

IUGS E-Bulletin #19 February 21, 2007

Highlights of the 57th Executive Committee Meeting of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) January 16-20, 2007 Nara Public Hall, Nara Japan.

CONDOLENCES EXPRESSED

Vice President Eldridge Moores accepted to chair the meeting, and opened with a moment of silence. IUGS President Zhang Hongren had suffered the loss of his wife, Wang Meixian on January 12th and was unable to travel to Nara. IUGS webmaster John Aaron also sent his regrets: his wife, Barbara Aaron, passed away December 12th, after a long illness. Missed also was Mr. Satoru Ohya (Chair of the IYPE National Committee for Japan) who died November 13th at the age of 76 a few days after a traffic accident. Also commemorated was Professor Vilen Zharikov, former IUGS Vice-President, who passed away on July 29th.

MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION

The IUGS Executive Committee warmly welcomed representatives from the National Committees for Japan, Mongolian and Russia and Mongolia to their 57th annual meeting.

The Executive reviewed the activities of the existing affiliated organizations to IUGS (see list below). The Executive also noted that IUGS representatives had been present at nearly two-thirds of the meetings held in 2006 by various IUGS affiliated organizations. The presence of IUGS at Affiliate meetings increases contacts and visibility in contrast to have a single representative from the Affiliate Organization attend the IUGS EC meeting.

New affiliate members:

In December 2006, the IUGS Council had unanimously ratified the Executive Committee's decision to approve applications of The European Association for the Conservation of the Geological Heritage (ProGEO) and Drilling, Observation and Sampling of the Earth's Continental Crust (DOSECC) as Affiliated Organizations. The 57th EC approved the applications of National Ground Water Association (NGWA)* and the Association for African Women Geologists (AAWG) and will soon present to Council their request for ratification.

*pending IUGS Council ratification

Organizations presently affiliated to IUGS:

AAG, AAPG, AEGS, AAWG*, AGA, AGI, AGID, AGU, AIPEA, CBGA, CGMW, CIFEG, CPC, DOSECC, EASE, EMU, GS, GSA, GSA, GV, IAEG, IAG, IAGC, IAGOD, IAH, IAMG, IAS, ICL, IFPS, IGEO, IMA, IPA (permafrost), IPA (paleo), ISRM, ISSMGE, IMGA, Meteoritical Society, ProGeo, SEG, SEPM, SGA

IUGS COMMISSIONS, TASKGROUPS AND OTHER JOINT PROGRAMMES

Summaries of all annual reports were presented at the meeting. The Executive Committee members are now in the process of sending replies to all organizations that submitted their reports. The recommendations of the Ad hoc Review committees on the Systematics of Petrology and Fossils Fuels were discussed. Both groups will be allowed time to respond to the reports of

the ARC, to determine if Executive follow-up is required.

THE INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESSES

The Presidents of the 32nd, 33rd and 34th International Geological Congresses attended various parts of the meeting to discuss the new relationship between IUGS and IGC, as well as to report on planning of the congresses in 2008 and 2012. The combining of IGC and IUGS Councils had been approved in Florence, and a new task group was still busy at work refining statutes that could be approved electronically and in place prior to the Council in 2008 in Oslo.

The 33rd IGC President, Arne Bjørlykke, reported on congress preparations and hoped that IUGS would encourage more submissions of symposium suggestions from North and South America IUGS commissions, task groups and initiatives. He also mentioned that the funds available for the Geohosts programme were double of those available for the 32nd IGC in Florence, which will offset the IGC participation costs for many more people.

Neil Williams, the 34th IGC President, described the work by the local Congress committee to plan field trips in the South Pacific outside Australia and New Zealand. Political unrest, like that currently experienced in the South Pacific, could interfere with organization of field trips in this region. It was hoped such problems would not hamper future organization. The preparation for the congress is well on track and updates and brochures can be found on the newly established website: <http://www.ga.gov.au/igc2012/>

TOWARDS A GLOBALLY INTEGRATED GEOLOGICAL UNIT

Various Executive Committee members and observers expressed the need for a more integrated, cohesive geological community at both the national and international level. There was concern expressed that certain national geological societies wished to receive more information regarding key IUGS activities. The Executive Committee established a task group to undertake a case study on the structure, function and operability of the IUGS national committees in five countries. The countries to be included in this study will be announced in a future E-Bulletin.

In 2007, the Executive Committee will work further to improve cohesion of the international earth sciences organizations represented in the International Council of Science. IUGG's incoming Secretary General's attendance and contribution to the meeting was acknowledged and appreciated.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANET EARTH

The IYPE Board held its first meeting early January 9 and 10 at the Piccadilly House in London. The Board is currently seeking a new Chairman. Professor Eduardo de Mulder, Executive Director of the IYPE Secretariat discussed the organization, budget and fund-raising strategies. The annual report is available on-line at <http://www.yearofplanetearth.org>

RESTRUCTURING INTERNATIONAL GEOSCIENCE PROGRAMME (IGCP)

Robert Missotten, Chief of the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences of UNESCO, was at hand for discussions on the restructuring of the IGCP programme. The IUGS and UNESCO have already approved new guidelines for submitting project proposals: these can be found posted on <http://www.unesco.org/science/earth/igcp.shtml>.

Drafts for the new organization and operating structure of IGCP, as well as guidelines for the project evaluation process were also tabled and approved pending minor changes. Still to be developed are new procedures for the creation of IGCP National Committees.

SPONSORS

The Executive expressed thanks to Prof. Niichi Nishiwaki for the careful organization of the Annual Executive Committee meeting, and to the sponsors (many who were represented at the meeting): The Geological Society of Japan, Geological Survey of Japan (AIST) 21st Century COE for Neo-Science of Natural History (Hokkaido, University), Japan Geotechnical Consultants Association, Tokyo Geographical Society, The Japanese Association of Mineralogists, Petrologists and Economic Geologists, Japan Society of Engineering Geology, The Sedimentological Society of Japan, Japan Society of Geoinformatics and the Nara Convention Bureau. Representatives from these sponsor organizations were present for parts of the meeting.

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