Deadline: 3 May 2015.

Future Earth Research Liaison Officer, Stockholm, Sweden. Deadline: 10 May 2015.

Science Officer, Paris, France. Deadline: 11 May 2015.

Executive Director of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), Cambridge, UK. Deadline: 15 May 2015.

Future Earth Global Hub Director, Boulder, Colorado. Deadline: 24 May 2015.

News from ICSU's Regional Offices

Africa

Following up on one of the recommendations of the 2nd Future Earth Regional

Workshop for Africa held in Pretoria, South Africa, on 23 – 24 June 2014, [eleven scientists were selected to constitute the African Future Earth Committee \(AFEC\)](#). The composition of the Committee reflects a fair geographical spread across all the sub-regions of the African continent as well as the diverse and trans-disciplinary nature of the stakeholders involved in Future Earth activities. The main goal of the AFEC is to drive activities of Future Earth on the continent until such time that an African Future Earth regional node has been established and is operational. The Committee will be working with the new Future Earth Secretariat and will consult relevant stakeholders within and outside the continent while executing their mandate.

The Regional Office for Africa has also moved to a new host organization. After ten years with the National Research Foundation (NRF), as of 1 April 2015, the Office is now hosted by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf).

[More news from ICSU's Regional Office for Africa](#)

Asia & Pacific

The ICSU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) [recently published its Annual Report for the year 2014](#). The report documents the activities of ROAP highlighting key activities in its priority areas of work in health and wellbeing in the changing urban environment, hazards and disasters, and sustainable energy. The report also details the contributions made by ROAP towards the development of Future Earth in Asia and the Pacific.

[More news from ICSU's Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific](#)

Latin America and the Caribbean

On 9-10 March 2015, [ICSU National Members' Focal Points in Latin America and the Caribbean met for a workshop](#) in the University of Panama, Panama City. The objectives of the workshop were to report the activities of the ICSU Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) in the last 5 years, to share experiences and successful cases along the region, to promote actions to enhance the three pillars of ICSU in Latin America and the Caribbean, to enhance the scientific links among all the organizations, to receive feedback from the Focal Points, and to establish a communications network among the Focal Points.

At the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction on March 14-18 in Sendai, Japan, ROLAC was represented by the Chair of the ROLAC Disaster Risk (DRR) Steering Committee, Barbara Carby, the Vice-Chair Patricia Alvarado and the committee members Irasema Alcántara and Allan Lavell. Barbara Carby presented the results of the ROLAC-sponsored consultancy “Identification of existing advances and linkages of the scientific and academic community initiatives with Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)”.

[More news from ICSU's Regional Office for Latin America & the Caribbean](#)

Events

[3rd Young Scientists Networking Conference on Integrated Science](#). 24-29 May 2015, Menaggio, Italy.

[CFRS Symposium at the World Conference on Research Integrity](#). 2 June 2015, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

1st International Workshop on Supporting Future Earth with Global Geo-information.
9-10 June 2015, Beijing, China.

Our Common Future Under Climate Change Conference. 7-10 July 2015, Paris,
France.-

2nd ICSU/IUPAC Workshop on Crystal Engineering. 30 August - 1 September 2015,
Como, Italy.

World Social Science Forum. 13-16 September 2015, Durban, South Africa.

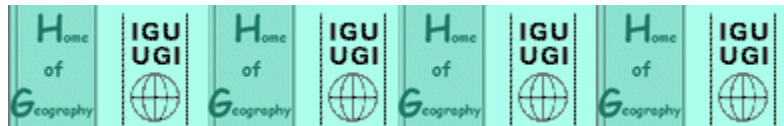
Global Data Activities for the Study of Solar-Terrestrial Variability. 28-30 September
2015.

International Collaboration for Advancing Polar Data Access and Preservation.

Waterloo, Canada, 27-28 October 2015.

PECS 2015 conference. Stellenbosch, South Africa, 2-5 November 2015.

2nd COSPAR Symposium: Water and Life in the Universe. Foz do Iguacu, Brazil, 9-13
November 2015.



5) FUTURE EARTH NEWSLETTER APRIL 2015



Welcome to the April 2015 Future Earth newsletter.

Up to €3m available for climate predictability research 2015 opportunities fund

The Belmont Forum and JPI Climate have launched a call for funding pre-proposals on climate predictability and inter-regional linkages (drivers and mechanisms linking poles & monsoons for societal usefulness of climate services). This call aims to support medium-size research projects of 3 - 4 years' duration, and recommends a budget of between 1 and €3M. Pre-proposals are due by June 1st 2015. [Read more...](#)

News and opinion



- 1) The Neglected Killer - why air pollution is the World's single largest environmental risk. [Read more...](#)
- 2) Five ways research can support the Sustainable Development Goals. [Read more...](#)
- 3) Mountains as sentinels of change - call for funding pre-proposals now open. [Read more...](#)

Executive Director Paul's message on Earth Day

World leaders will meet three times in 2015 to chart a course for the future of our planet. The challenge is to turn this political momentum into action on the ground, says Paul Shrivastava, Executive Director of Future Earth. [Read more...](#)

Vacancies

Global Hub Director, Boulder

We're seeking an experienced leader and manager with a strong international profile to join the Future Earth US hub based in Boulder, Colorado. [Apply by May 24th 2015](#)

Research Liaison Officer, Stockholm

We're looking for candidates with experience in research and research coordination to join the Future Earth Sweden hub based in Stockholm. [Apply by May 10th 2015...](#)

Events

Future Earth Finland Townhall Meeting

May 26th, Helsinki, Finland [Take part in a workshop to map out key priorities in global change research.](#)

Our Common Future under Climate Change - July 7 - 10th, Paris France

Join the largest gathering of the international scientific community ahead of COP21.

International Workshop on Supporting Future Earth with Global Geo-information - June 9th - 10th, Beijing, China

Discover the latest developments within global spatial data production.

EWACC 2015 - Building Bridges Conference - June 15th - 17th, Nicosia, Cyprus

Join this transdisciplinary conference to advance sustainable development in the MENA region.

The Ocean in a High-CO₂ World

The Fourth international symposium on the Ocean in a High-CO₂ World will take place in Hobart, Australia, from 3 - 6 May 2016. Abstract submission opens 1st June 2015. *Early registration open.*



6) REPORTS FROM CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

6a) Indo-Danish Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science meeting, Roskilde, 23-26 February 2015

Danish Cultural Institute (DCI) organised Indo-Danish meeting in order to strengthen existing collaboration and build new partnerships in culture, education and science between Indian and Danish institutions at Copenhagen during February 23-26, 2015. Scientists and Representatives from all Danish Universities participated in the meeting. The program is also follow up to the large program India Today-Copenhagen Tomorrow, which presented contemporary India to the Danes in 2012 through impressive programs in visual and performing arts, literature, design, fashion, education, science and business. I delivered a talk on sustainability and potential areas of co-operation were identified and the ways they can be facilitated by the DCI and other partners including the Danish Innovation Centre and Danish Universities. The areas of co-operation in Science and Education include air pollution and health modelling, storm water management, nano-technology and inclusiveness and innovation in sustainability. Meeting with Denmark IGU National committee chair H.T.Jensen and member T.T.Nielsen was held at Roskilde University on 26th February, 2015.



Left: The chairman of Association of Danish Universities Dr. Michael Christiansen together with IGU Vice President R.B. Singh. Right: Meeting with Denmark IGU National committee chair H.T. Jensen and member T.T. Nielsen at Roskilde University during February 22-26, 2015.

6b) INDAS INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING AT KYOTO UNIVERSITY, 6-9 MARCH 2015, INTERACTION OF IGU VP R.B. SINGH WITH JAPANESE PROFESSORS AND RESEARCHERS

IGU Vice President R.B. Singh interacted with Japanese Professors and Researchers during NIHU sponsored programme on Sustainable, Inclusive and peaceful Development in Globalising South Asia and India during March 6-9, 2015. Many presentations were delivered during 3 sessions: 1. Inclusive Development, 2. Sustainable development and Peaceful development.



India Studies Programme Meeting at Kyoto University during March 7-8, 2015

My presentations include Sustainable development taking two case studies of mega cities and disaster management. Visited Asia Future Earth Office on 9th March and interacted with Future Earth Science committee Member Professor Tetsuzo Yasunari, Director General, Research Institute of Humanity and Nature (RIHN), and other Scientists for taking stock of regional initiatives. Asia Future Earth Office is focussing on Disasters and Urbanisation.



Meeting with Future Earth Scientific Committee Member T. Yasunari and researchers of Asia Future Earth Office at Research Institute of Humanity and Nature on 9th March, 2015

6c) UGC-SAP DRS III SEMINAR, MARCH 20-21, 2015 AT UNIVERSITY OF DELHI HOSTED MR. JAIRAM RAMESH, CHAIR OF FUTURE EARTH ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Department of Geography, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi contributed towards ICSU initiative on Future Earth during UGC–SAP-DRS III National Seminar during March 20-21, 2015 on its thrust areas of Environment and Resource & Urban and Regional Planning. The Chief Guest of the valedictory session was Hon'ble Jairam Ramesh, Chair, Future Earth Engagement Committee. The seminar was inaugurated by Dr. L.S. Rathore, Director General of Meteorology, Government of India along with Dr. M.R. Bhutiyani, Director Defense Terrain Research Laboratory, DRDO, Government of India. The important event of the seminar was Panel Discussion on India's Future Earth-Challenges and opportunities for Geographers and Scientists.



Hon'ble Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Chair, Future Earth Engagement Committee (Second from Right) with R.B.Singh (Right) M.R. Bhutiyani, Director, Defence Terrain Research Laboratory, DRDO, Government of India (Third from Right) at the Department of Geography, University of Delhi

Hon'ble Jairam Ramesh, Member of Parliament and Chair, Future Earth Engagement Committee highlighted the issue of sustainability in Indian context and mentioned four key areas viz. Population, Climate Change, Health issues and Environment with special emphasis on livelihood. He advocated that India should take a different growth strategy because demographic situation is

different from developed economies where he talked that “*demographic karma*” is prevalent here. Regarding climate change he narrated that human actions have accentuated climate change since last 150 years, where human intervention in natural cycle have played a pivotal role. He also talked about the *anthropocene* era where human activities would have significant impact on natural ecosystem. He mentioned that the Himalayan glaciers are retreating except few and putting dependent livelihoods in danger. By talking about GHG emissions in India, he said that India is a very small contributor towards global GHG compared to USA and China. Mr. Ramesh argued that after linking of rivers also a majority of areas will remain rain-fed only. The climatic changes are putting coastal areas and Himalayan livelihood at stake where approximately 300 million people are living in vulnerable coastal region. The vulnerability in India is further increased because of the resources such as iron ore and coal are located in rich forested areas of India. The exploitation of these resources leads to the loss of the forest wealth that will further result in loss of carbon sink. India is one such country which is vulnerable on all four aspects i.e. Forest, Agriculture, Coastal Area and Glaciers. Issues of Public health both in terms of morbidity and mortality have increased due to increase in pollution level. By talking on issue of forest management, he said that it is closely linked to tribal community and India is one of the countries where forest areas are populated and not just areas of wilderness. In present context, taking into consideration the gender issues, he said that we worship God of GDP and must worship the Goddess of Sustainability. He further emphasized the leadership role played by women in major environmental campaign in India like *Chipko movement* and *Narmada bachao andolan*.



Hon'ble Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Chair, Future Earth Engagement Committee presenting his views on Sustainability of India and India's Future Earth

R.B. Singh, Head, Department of Geography, Vice President-IGU and Co-coordinator-UGC-SAP DRS III, introduced the theme of the seminar. He said that the seminar provides a platform for young researchers and also promotes trans-disciplinary research. The seminar also promotes

participation of community leaders and their contribution towards the thrust areas. He mentioned that the Department of geography is promoting Tran-disciplinary research initiating and coordinating co-design processes, facilitating engagement with and involvement of societal stakeholders, developing networks involving policy makers, academics and community leaders. In the process of bringing innovation, the Department has installed Automatic Weather Station and almost completing establishment of Media and Digital Library. Dr. Singh said that the panel discussion on Future Earth programme has been very useful in linking the thoughts of Indian researchers with global academic community. The seminar aims to contribute towards sustainability of India. He emphasized on future earth model of co-innovation and co-production approach is needed for solution oriented research particularly on Disaster Management and Urbanisation and highlighted need of integration of issues.



Dr. L.S. Rathore, Director General, India Meteorological Department, Government of India delivering talk on Climate Complexities and Sustainability

Dr. L.S. Rathore, in his speech mentioned that the meteorological complexities are increasing in post industrialization era, due to increase in GHGs and therefore the responsibilities of geographers has also increased. Dr. Rathore highlighted need to address issues in right direction, find how to deliver climate services and need to link how climate change will impact various sectors of economy. He said that many topics in the seminar are very close to global thinking. Dr. Rathore welcomed the proposal for network of Meteorological stations by the geography department of DU. He showed concerns about world class research regarding climate change modeling. In India at present only IITM Pune has world class Climate Research Centre. He said that by adopting the *Green Technology* the global warming may be limited to 2° to 3°C. Therefore, climate related services and decision making should be timely handled with comprehensive strategies.

Dr. M.R. Bhutiyani, Director, Defense Terrain Research Laboratory, DRDO, Government of India, said that environment has to take priority these days. The present day conferences are focused on three themes of Global Terror, Global Trade and Global Temperature. Dr. Bhutiyani said we need to contain Global Warming by 2°C at the end of century by arresting winter

warming through *snow harvesting*. He said climate change *is not a liability but a reality*. He argued that simple measures can contain the temperature rise and it is not a rocket science. Highlighting the process of climate change in Himalaya he said that it is changing at a rate more than the global average. He also emphasized on the role of geographers, where they can take up many research issues and cannot be confined to government initiatives. Comparing the researches on landslides by Swiss scientist, he said that we have to learn many things from them.

Major Recommendations towards India’s Future Earth include:

1. India is among the countries which face all four type of vulnerabilities i.e. Forest, Agriculture, Coastal Area and Glaciers which could be handled through democratic and participatory process.
2. The increasing rate of Climate Change calls for an urgent need to focus on framing community based mitigation strategies by ensuring co-innovation and participation from all major stakeholders like academics, policy makers and community leaders.
3. To mitigate glacier retreat in the Himalayan region which acts as human equator and provides the tallest source of water can be saved through *snow harvesting*. Upper atmospheric data will be very helpful to improve our understanding.
4. The dependence of rural economy on monsoon is *fundamental* and *inbuilt* in India and will continue to remain same for about 60 per cent on India, if even all water resources are utilized. Therefore in order to sustain water supply new technology for water harvesting along with traditional techniques need to be promoted.
5. Alternate livelihood options like food processing, hybridization of species, non farming activity can be emphasised through Green Technology by creating smart villages together with smart cities.
6. The out migration from villages should be curbed by making rural economy self sufficient and vibrant under the broad umbrella of “*Make in India*” campaign.
7. Green space and green buildings in fast growing mega cities should be promoted. The Massive Sanitation Programme holds the key for clean Future Cities of India along with Storm Water Management in Indian Metropolitan Cities. Air pollution based health modelling is need of the hour.
8. Inter-disciplinary research with bio-physical and human geo-sciences should be promoted and the roles of geographers are to provide the necessary inter-linkages by connecting the social sciences, humanities and sciences.
9. The accurate and timely forecasting the weather condition, cyclonic storm, monsoon, etc. to reduce vulnerability for sustainable disaster management. This requires continuous data monitoring, information dissemination and timely action by the concerned authorities. On the pattern of Department of Geography, University of Delhi all other Departments of the country should have a Weather Station and should promote complementarities.



7) FORTHCOMING EVENTS

(more information in the Home of Geography website, Events 2015)

- 7.1) ASEN CONFERENCE "NATIONALISM DIVERSITY AND SECURITY", LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, 21-23 APRIL 2015
- 7.2) AAG ANNUAL CONFERENCE, CHICAGO, 21-25 APRIL 2015
- 7.3) FIRENZE-HERAT, INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, FLORENCE, 23 APRIL 2015
- 7.4) EUROPEAN CULTURE EXPRESSED IN SACRED LANDSCAPES, SASSARI, 23-24 APRIL 2015
- 7.5) PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE, GENDER, SAN JOSÉ COSTA RICA, 27-30 APRIL 2015
- 7.6) CONTROL DEL ESPACIO, ESPACIO DE CONTROL, BARCELONA, 5-12 MAY 2014 (IN SPANISH)
- 7.7) GESTION INTÉGRÉE DES EAUX TRANSFRONTALIÈRES, UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL, QUEBEC, 7-9 MAI 2014, APPEL À COMMUNICATION
- 7.8) SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE: LET THEM WORK. BOROVETS (BULGARIA), 14-16 MAY 2015
- 7.9) SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN HISTORIC CENTRES, MALTA, 13 MAY
- 7.10) AGC CONFERENCE, BEN GURION UNIVERSITY, TEL AVIV AND BEER SHEVA, 13-18 MAY
- 7.11) SEMINAR ON FRONTIERS STUDIES, CORUMBÀ, 20-22 MAY 2015
- 7.12) LANDSCAPES: PERCEPTION, KNOWLEDGE, AWARENESS AND ACTION, BUCHAREST, 29-30 MAY 2015
- 7.13) REPENSER L'ESPACE SOCIALE, TURIN, 21-22 MAI
- 7.14) PRIVATISATION PARTIELLE DE LA SECURITE PUBLIQUE, S.JUAN DE PUERTO RICO, 27-30 MAI 2015
- 7.15) BORDERLESS EUROPE, PECS, 5-6 JUNE 2015
- 7.16) NORDIC GEOGRAPHY MEETING, TALLIN (ESTONIA), 15-19 JUNE 2015
- 7.17) 5TH INSTITUTE FOR THE GEOGRAPHIES OF JUSTICE, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, 21-27 JUNE 2015
- 7.18) INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GEODESY AND GEOPHYSICS, PRAGUE, 22 JUNE TO 2 JULY 2015
- 7.19) V CENTENARIO DE LA MUERTE DA FERNANDO EL CATOLICO, VALLADOLID, 23-25 JUNIO 2015
- 7.20) TOGETHER TO MANAGE MEDITERRANEAN COASTAL AND MARINE AREAS: WHAT ASSETS FOR THE TERRITORIES? MARSEILLE, 23-24 JUNE 2015
- 7.21) COASTAL CITIES AND THEIR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE, NEW FOREST (UK), 5-7 JULY 2015
- 7.22) INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHERS, LONDON, 5-10 JULY 2015
- 7.23) GENDER AND RISING INEQUALITY, LONDON, 6-10 JULY 2015
- 7.24) GEO-SPATIAL MINDS FOR SOCIETY, SALZBURG, 7-10 JULY 2015
- 7.25) 22ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF EUROPEANISTS, NEW YORK, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, 8-10 JULY 2015

