

35th IGC; report to IUGS, 2014–2015

It's been over 64 years since the International Geological Congress (IGC) was last held in Africa. The 35th IGC will be hosted in Cape Town, South Africa from 28 August to 4 September 2016. During 2015 the Local Organising Committee made progress towards finalising the Scientific Programme, opening the online abstract submission portal, publishing the Third Announcement and opening of Registration.

During late May, members of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) Executive Bureau visited Cape Town to meet the Local Organising Committee and inspect the Cape Town International Convention Centre venue for the event. The IUGS President, Prof. Dr. Roland Oberhänsli, the Secretary-General, Prof. José P. Calvo and the Treasurer, Prof. Shuwen Dong were supported by members of the IUGS Secretariat from Beijing. The visitors had an opportunity to tour the Cape peninsula and winelands to experience some of the geological superlatives and scenic splendour that awaits delegates in August 2016.



The Third Announcement was lodged on the 35th IGC website in early October 2015 and was circulated to the IUGS for distribution to its adhering and affiliated organisations. The document provided more detail on important dates and deadlines, the Scientific Programme, short courses/workshops, field trips and GeoHost support programme.

The Scientific Programme encompasses 50 themes with abstracts being submitted towards over 200 symposia. The management of themes is being undertaken by 182 Theme Champions who are taking ownership of these topics and attracting contributors. Twenty two short courses or workshops have been organised and will be hosted at the CTICC during the weekend prior to the welcome reception on 28 August 2015.

Registration opened on 1 September 2015 and the discounted “Super Early Bird” rate exceeded expectations by attracting over 450 registrations before the “Early Bird” registration rates were introduced on 2 November. The continued weakening of the South African Rand (ZAR) against major currencies has made the 35th IGC even more affordable to most prospective delegates. The accommodation offered on the website (<http://www.35igc.org/Accommodation>) represents unbeatable value!

The itineraries of field trips that will take delegates to spectacular geological sites across South Africa and other African countries have been refined. The ten-day ‘Great Southern African Train Geo-Safari’ from Cape Town to Victoria Falls, offered by JB Train Tours on the Shongololo Express Heritage Train, has been very well supported. The delegates that take part in the other ‘flagship’ trips; the “Geological Summits of Africa” and traverse through the East African Rift Valley in Tanzania, will be treated to unique experiences. Every aspect of South African geology will be covered by 38 field trips and many others will expose delegates to the geological superlatives of Namibia (7 trips), Botswana, Angola, Lesotho, Ghana (2), Mali and Zambia (2).

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

Pre-congress Field Trips	Thursday 18 to Saturday 27 August 2016
Workshops, Short Courses	Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 August 2016
Registration opens,	
Exhibition setup and Opening	Sunday 28 August 2016
35TH IGC welcome reception	Sunday Evening, 28 August 2016
Opening Ceremony and first symposium	Monday 29 August 2016
Scientific Programme	Monday 29 August to Friday 2 September 2016
Business meetings	Evenings of Monday 29 August to Thursday 1 September 2016
Congress dinner	Thursday 1 September 2016
Last symposium & Closing Ceremony	Friday 2 September 2016
Post-congress Field Trips	Saturday 3 to Tuesday 13 September 2016



- Caption: members of the IUGS Executive Committee and Secretariat were taken on a geological excursion around the Cape peninsula area. The geological development of this region was explained by Prof John Rogers (left) to Xu Yaqi and Wang Wei (IUGS Secretariat), José Calvo, Greg Botha (Secretary-General, 35th IGC), Roli Oberhänsli and Shuwen Dong. (photo Morgan Morris)