



IUGS PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2015

1. INTRODUCTION

Principal tasks for the Committee during the year were to:

- continue rebuilding the IUGS journal Episodes to (and beyond) its pre-2012 status;
- collaborate with an Ad-hoc Review of the MOU between IUGS and the GSI for the publication of Episodes;
- investigate the costs and steps towards online only publication and online first publication of Episodes;
- expand the Editorial Board of Episodes to cover the broad range of topics covered by the journal; and
- secure a forward programme of strong thematic issues of Episodes.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

The Publications Committee currently consists of;

Amel Barich (representing the IUGS Bureau)
Peter Bobrowsky (Webmaster)
Fareeduddin (Editor of Episodes)
Zhenyu Yang
Delores Pereira
Brian Marker (Chairman)

Amel Barich replaced Yildirim Dilek in March 2015 because he was assigned to undertake an Ad-Hoc Review of the Memorandum of Understanding for the publication of the journal Episodes.

3. COMMITTEE MEETING

The Committee met in Bangalore in April 2015 to discuss the future of Episodes with the Geological Society of India and to meet their production management team, as well as other publications issues. The Ad-Hoc Review was undertaken alongside that meeting.

4. EPISODES

a) Performance in 2015

Four issues of the journal were, as usual, published during 2015 and, in keeping with a Publications Committee decision in early 2014 these consist of alternating general and special thematic issues. The special issues were devoted to heritage stone (June 2015) and ophiolites (December). The ophiolites issue is a particularly strong one which is likely to be extensively cited.

The recovery of the impact factor from an all time low of 0.95 in 2012 has continued and has risen from 1.4 at the end of 2014 to 2.0 now. In parallel with this, the numbers of manuscripts submitted has increased. In 2013 there were barely enough submissions to fill each issue but now the Editor is able to reject around 60% of those submitted, with consequent improvement in quality. Much of this has been due to the hard work of our Editor Dr Fareeduddin.

Table 1A: Articles submitted in 2015 (up to Nov.10, 2015):

Articles Received at Editor's Office	66
Articles Received by the Guest Editors	18
Total Articles Received during the year	84

Table 1B: Statistics for the articles received at Editor's office

Total articles received	66
Articles Rejected	22 (33%)
Articles Accepted (under publication)	17 (26%)
Articles under review	27 (41%)

b) Thematic issues

The MOU is for publication of 4 issues with 80 pages each per year. There has been a tendency for thematic issues to exceed the allowable page number with consequent cost over-runs and also for papers be submitted late causing problems for the production management team.

These problems must be solved. The guidance to guest editors has been amended to stress the importance of finding additional funds if a larger than normal issue is intended and for papers that come in after the Editor's final deadline to be deferred to later issues of the journal.

On the basis of number of views of papers on the Episodes website, it is clear that thematic issues attract more attention, overall, than general issues (Table 2). The Publication Committee has also found that papers from the June 2015 issue have had many visits on the ResearchGate personal pages showing that this is now an important means of dissemination for papers.

Table 2: Papers in Episodes in terms of total number of views through the journal website (as at 10th November 2015)

Issue	Type	No. of papers	Total views (range)	Total views (average)
December 2014	Thematic issue (geohazards)	14	296-956	554
March 2015	General	8	303-526	368
June 2015	Thematic issue (heritage stone)	9	490-654	546
September 2015	General	7	308-413	359
December 2015*	Thematic (ophiolites)	9	a	a

a) Not yet available

c) Editorial Board

Membership of the Editorial Board has expanded from 10 at the start of the year to 20 at the end. About 12 more members are required to cover specific topics and to improve the geographical and gender balances of the Board. An advertisement for expressions of interest was published in the November 2015 IUGS E-Bulletin to try to fill those places but few responses have arrived and most of these were not accepted. When the Board is completed, a policy of rotation of members can be implemented.

Table 3A: Geographical spread of the Editorial Board

North America	South America*	Europe	Africa*	Asia	Australasia*
3	0	10	1	6	0

*contacts in these regions are currently trying to identify potential members

Table 3B: Gender imbalance in the Editorial Board

Male	Female
12	8

d) Guidance notes

Guidance notes to members of the Editorial Board, contributors to the journal and guest editors are being maintained and updated as necessary. A guidance note for advertisers has been drafted for completion in 2016. A statement of benefits for authors publishing in Episodes has been partly prepared and will be completed when the future form of the journal has been decided by IUGS.

e) Preliminary steps towards the modernisation of the journal

The Geological Society of India upgraded the Episodes website in March 2015 at its own expense. It contains pdf. files for all papers in journal issues from March 2009 onwards. IUGS might consider whether a staged programme to digitise earlier issues should be undertaken.

IUGS has registered for the issuing of DOI numbers to papers. Thanks are due to the IUGS Secretariat. The Geological Society of India is now securing DOI numbers for all papers commencing with the December 2015 issue.

In keeping with the availability of papers on line, release by authors through such outlets as ResearchGate and the possibility of online first publication, the IUGS Logo (and, if appropriate, that of the International Geoscience Programme) is now included on the front page of each paper. The dates that papers are received and when they are accepted after any necessary revision are also now shown on the first page of each.

A first draft of a note on the future mission and scope of Episodes is in preparation.

f) Ad-hoc review

The Ad-Hoc review of the Memorandum of Understanding between the IUGS and the Geological Society of India for the publication of Episodes was undertaken in April 2015 by IUGS Vice-President Yildirim Dilek. His report was considered by the IUGS Bureau in October 2015 and will be presented to the Executive in January 2016. It will be necessary to implement recommendations that are accepted by IUGS during 2016.

g) Attracting excellent papers

The Committee is grateful that our President, Roland Oberhänsli, and Patrick McKeever (UNESCO) wrote to the leaders of IGCP projects to remind them of the need to publish reports in Episodes and books with the GSL. A few replies have resulted but, hopefully, more will be sent soon.

h) Other matters

In 2014 the Publications Committee identified the lack of a publications policy and ethics statement for Episodes. A draft was prepared. It will be sent to the IUGS Bureau for consideration, if possible, during 2016.

5. WEBSITE

The IUGS has expressed a wish to modernise the website. The Publications Committee has estimated that would probably require about US\$10,000. It also advises that the basic template of a new site should be based in English to facilitate any possible later transfers of responsibility for the site. It is also important to have a fluent speaker of English available to check material placed on the site. This should be taken forward during 2016.

6. BOOKS

The Chairman has been in regular contact with the Commissioning Editor at the Geological Society (GSL) Publishing House. Four books have been published during the year. One proposal was approved and is now in preparation.

Comparatively few books had been offered to the Publishing House during the past three years but it is likely that 7 or 8 titles will be published during 2016. The attention of the 35th IGC Committee has been drawn to the MOU between IUGS and the GSL that provides that the GSL should have first refusal of titles arising from IUGS activities.

Annex A contains full details.

7. OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Committee has assisted with English language checking of the IUGS Two Year Report (2013-2014) and a revision of the IUGS brochure. It has also secured translations of the previous brochure text into 16 languages, but several important languages are not yet represented. Thanks are due to colleagues who devoted time to making the translations which are placed on the IUGS website as they arrive.

From time-to-time the Chairman of the Publications Committee deals with requests for copyright permission to use material from Episodes (usually individual figures or tables). There are about 6 requests per year.

8. MEETINGS IN 2016


Because the Chairman cannot attend, Dolores Pereira will represent the Publications Committee at the IUGS Executive meeting in January 2016.

Subject to IUGS approval, the next Publications Committee meeting will be held in London, UK, in March 2016. One member of the Committee will also need to report to the meeting at the 35th IGC in Cape Town. The Committee therefore requests funding of about US\$10,000 for 2016.

9. PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES IN 2016

Key activities will be:

- Preparation of a “Mission and scope” statement for Episodes prior to the 35th IGC;
- Negotiation of a new MOU for publication of Episodes between the end of 2016 and 2020;
- Modernisation of Episodes as an online only and online first publication [if funding is approved by IUGS];
- Modernisation of the IUGS website [if funding is approved by IUGS];
- Continuing to increase the impact factor of Episodes from the present level of 2.0;
- Proactively seeking high quality content for Episodes and extending the programme of thematic issues;
- Seeking a 33% increase in members of the Editorial Board of Episodes to improve topic coverage and geographical and gender balance;
- Maintaining and updating guidance documents;
- Seeking advertisements to bring in revenue to support Episodes; and
- Finalising a statement of publications policy and ethics for Episodes



Brian Marker

Chairman, IUGS Publications Committee

30th November 2016

ANNEX

BOOKS PUBLISHED BY THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (LONDON)

Note that the source of each publication is noted in terms of those arising from an IGC and those from other IUGS activities. SP denotes "Special Publication" series.

Titles published during 2015 (as at November)

Geodynamic Processes in the Andes, 32°-34°S (IUGS -SP)

Global Heritage Stone: Towards International Recognition of Building and Ornamental Stones (IUGS-SP)

Magnetic susceptibility application: a window onto ancient environments and climatic variations (IUGS-SP)

Sedimentary Basins and Crustal Processes at Continental Margins (IGC34 - SP)

Titles in the process of being published or accepted

Title and expected publication year*	Type	Status	Serie s	Comments
2015				
Geology and Archaeology: Submerged landscapes of the continental shelf	IGC34	In production- complete	SP	Will be published in full online in 2015 and in print in 2016
2016				
Devonian climate, sea-level and evolutionary events	IUGS	In production	SP	Has started Online First
Archaean Cratons: New Insights on Old Rocks	IUGS	Accepted	SP	Papers in review process
Developments in Engineering Geology	IGC34	Accepted	EGSP	Editors working hard to complete the volume
River dominated shelf sediments of Asian seas	IGC34	In production	SP	Has started Online First

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Supercontinent Cycles Through Earth History: Possibilities and Geodynamic Processes	IGC34	In production	SP	Has started Online First
Geohazards in Indonesia: Earth Science for Disaster Risk Reduction	IGC34	Accepted	SP	Probably viable, awaiting communication from Editors
2017				
Radon, Health and Natural Hazards	IUGS	Accepted	SP	Submissions started
The Permian Timescale	IUGS	Accepted	SP	No submissions yet
History of Geoscience: Celebrating 50 Years of INHIGEO	IUGS	Accepted	SP	Submissions started

* Note that with *Online First*, MS due dates are more fluid, as the GSL no longer takes delivery of a complete batch. Instead a year is given to provide a rough idea of when the book will be completed and published.

EGSP = Engineering Group Special Publication