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## NEWS AT A GLANCE

- IGC Abstract Submission Deadline Postponed to Feb 29<sup>th</sup>
  - Report on IUGS 69<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee Meeting, Kunming
  - Call for Applications: Roster of Evaluators for UNESCO Global Geoparks
  - IGCP Evaluation Board Chair Awarded the Order of Australia
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### IGC ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE POSTPONED TO FEB 29<sup>TH</sup>

The deadline for abstract submission for the International Geological Congress (IGC) in Cape Town, South Africa (August, 2016) has been postponed to February 29<sup>th</sup>. Take the opportunity to submit an abstract!

Please refer to the [IGC website](#) for details regarding abstract submission.



### REPORT ON IUGS' 69<sup>TH</sup> EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, KUNMING

The IUGS Executive Committee (EC) held its 69<sup>th</sup> Meeting in Kunming, southern China. The meeting was sponsored by the Department of Land and Resources of the Yunnan Province and the Stone Forest Global Geopark. This event was organized by the Stone Forest Global Geopark, Kunming City, and the Secretariat of IUGS. Needless to say, the organization was excellent and the extremely kind and generous hospitality provided by local authorities was greatly appreciated by all participants.

The program of the EC meeting was divided into three main parts: the opening session of the EC involving EC members, the IUGS Secretariat and invited people from several IUGS bodies (the session ran January 18–19); followed by a 2 day fieldtrip to the Stone Forest Geopark and some locations important for the evolution of life (e.g. Precambrian–Cambrian); and thirdly a closed session of the Executive on January 22.

After welcoming addresses by R. Oberhänsli, President of IUGS, and Bai Xingbi, the top level representative of the Ministry of Land and Resources, the open session started with a very emotive event to honor our greatly respected Former IUGS President Prof. Zhang Hongren. The IUGS golden pin was presented to Prof. Zhang by the current President of IUGS.

The opening session of the EC was used to discuss some currently relevant aspects of both the internal activities of the Union and the Union's relationships with other organizations. Items such as the current status of the Initiative on *Resourcing Future Generations* (RFG), progress of the New Activities Strategic Implementation Committee (NASIC) and advances in the organization of the RFG2018 in Vancouver, Canada, were discussed. The relationships between IUGS and UNESCO were



analyzed following the recent approval of the reinvigorated International Geosciences Program, taking advantage of the presence of Dr. Patrick McKeever, Executive Secretary of the UNESCO Science Department. IUGS – ICSU relations and the participation of IUGS in the ICSU Grants Programme were also considered.

With regard to activities of the IUGS bodies, reports by representatives of the IUGS Commissions (ICS, COGE, CGI, INHIGEO, TEC TASK and GEM), Task Groups, IUGS Committees and Initiatives, other than the RFG, were provided. Important reorganizations of certain IUGS bodies were proposed by the IUGS Secretary General. As promoted by the EC in Vancouver last year, the Task Group on Global Geochemical Baselines (TGGGB) was proposed to be upgraded into a Commission. The two task groups dealing with aspects of geoheritage (Global Heritage Stone and Geo-Heritage Task Groups) will merge into a new Commission.



A new Task Group dealing with Geo-Hazards will be launched if approved when the IUGS Council meets at the 35<sup>th</sup> International Geological Congress in Cape Town. The EC accepted that a new proposal on “Human Activities and the Geoenvironment” should be developed in association with other International Geosciences Unions for consideration at the Cape Town meeting.

An important matter of discussion in the opening session of the EC was publications policy, outreach and promotion of the Union. It was good to note that the impact factor of *Episodes* has risen from 0.95 in 2012 to 2.0 in 2015. Several aspects of the modernization of *Episodes* were discussed in detail in preparation for decisions to be taken during the 35<sup>th</sup> IGC.

Progress towards the organization of the IGC was presented by the Secretary General of the congress, Dr. Greg Botha. The EC was informed of the various business meetings that will take place during the congress.

Representatives of the 36<sup>th</sup> IGC in Delhi 2020 reported on the organization of the event. In addition to this information the EC took note that four expressions of interest for organizing the 37<sup>th</sup> IGC in 2024 had been received by the deadline. South Korea (Busan venue), Russia (Saint Petersburg venue), Germany–France–Poland (Berlin venue) and Turkey (Istanbul venue) have expressed interest for hosting the 37<sup>th</sup> IGC.

Some Adhering Organizations and Affiliated Associations presented short reports dealing with activities in 2015 and prospective activities in 2016.

The field trips organized during the EC meeting were very enjoyable. The first trip was a one day visit to the Stone Forest Global Geopark, an impressive karst landscape sculpted in Permian limestones that covers about 250 square kilometers. The Geopark, which received 4 million visitors in 2015, shows a variety of karstic landforms including tower-like landscape, dolines, lakes and falls. The second one day trip visited the Chengjiang Fossil Site, 60 km from Kunming, where an extraordinary Early Cambrian faunal assemblage had been discovered by 1990. Recognition of the fossil site was supplemented by a visit of the EC members and invitees to the museum built in the city of Chengjiang. Local authorities kindly hosted the attendance in the area. In the afternoon, the trip was continued to the Kuniang deposit, one of the largest phosphorite mines in the world. An outstanding element of the area is the Meishucun section where the Precambrian–Cambrian boundary has been described. In short, the 2-day field trips in Yunnan Province allowed participants to see top geological sites.

IUGS is deeply thankful to all the hosting administrations in China, at the local, regional and national level.

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: ROSTER OF EVALUATORS FOR UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS

In accordance with the Statutes of the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) and the Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, UNESCO in conjunction with the Global



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Cultural Organization



UNESCO  
Global  
Geoparks



Geoparks Network (GGN) will establish and maintain a roster of evaluators who will undertake field evaluations of new applications for aspiring UNESCO Global Geoparks and revalidation missions of established UNESCO Global Geoparks. These evaluators will have combined and proven professional experience relevant for UNESCO Global Geopark development (geological heritage, conservation, sustainable development, tourism development and promotion, and environmental issues).

Evaluators will serve in their personal capacity, not as representatives of their respective States or any other affiliated entities. The GGN will ensure that evaluators have no conflict of interest regarding new UNESCO Global Geopark applications or those requiring revalidation. Evaluators will not seek or accept instructions from governments or other authorities and will not conduct missions in their own country. The UNESCO Global Geoparks Bureau will assign a maximum of two evaluators from the roster of evaluators per field evaluation / revalidation mission.

Evaluation Teams shall independently:

- (a) evaluate applications, extensions and revalidations for UNESCO Global Geoparks on the basis of the strict guidelines provided by the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council;
- (b) prepare a report to the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council on the applications, extensions and revalidations evaluated.

#### *Procedure for inscription in the roster of evaluators*

Each individual wishing to become an evaluator for UNESCO Global Geoparks should fill in the application form for evaluator for UNESCO Global Geoparks and send it to the UNESCO Global Geopark Secretariat (Patrick McKeever, [pj.mckeever@unesco.org](mailto:pj.mckeever@unesco.org)) and the President of the GGN Association (Nikolaos Zouros, [nzour@aegean.gr](mailto:nzour@aegean.gr)), accompanied by their CV, including the necessary documentation and references.

The GGN will create a database for the UNESCO Global Geopark evaluators. This database will be used by the UNESCO Secretariat in conjunction with the GGN for the establishment of the roster of evaluators carrying out field evaluations of new applications for aspiring UNESCO Global Geoparks and revalidation missions of established UNESCO Global Geoparks.

#### *Criteria for inscription*

Each evaluator should fulfil at least **two** of the criteria below:

- Be a manager or representing geoscientist in a “green card” holding UNESCO Global Geopark for at least 4 years;
- Combined and proven professional experience relevant to UNESCO Global Geopark development (in at least **three** of the following areas: geological heritage, geological conservation, sustainable development, tourism development and promotion, environmental issues, community engagement, and public communication of geoscience) for at least 5 years;
- Be a member of the former Global Geoparks Bureau, Asia–Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN) Advisory Committee, and/or European Geoparks Network (EGN) Advisory Committee.



## IGCP EVALUATION BOARD CHAIR AWARDED THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

The Chair of the IGCP Evaluation Board, Patricia Arlene Vickers-Rich (School of Earth, Atmosphere and Environment, Monash University, Australia), was awarded the Order of Australia on January 26<sup>th</sup> “for [her] distinguished service to the Earth Sciences, particularly palaeontology, as an academic, to education curriculum development, and to international scientific organisations” (Australian Governor General’s website)

IUGS congratulates Pat for this highly deserved recognition.

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### NOTES

- If you require notices, information on publications, etc. to be considered for inclusion in forthcoming IUGS e-bulletins, please <mailto:amel.barich@gmail.com>
- Please check the IUGS [Calendar of Events](#) for upcoming scientific meetings this coming month. If you require information on international conferences, meetings, etc. to be considered for inclusion in this Calendar please <mailto:pbobrows@NRCan.gc.ca>.
- To be added to or removed from the IUGS e-bulletin distribution list, please <mailto:iugs.beijing@gmail.com>.

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