



International Geoscience Programme

Report of the IGCP Secretary for 2008

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1. IGCP reform process

Since the inception of the programme over 35 years ago the field of earth sciences has evolved. Initially IGCP projects focussed on basic geoscience research and the correlation of events in the earth's history. More recently, the emphasis changed towards themes oriented to society. Responding to this, IGCP is changing from a programme with focus on fundamental sciences to a programme concentrating on applied geosciences, including mitigation of geo-hazards, such as earthquakes, landslides and volcanic eruptions. IGCP became more interdisciplinary in nature and co-operates very closely with the Division of Water Sciences to strengthen the principal priority of UNESCO in the natural sciences.

The IGCP reform process started in 2005 following the major findings of the external evaluation of IGCP carried out in 2004 (document 169 EX/22). Since then UNESCO and our partners from the IUGS took steps to improve the mode of operation of the IGCP, and to continue to improve the efficiency of its strategic planning process, and effectiveness of its governing mechanisms. In 2005, a reflection process was also initiated among the partner organizations of IGCP to adjust the programme to their new strategic priorities and findings of the external evaluation. As a logical consequence, although the ongoing IGCP projects continued, no call for new proposals was issued during that year.

In 2005 a fifth working group was created in the IGCP Board focussing on Hydrogeology. Several internal working documents were revised or are currently under revision (proposal guidelines, project assessment procedure, guidelines for IGCP National Committees, Statutes). In 2006 the IGCP decided further to reorient the aims and objectives of the programme and create 5 themes. A new call for project proposals was undertaken in summer 2006 under the revised guidelines. The five new 'themes' of particular interest to IGCP are:

Geoscience of the Water Cycle

Geohazards: Mitigating the Risks

Earth Resources: Sustaining our Society

Global Change and Evolution of Life: Evidence from the geological record

The Deep Earth: How it controls our environment

The reform of the composition of the IGCP Scientific Board has already started in 2007 and is well underway. A call for nominations for IGCP Scientific Board membership was sent out by IUGS and UNESCO in spring 2007 in view of replacing outgoing Board members and to nominate scientists with expertise in the above-mentioned new topics of special interest to IGCP. It shall result in the expansion to up to 50 experts from the current 40.

2. Acknowledgement to the outgoing members of the IGCP Scientific Board

In 2008 three members of the IGCP Scientific Board retired.

Theme Group 1 - Water

Wilhelm Struckmeier (Chair, Germany)

Theme Group 2 - Geohazards

Bryan T. Schreiner (Chair, Canada)

Theme Group 3 - Resources

Peter Anthony Cawood (Chair, Rapporteur, Australia)

IUGS

Antonio Brambati (IUGS Treasurer)

Professor William Cavazza (Italy) was asked to serve as IGCP Chairperson until the 37th Board Meeting in order to assure continuity within the new IGCP Board.

3. Overview of current Board members

Theme Group Water

Al-Sultan, Maitham

Bredehoeft, John

Brenčič, Mihael

Georgiadi, Alexander

Lyons, William

Saraf, Arun

Snoussi, Maria (Chair)

Pulido-Bosch, Antonio

Theme Group Geohazards

Canuti, Paolo

Gosar, Andrej

Shroder, John

Slaiupa, Saulius

Stewart, Iain (Chair)

Ulusay, Resat

Theme Group Resources

Agarwal, Mandira

Gervilla, Fernando

Kalindekafe, Leonard

Lips, Andor (Chair)

Ochir, Gerel

Pandit, Sundar

NIE Fengjun (new member in 2008)

Theme Group Global Change and Evolution of Life

Harper, David
Kuijpers, Antoon
Lukeneder, Alexander
Märss, Tiiu
Mc Keever, Patrick
Vajda, Vivi (Chair)
Vickers-Rich, Patricia
Peter Koenigshof
Narbonne, Guy

Theme Group Deep Earth

Ainsaar, Leho
Brown, Dennis
Dilek, Yildirim (Chair)
Gibson, George
Kroener, Alfred
Rapalini, Augusto
Shuwen Dong (extended term)
Toteu, Felix
Jin Xiaochi (new member in 2008)

4. Information on IGCP projects

IGCP Projects according to their year of termination

2008: 487, 495, 497, 499, 500, 502, 503 (seven)

2009: 480, 506, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 519, 521, 523, 524 (fourteen)

2010: 507, 543, 555 (three)

1011: 526, 529, 534, 540, 545, 546, 557 (seven)

1012: 557, 559, 565, 567, 572 (five)

5. Publications

The English version of the IGCP annual report 'Geological Correlation No.36' was put on the IGCP website as e-version, with the support of IUGS in July 2008.

Two issues of 'A world of science' had lead stories in relation to themes of the IYPE and the IGCP. Two issues already appeared having two major articles 'in focus' on "The rise of animals" prepared by IGCP Project 493 ('The Rise and Fall of the Vendian Biota', Patricia Vickers-Rich, et al.).

6. Finances

The statistics of the financial situation of IGCP projects from 1988 to 2008 is listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1

| Year | UNESCO | IUGS US | Total | No. of projects | | | Average per project |
|--------------------------------------|--------|------------|-------|-----------------|--------|-----|------------------------|
| | | | | Overall | Funded | OET | |
| Financial figures in US\$1,000 units | | | | | | | |
| 1988 | 173.3 | 104.0 | 277.5 | 53 | 50 | 3 | 5.5 |
| 1989 | 143.1 | 109.9 | 253.0 | 55 | 50 | 2+3 | 5.0 |
| 1990 | 185.0 | 121.0 | 306.0 | 61 | 54 | 6+1 | 5.6 |
| 1991 | 185.0 | 137.0 | 322.0 | 59 | 55 | 3+1 | 5.8 |
| 1992 | 170.0 | 137.0 | 307.0 | 56 | 50 | 5+1 | 6.1 |
| 1993 | 173.0 | 147.2 | 320.2 | 60 | 56 | 4 | 5.7 |
| 1994 | 190.3 | 137.0 | 327.3 | 54 | 50 | 4 | 6.5 |
| 1995 | 197.7 | 143.5 | 341.2 | 53 | 51 | 2 | 6.6 |
| 1996 | 199.8 | 130.0 | 329.8 | 56 | 49 | 7 | 6.7 |
| 1997 | 204.0 | 55.0 | 259.0 | 53 | 45 | 8 | 5.8 |
| 1998 | 205.0 | 90.0 | 295.0 | 49 | 40 | 9 | 7.4 |
| 1999 | 190.0 | 90.0 | 288.0 | 43 | 40 | 3 | 7.2 |
| 2000 | 187.7 | 90.0 | 277.7 | 45 | 40 | 5 | 6.9 |
| 2001 | 184.4 | 95 | 279.4 | 41 | 37 | 4 | 7.5 |
| 2002 | 170.0 | 95.0 | 265.0 | 39 | 33 | 4 | 8.0 |
| 2003 | 180.4 | 95.3 | 275.7 | 42 | 37 | 5 | 7.5 |
| 2004 | 180.5 | 95.5 | 276.0 | 39 | 37 | 2 | 7.5 |
| 2005 | 163.0 | 95.0 | 258.0 | 48 | 47 | 1 | 5.5 |

| Year | UNESCO | IUGS | Total | Projects | | | no funding | Average per project |
|------|--------|------|-------|----------|--------|-----|---------------|------------------------|
| | | | | Overall | Funded | OET | | |
| 2006 | 135.5 | 61.5 | 198.0 | 44 | 40 | 4 | - | 4.95 |
| 2007 | 162.0 | 58.5 | 220.5 | 47 | 44 | 2 | 1 | 5.01 |
| 2008 | 105.0 | 60.0 | 165.0 | 38 | 33 | 5 | - | 5.00 |

In 2008, about 54% of the IGCP budget (UNESCO contribution) was decentralized. 11 projects have been decentralized to the UNESCO Offices in the following cities: Jakarta (6 projects), Montevideo (2 projects), and Nairobi (2 projects), Cairo (1 project).

Efforts undertaken to widen the funding base of IGCP by contacting countries and organizations for support for IGCP were successful with the initiation of a transfer for 2009 of 20.000 USD annual contribution from China.

7. Funding status of IGCP Projects in 2008

| Completed | Terminated | On extended term | Medium low | Medium medium | Medium high | High | Young Scientists Projects |
|-----------|------------|------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|------|---------------------------|
| 467 (OET) | 515 | 475 | 523 | 487 | 480 | 497 | |
| 469 | | 478 | 526* | 495 | 499 | 500 | |
| 473 (OET) | | 481 | | 503 | 506 | 502 | |
| 474 | | 486 | | 507 | 512 | 509 | |
| 476 | | 493 | | 510 | | 511 | |
| 479 | | | | 514 | | 513 | |
| 482/489 | | | | 516 | | 521 | |
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| 490 | | | | 524 | | | |
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| | | | | 567 | | | |
| | | | | 572 | | | |

In the follow-up to the 36th IGCP Scientific Board Meeting, after analysis of the recommendations made by the Scientific Board concerning the on-going projects and the new project proposals, IUGS and UNESCO jointly decided to only accept the four highest ranking new project proposals for funding. This decision was made by taking into consideration the funds available and the overall strategy to reduce the number of IGCP projects.

8. IGCP Projects active in 2008

**No. title,
project leader(s),
duration (OET – on extended term)
website(s)**

475 Deltas in the Monsoon Asia-Pacific Region (DeltaMAP)

S. Goodbred, Jr. (United States), Y. Saito (Japan)

2003-2007 (OET)

http://unit.aist.go.jp/igg/rg/cug-rg/ADP/ADP_E/a_igcp475l_en.html

478 Neoproterozoic-Early Palaeozoic Events in South-West-Gondwana

C. Gaucher (Uruguay), P. C. Boggiani (Brazil), A. Braun (Germany), H. Hartwig Frimmel (Germany), J.B. Germs (South Africa), D. G. Poiré (Argentina)

2003-2007 (OET)

Official website: www.igcp478.com

Mirror website: www.vssagi.com/igcp478/igcp478.htm

480 Tectonics of Central Asia

B. Natal'in (Turkey), A. Yin (United States), A. M. C. Şengör (Turkey), M. Kuzmin (Russia), Shuwen Dong (China)

2005-2009

<http://www.igcp.itu.edu.tr/>

481 Dating Caspian Sea Level Change

S.B. Kroonenberg (Netherlands), S. Leroy (United Kingdom)

2003-2007 (OET)

<http://www.caspasea.org>

www.caspiansealevelchange.org

<http://black.sealevel.ca>

486 Au-Ag-Telluride-Selenide Deposits

N. J. Cook (Norway), K. Kojonen (Finland)

2003-2007 (OET)

www.ngu.no/igcp486

487 Seismic Microzoning of Latin American Cities

J. L. Alvarez Gómez (Cuba), A. A. Giesecke Matto (Peru), G. F. Panza (Italy)

2004-2008

www.ictp.trieste.it/~sand/SMLAC/SMLAC.html

493 The Rise and Fall of the Vendian Biota

M. Fedonkin (Russia), P. Vickers-Rich (Australia), J. Gehling (Australia)

- 2003-2007 (OET)
<http://www.geosci.monash.edu.au/precsite>
- 495 Quaternary Land-Ocean Interactions**
A. Long (United Kingdom), S. Islam (Bangladesh)
2004-2008
www.geography.dur.ac.uk/projects/igcp495
- 497 The Rheic Ocean**
U. Linnemann (Germany), R. D. Nance (United States), M. de Wit (South Africa), E. Bozkurt (Turkey), P. Kraft (Czech Republic), F. Pereira (Portugal), R. A. Strachan (United Kingdom)
2004-2008
<http://www.snsd.de/igcp497/>
- 499 Devonian land-sea interaction: Evolution of Ecosystems and Climate in the Devonian**
P. Königshof (Germany), J. Lazauskiene (Lithuania), E. Schindler (Germany), Volker Wilde (Germany) and N. Yalçin (Turkey)
2004-2008
<http://www.senckenberg.de/igcp-499>
- 500 Dryland Change: Past, Present, Future**
D. Thomas (United Kingdom)
2004-2008
<http://igcp500.ouce.ox.ac.uk/>
- 502 Global Comparison of Volcanic-hosted Massive Sulphide Districts**
R. Allen (Sweden), F. Tornos (Spain), J. Peter (Canada), N. Çagatay (Turkey)
2004-2008
<<http://www.1tu.se/tkg/>>
<<http://www.1tu.se/tkg/avd/kgoforsk/IGCP>>
- 503 Ordovician Palaeogeography and Palaeoclimate**
T. Servais (France), D.A.T. Harper (Denmark), J. Li (China), A. Munnecke (Germany), A. W. Owen (United Kingdom), P.M. Sheehan (United States)
2004-2008
<http://sarv.gi.ee/igcp503/>
- 506 Marine and Non-marine Jurassic**
Jingeng Sha (China), Nicol Morton (France), W. A.P. Wimbledon (United Kingdom), Paul E. Olsen (United States), Alberto G. Riccardi (Argentina), Grzegorz (Gregory) Pieńkowski (Poland), Yongdong Wang (China)
2005-2006 (2009)
<http://www.nigpas.ac.cn/IGCP506index.asp>
- 507 Paleoclimates of the Cretaceous in Asia**
Yong Il Lee (Korea), Xiaoqiao Wan (China), Takashi Sakai (Japan), and Krishnan Ayyasami (India)
2006-2010
<http://igcp507.kopri.re.kr/>
- 509 Palaeoproterozoic Supercontinents and Global Evolution**
S.M. Reddy (Australia), D. Evans (United States), R. Mazumder (India)
2005-2009
<http://earth.geology.yale.edu/igcp509/>
- 510 A-type Granites and Related Rock through Time**
Roberto Dall'Agnol (Brazil), Carol D. Frost (United States), O. Tapani Rämö (Finland), L.J. Robb (South Africa)

- 2005-2009
<http://www.igcp-510.org>
- 511 Submarine Mass Movements and Their Consequences**
Jacques Locat (Canada), Juergen Mienert (Norway) and Roger Urgeles (Spain)- (IOC link)
2005-2009
<http://www.geohazards.no/IGCP511>
- 512 Neoproterozoic Ice Ages**
Graham A. Shields (Australia), Emmanuelle Arnaud (Canada)
2005-2009
www.IGCP512.org
- 513 Karst Aquifers and Water Resources**
Chris Groves (United States), Yuan Daoxian (China), Bartolome Andreo-Novarro (Spain), Heather Viles (United Kingdom)
2005-2009
<http://hoffman.wku.edu/igcp/513.html> (General information)
<http://hoffman.wku.edu/karst2007/k2007.html>
<http://www.wku.edu/cehp>
http://www.cosis.net/members/meetings/sessions/information.php?p_id=247&s_id=4433
- 514 Fluvial Palaeosystems: Evolution and Mineral Deposits**
N. Patyk-Kara (Russia), A. Duk-Rodkin (Canada), Baohong Hou (Australia), Li Ziyang (China), Vladimir Dolgoplov (Kazakhstan)
2005-2009
<http://www.igem.ru/igcp514/>
- 516 Geological Anatomy of East and South East Asia**
Ken-ichiro Hisada (Japan), Punya Charusiri (Thailand), Byung-Joo Lee (Rep. of Korea), Xiaochi Jin (China)
2005-2009
<http://staff.aist.go.jp/hara-hide/igcp516>
- 519 Hydrogeology, Hydrochemistry and Management of Coastal Aquifers on the Atlantic Coast of South America**
Emilia Bocanegra (Argentina), Emilio Custodio (Spain), Marisol Manzano (Spain), Gerson Cardoso (Brazil), Jenny Reynolds Vargas (Costa Rica),
2005-2009
<http://www.mdp.edu.ar/exactas/geologia/cgcyc/hidrogeologia.html>
- 521 Black sea Mediterranean Corridor during the last 30 ky: Sea level change and human adaptation**
Valentina Yanko-Hombach (Canada), Yucel Yilmaz (Turkey), Pavel Dolukhanov (United Kingdom)
2005-2009
<http://www.avalon-institute.org/IGCP>
<http://black.sealevel.ca>
<http://www.bridge.bris.ac.uk/projects/EMBSEC BIO>
<http://www.paleontol.geo.sfn.edu>
- 523 GROWNET – Goba Ground Water Network**
Shrikant Daji Limaye (India), Antony J Reedman (United Kingdom)
2005-2009
<http://www.igcp-grownet.org>
- 524 Arc-Continent Collision**
Denis Brown (Spain), Chi-Yue Huang (Taiwan)

2007-2009

www.ija.csic.es/gt/IGCP524

- 526 Risks Resources and Record of the Past on the Continental Shelf**
Francesco L. Latino Chiocci (Italy), Lindsay Collins (Australia), Michel Michaelovitch de Mahiques (Brazil), Renée Hetherington (Canada)
2007(-2011).
- 529 Availability of groundwater resources in selected urban areas in Southern African Development Community (SADC) region**
Imasiku A. Nyambe (Zambia)
2007-2011
- 540 Gold-bearing hydrothermal fluids of orogenic deposits**
P.S. Garofalo (Italy), J.R. Ridley (USA), Vsevolod Prokof'ev (Russia)
2007-2011
http://www.geomin.unibo.it/igcp_540
- 543 Low-temperature thermochronology: applications and inter-laboratory calibration**
Massimiliano Zattin (Italy), J. I. Garver (USA), Vitaliy A. Privalov (Ukraine), Alexei V. Soloviev (Russia), Cornelia Spiegel (Germany), Maarten de Wit (South Africa), Dewen Zheng (China)
2007-2010
- 545 Clays and clay minerals in Africa**
Georges-Ivo E. Ekosse (South Africa)
2007-2011
<http://www.saweb.co.za/claymineralsafrica/>
- 546 Subduction zones of the Caribbean**
Antonio Garcia-Casco (Spain), Uwe Martens (USA)
2007-2011
<http://www.ugr.es/~agcasco/igcp546/>
- 555 Rapid Environmental/Climate Change in the Cretaceous Greenhouse World**
Chengshan Wang (China), Robert Scott (USA), Hugh Jenkyns (UK), Michael Wagreich (Austria), William Hay (USA); Zakharov Y.D. (Russia)
2007-2010
www.cretaceousworld.com/igcp555
- 557 Diamonds, xenoliths and kimberlites**
Holger Sommer (Botswana), Klaus Regenauer-Lieb (Australia), Christoph Hauzenberger (Austria) Jonathan Kashabano (Tanzania), Gétan Moloto-A-Kenguemba (Central African Republic)
2007-2011
<http://igcp557.uni-graz.at/>
- 559 Crustal Architecture and landscape Evolution**
Bruce R. Goleby (Australia) and 14 members (USA, Canada, China, Finland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia)
2008-2012
- 565 Geodetic Monitoring of the Global Water Cycle**
Hans-Peter Plag (USA), Richard S. Gross (USA), Markus Rothacher (Germany), Norman L. Miller (USA), Susanna Zerbini (Italy), Chris Rizos (Australia)
2008-2012

567 Earthquake Archaeology – Archaeoseismology along the Alpine-Himalayan seismic zone
Manuel Sintubin (Belgium), Iain Stewart (United Kingdom), Tina Niemi (USA), Erhan Altunel (Turkey)
2008-2012

572 Permian-Triassic ecosystems
Zhong Qiang Chen (Australia), Richard J. Twitchett (United Kingdom), Jinnan Tong (China), Margret L. Fraiser (USA), Sylvie Crasquin (France), Steve Kershaw (United Kingdom), Thomas J. Algeo (USA), Kliti Grice (Australia)
2008-2012

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Funded projects | 33 |
| O.E.T. | 5 |
| <hr/> Total | <hr/> 38 |

9. Proposals received in 2008

| No. | status. | date | title/proposer | NC endors | Theme Group |
|-----|--------------|----------|---|-----------|------------------------|
| 528 | Resub.- e | 15/10/08 | Ore genesis at unstable volcanoes A. Szakacs (Rumania), F. Molnár, (Hungary), K. Nemeth (New Zealand), A. Tibaldi (Italy), E. Canon-Tapia (USA) K. Watanabe (Japan) 2009-2013 | yes | Resources |
| 561 | Resub.- e | 15/10/08 | Resources of Cu, Ni, and PGEs in Mafic Igneous Rocks Edward M. Ripley (USA), Wolfgang Maier (Australia), Mei-Fu Zhou (Hong Kong, China) 2008-2012 | yes | Earth Resources |
| 562 | Resub.- e | 06/10/08 | Hazards assessment and short-term forecast of tephra fallout Antonio (Italy), Arnau Folch (Italy), Gustavo Cordoba (Colombia) 2009-2011 (three years) | yes | Geo-hazard |
| 571 | Resub.- e | 15/10/08 | Radon health and natural hazards Gavin Gillmore (UK), Robin Crockett (UK), Frederic Perrier (France), Tadeusz Przylibski (Poland), V. Walia (Taiwan), B. Bajwa (India) 2009-2013 | yes | Geo-hazards |
| 574 | New-e | 03/10/08 | Bending and Bent Orogens and Continental Ribbons S. Johnston (Canada), G. Gutierrez-Alonso (Spain), A. Weil (USA) 2009-2013 | yes | Deep Earth |
| 575 | New-e | 09/10/08 | Pennsylvanian terrestrial environments of eastern Variscan Euramerica C. Cleal (UK), S. Oplistol (Czech Republic), I. v. Waveren (Netherlands), M. Popa (Rumania), B. Thomas (UK) 2009-2013 | yes | Global Change and Life |
| 576 | New-e | 03/10/08 | Landslides Disaster Management Project (LDMP) Mr. Lugaizi Isa (Uganda), Cees Van Westen (Netherlands), Mr. Wejuli Wesonga Wilber (Uganda), Prof. Dr. Victor Jetten (Netherlands) 2009-2013 | yes | Geohazards |
| 577 | New-e | 15/10/08 | Investigation on Mineralization, Geohazard, Geothermal Resources and geological setting of Sahand-Bazman Quaternary - Plio-Quaternary volcanic belt of Iran Monireh Kheirkhah, Mohamad Hashem Emami (Iran) 2009-2012 (four years) | yes | Deep Earth |
| 578 | New-e | 15/10/08 | Evaluation of Quaternary deposits in order to Landfill site selection from the Environmental and Geotechnical points of view S. Ahmadi, A. Ostovar, P. Rasouli, L. Komaei (Iran) 2009-2013 | yes | Resources, Water |

| | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|----------|---|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 579 | New-e | 15/10/08 | Characteristic of geodynamic and petrology of the quaternary volcanism near border of Iran and Armenia Pezhvak Didar, Abdullah Kosari, Fatemeh Emamian, Mastaneh Haghazari (Iran) 2009-2013 | Yes | Resources, Global change, Deep Earth |
| 580 | New-e | 15/10/08 | Application of magmatic susceptibility on Palaeozoic sedimentary rocks A-C da Silva (Belgium), et al. 2009-2013 | yes | Global Change |
| 581 | New e- | 15/10/08 | Evolution of Asian River Systems Hongho Zheng (China) et al. 1009-2013 | yes | Water, Global Change |
| 582 | New-e | 15/10/08 | Tropical Rivers: Hydro-Physical Processes, Impacts, Hazards and Management E. Latrubesse (USA), et al. 2009-2013 | yes | Water, Geohazards, Resources |
| 583 | New incomplete | 10/08 | Geological and geophysical investigations for development of the Red Sea Deltas El Sayed M. El Kattan (Egypt), et al. 2009-2013 | no | Resources |

10) Proposals to improve IGCP working procedures

These proposals were received by Edward Derbyshire, UK IGCP National Committee Chairperson (14 July and 8 August 2008), which will be presented to the IGCP Board for discussion and Mr Derbyshire was informed that these changes need discussion in the Board and cannot be done by the IGCP Secretariat alone.

The first one concerns changes in the IGCP Proposals Guidelines with the intention to add weight to the National Committee's requests that such copies should be supplied to them as well as to IGCP and IUGS, as well as ensuring that, in future, national records will be complete and up to date (addition highlighted in italics):

“8. Reports

Annual Report forms are sent out to project leaders by the IGCP Secretariat. The **Annual Report** (*in grammatically correct English* and using the IGCP report format) is the basis for the assessment of an IGCP project and the subsequent allocation of funds (high, medium, low). Project leaders must submit their Annual Report electronically to the IGCP Secretariat and simultaneously to the IUGS Permanent Secretariat *and to their National Committee Chairs* before **15 December**. Failure to submit an Annual Report before the deadline will result in automatic termination of the project. Under no circumstances are delays to this deadline permitted. “

The other important question which reached us by Mr Derbyshire was related to the report of the UK IGCP National Committee and concerned a misunderstanding of the deadlines for submission of the report to the IGCP Secretariat. Mr Derbyshire considered that the deadline for NatCom reports (31 October) was too early, regarding the fact that incoming project reports are due on 15 December. Now, the deadline has actually changed since several years in order to facilitate preparation of IGCP NatCom reports to the Secretariat. Deadline for IGCP NatCom reports was on 29 December in 2006, 4 January in 2007, and was now prolonged to 15 January 2009.

11. Information regarding cooperative efforts of IUGS and UNESCO in the Earth sciences

1) International Research Category II Centre on Karst in Guilin, China

As a result of many years of preparatory work within the IGCP, a Category II International Research Centre on Karst was successfully established in Guilin, China, between UNESCO and the People's Republic of China. The research organised by IGCP in the field of Karst (mainly through IGCP 513, 448 and 379) has led to the formulation of a proposal to create an international Karst research centre. An agreement was signed in February 2008 for the establishment of such a centre under the auspices of UNESCO between the Government of the People's Republic of China and UNESCO (Mr Koïchiro Matsuura and Mr Wang Shouxiang, Vice-Minister of Land and Resources of the People's Republic of China). The official opening and the first Governing Board Meeting of the Centre took place in December 2008 in the presence of the Vice minister of the Ministry of Land and Resources, the Assistant Director General of Natural Sciences UNESCO, and the IGCP Secretary and a number of IGCP project leaders.

The creation of the centre responded to the need to strengthen fundamental and applied interdisciplinary research on karst at a worldwide scale. The creation of the centre resulted from an initial proposal by the Government of China to establish on its territory an international research centre on karst. This was unanimously supported by the Scientific Board of the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP), at its 32nd session in February 2004. The IGCP Scientific Board, at its 35th session in February 2007, made a specific resolution in support to the creation of the karst centre. It is the first category 2 centre to be created in the framework of the Earth science programme of UNESCO and is the only international centre on interdisciplinary research on karst in the UN system.

2) Geoparks

In the Framework of IYPE under the auspices of UNESCO the 3rd International Conference on Geoparks took successfully place 22-26 June 2008, Osnabrueck, Germany. For the first time, the International Conference on Geoparks was held in the heart of a Global Geopark, TERRA.vita. About 350 participants attended and discussed how best to communicate the fascination of Geoparks to a wider public, how to integrate them in tourism offers, how to achieve regional development. A wide range of side events such as the 1st International Geoparks Fair, school projects and public lectures made sure that the conference reached out to a wide public. The Global Network of National Geoparks under UNESCO has now 56 members from 18 Member States. The GGN Bureau will increase the number of organizations participating in its work and a letter to this effect will be sent to IUGS early 2009.

3) IYPE

The Director-General of UNESCO Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, gave an opening address on the occasion of the African Regional Conference for the launch of the International Year of Planet Earth, Arusha, Tanzania, 8 May 2008, organized by the Tanzanian National IYPE Committee. Tanzania was not only instrumental in establishing 2008 as the IYPE during the UNESCO and UN administrative and political procedure, but has also taken the lead in championing its objectives across Africa. 15 active African member countries in IYPE participated in this event and about 300 participants attended the event which was hosted by the president of Tanzania.

An IYPE Board meeting was held during the IGC in Oslo, where the support of IGCP projects was discussed. In London in January 2009 an IYPE Board will be further discuss this as well as the future orientations of the Year.

4) The IUGS-UNESCO GARS programme

A separate detailed report on this important cooperative effort and its links to GEO-GEOSS is being submitted by the GARS Chair Prof. Stuart Marsh in December 2008.