

## Candidate for IUGS Executive Committee

### Position: Secretary General

**Name:** Philippe CLAEYS

**Affiliation:** Analytical-Environmental & Geo-Chemistry,  
Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium

**Nominating Organization:** Belgium - National Committee  
for Geological Sciences



### Biography:

I am a geologist interested in documenting global changes and the consequences of asteroid and comet impacts on the evolution of the bio-geosphere. I obtained my PhD in early 1993 from the University of California at Davis working on the Chicxulub crater in Yucatan, the most likely cause of the mass extinction that wiped out the dinosaurs, 66 million years ago. I then carried out postdoctoral research at UCLA, measuring platinum group elements by neutron activation in sediments, before taking in 1994 a position as research geologist at UC Berkeley in the group of Walter Alvarez. I then moved to the Museum of Natural History in Berlin as chief scientist in charge of organizing the new analytical laboratories. In 2001, I returned to Belgium, as a professor at the "Vrije Universiteit Brussel" in Brussels, where I established the multidisciplinary research unit Analytical-Environmental and Geochemistry. I am also a visiting professor at Ghent University, Catholic University Leuven and University of Liège. In 2009, I promoted joint Belgian-Japanese meteorite searches in Antarctica, using the new Belgian station in the Sør Rondane Mountains. I spent 2017, as International Scholar at the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of British Columbia, in Vancouver. When not in the field looking for clues to better understand the 4.5 billion years of evolution of planet Earth, I enjoy working in the lab and discussing research ideas with PhD students and postdocs on a wide variety of projects ranging from Antarctic meteorites, to paleoclimate and cyclostratigraphy, and from geo-archaeology to urban water management. More on my website: <http://we.vub.ac.be/en/philippe-claey>s

**Statement:**

Over the years, my career took me to different countries and working environments. I realized that the passion that motivates Earth Scientists to understand the dynamic processes that shape our planet and use this knowledge to preserve it, often forges strong connections between people of various backgrounds and cultures. I particularly enjoy these ties as well as the great collaborations and interactions, I had with so many colleagues, either in the field, in the laboratory, around a campfire or in a fancy restaurant. Now, with my application of Secretary General on the IUGS Executive Committee, I propose, for a few years, to devote my time, experience and energy to a worldwide organization that promotes the global understanding of the complex mechanisms of planet Earth through scientific research and outreach to the public, and that within a broad and open international context. As my research shows, I am implicated in a wide variety of topics in the Earth Sciences, I consider this an advantage to support the vast scientific missions of IUGS and encourage an even larger number of scientists, from all over the world, to participate and contribute.

This is a critical period for Earth Scientists; we are the carriers of 4.5 billion years of planet evolution and transformation and this fantastic knowledge must be made available to manage and/or adapt to the ongoing anthropogenic global changes and protect Earth natural environments and vast resources.