



IUGS Commission on Geoscience Education, Training & Technology Transfer (COGE)

The training of IUGS/IGEO Field Officers

(by Chris King, IUGS-COGE Chair)

Two International Union of Geological Sciences/International Geoscience Education Organisation (IUGS/IGEO) Field Officers have been appointed and trained alongside four new European Geosciences Union (EGU) Field Officers. Yamina Bourgeoini in Morocco and Baskar in India, together with the EGU Field Officers based in France, Italy, Portugal and Spain, will now be offering workshops in their own countries to train school teachers and geopark volunteers in interactive geoscience teaching strategies. All the Field Officers are unpaid, but the training and kit expenses for the IUGS/IGEO Field Officers has been covered by IUGS.



R. Baskar (India).



Yamina Bourgeoini (Morocco).



Training.



The training took place in the build up to the EGU General Assembly in Vienna in April this year. The six field officers were trained to offer teaching workshops originally devised by the Earth Science Education Unit (ESEU) which have been used to train nearly 40,000 teachers of science, geography and primary children in the UK. These workshops have received highly positive evaluation feedback, whilst research has shown that they have a real impact on teaching in schools.

The workshops focus on:

- Exploring rocks, soils, water, fossils and the active Earth for primary (elementary) teachers
- Rock identification and using the school environment for primary (elementary) and secondary (high school) teachers
- The rock cycle, plate tectonics and the structure of the Earth, and teaching Earth processes for secondary (high school) teachers of science and geography
- The training of informal geoscience educators in geoparks

An example is the Dynamic rock cycle workshop, which includes the following phases:

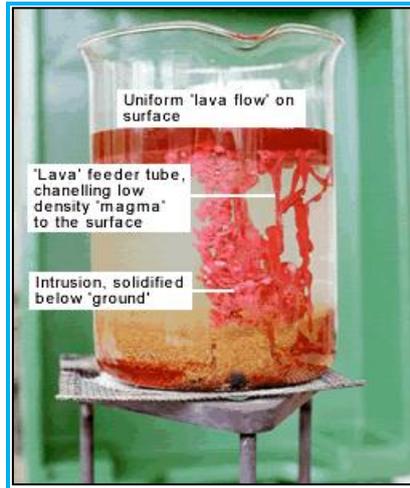
- A 'starter' activity of inviting participants to place rock and sediment samples and photographs in the correct positions on a rock cycle diagram
- A review of the 'starter' to reinforce the correct positioning the rock cycle products
- Introduction to the different surface and deep Earth processes that produce all these products
- Exploration of a range of hands-on practical teaching activities to teach about: weathering, erosion, transportation and deposition, compaction and cementation, metamorphism, crystallisation, extrusion and deformation
- Plenary activities to draw all the practical activities together whilst consolidating learning

The workshop uses two hours of interactive teaching, presentation, discussion and conclusion. It has been shown by research that, when teachers return to their schools, they change their schemes of work and so their teaching in the light of this workshop. Not many educational initiatives can demonstrate impact on teaching in this way.

For information on the availability of the new Field Officers, contact: chris@earthlearningidea.com



The deformation of sand and flour layers in a small plastic box.



The results of a 'wax volcano' 'eruption', showing 'intrusions' and 'lava flows'.