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## NEWS AT A GLANCE

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## UN WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION SENDAI, JAPAN

During the UN-WCDRR, held on March 14–18 in Sendai, Japan, several symposia have addressed geoscientific issues specifically.

The session on “Capacity Building of Earth Sciences toward decrease of geohazards: Establishment of global networks for decreasing geohazards” was organized by Hiroshi Kitazato (SCJ Member, IUGS Regional Committee Chair, JAMSTEC) and Kazuhisa Goto (IRIDeS, Tohoku University) and hosted by the Science Council of Japan (National Committee for IUGS), the International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS), the University of Tohoku, and the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST). This event was supported by the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC), the Universities of Tokyo, Okayama, Hiroshima, Meiji, and Osaka City. IUGS councillor Yuriyo Ogawa participated in the organization as well as the symposium program that ended with a joint paper by him and IUGS President Roland Oberhänsli. During the second part of the symposium, devoted to disaster risk reduction related education and knowledge transfer, the strong commitment of Japan by making available grants and special training courses and study programs for students (BSc, MSc and PhD) from less developed or less privileged countries became very obvious. This impressive demonstration of involvement in disaster risk reduction was very welcomed by the international audience. Most of the presented programs focused on improving the education of Earth Science students, some involving aspects of management. IUGS President presented an alternative model called GeoGovernance developed at the University of Potsdam, Germany, where efforts are made to bring scientific thinking on geologic dimensions in time and energy to socio-economic sciences training political administrators. The proposal to think about a new task group on global a geohazard network for disaster reduction was welcomed. It seems that IUGS can expect such a new task group to be proposed by Earth scientists.

The second geoscience-dedicated event was the 3<sup>rd</sup> International G-Ever Meeting, which IUGS Councillor Yujiro Ogawa attended. The G-EVER Consortium and the Geological Survey of Japan organized the *2015 International Workshop on Earthquake and Volcanic Hazards and Risks in Asia-Pacific Region* as one of the



major public forums at UN-WCDRR. The purpose of this event was to establish an effective international framework, allowing for efficient gathering of information on disaster mitigation in the Asia–Pacific Region. The workshop provided a venue for the presentation of research on earthquake and volcanic hazard mitigation in the region, and operated as a forum fostering exchange of ideas on international standards on data compilation, hazard and risk assessment.

The IUGS President attended the working Session “Education and Knowledge in Building a Culture of Resilience” at UN-WCDRR, which ended with a voluntary commitment. The “[ISDR–ICL Sendai Partnerships 2015–2025 for Global Promotion of Understanding and Reducing Landslide Disaster Risk](#)”, meant to contain tools for implementing and monitoring the post-2015 framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Goals. This commitment was presented at the meeting and co-signed in the aftermath by UNISDR, ICL, UNESCO, FAO, UN University, ICSU, WFEO, IUGS, IUGG, CO & MECSST Government of Japan, SCJ, Kyoto University, MCPD Italy, NPRD Croatia.

On the occasion of the UN-WCDRR, the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Sciences Council (ISSC) have released the paper "Disaster Risks Research and Assessment to Promote Risk Reduction and Management" written by an international multidisciplinary group of experts on disaster risk research and practice and reviewed by another group of distinguished experts. The group was comprised of representatives of GeoUnions (IAU, IGU, ISPRS, IUGG, IUGS, and URSI), IRDR, ICSU Regional Programs on Disasters, and ISSC and ICSU appointed experts.

The paper is highlighted at the [ICSU webpage](#) and can be downloaded [here](#).

Besides, the Sendai meeting offered the opportunity of a short field trip to the Boso Peninsula to the Cretaceous Mineoka Ophiolite at Kamogawa (Fig. 1) and accretionary sequences with stunning evidence for paleo-earthquakes induced liquefaction (Fig. 2) as well as thrusts forming duplexes and folding. This was examined at the Nabo Formation of the Upper Oligocene–Lower/Middle Miocene Emi Group and at the Kotto Thrust. The trip ended with spectacular evidence of Holocene earthquake related uplifted terraces near Hiraiso.



Fig. 1: Pillow basalts of the Mineoka Ophiolite at Kamogawa.



Fig. 2: Outstanding evidence for paleo-earthquake induced liquefaction.

## IUGS PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROGEOSURVEYS MEETING, BRUSSELS

The 38<sup>th</sup> EuroGeoSurveys (EGS) meeting held in Brussels, March 24–25, 2015 attracted representatives from the 32 member states integrated in EGS plus 42 invited guests that altogether participated in a workshop dealing with “Geological infrastructures priorities in Africa and beyond”. IUGS was represented in the meeting by Secretary General José P. Calvo who gave a talk on the IUGS Resourcing Future Generations Initiative, and provided updated information on the current activities of the Union. The SG invited the European Geological Surveys to take part in the next RFG meeting that will be held in Windhoek, Namibia, by the end of June, conducted by the NASIC and with the support of IUGS and ICSU.

Several deputies from the European Commission attending the meeting summarized the EU projects being currently developed at both general and regional scales in Africa, in particular those related to the cooperation in searching for mineral resources and enhancing geoscientific knowledge and skills in different countries of the continent. The workshop was attended by high-level representatives from the administrations of Botswana, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Togo, South Africa and Zambia. This was also an appropriate forum for publicizing and encouraging attendance to the 35<sup>th</sup> International Geological Congress, Cape Town 2016.

## HSTG AT THE 7<sup>TH</sup> PARMENIDES CONFERENCE, DUBROVNIK (MARCH 17–19)

The Heritage Stone Task Group (HSTG) was represented at the 7<sup>th</sup> Parmenides Conference by Lola Pereira, presenting the invited contribution: “The Value of Global Heritage Stone Resource Designation in Enhancing our Legacy and Culture”.

The Parmenides Conference (Mediterranean space of knowledge) met on March 17–19, 2015, in Dubrovnik, Croatia, with the common theme: “Common heritage and technologies: enhancement of heritage, a key to development”. The aim of the conference was to gather high-level researchers and stakeholders in the



domain of common heritage and particularly: lively heritage; geological and archaeological heritages and geotourism; heritage and urbanization. By giving access to the available knowledge and to the success stories, this meeting between decision makers and researchers will lead to concrete proposals concerning economical development, job creation and vocational training.

More on the conference and the program can be found [here](#).

The volume of the Geological Society Special Publications dedicated to Global Stone Resources and edited by D. Pereira, B. R. Marker, S. Kramar, B. J. Cooper and B. E. Schouenborg is now fully available online: <http://sp.lyellcollection.org/content/407/1>.

### **CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN HEALTH, BARCELONA (MAY 14–15, 2015)**

A great deal of scientific evidence indicates that the global climate is changing, largely due to human activities. Human health and well-being can be negatively affected by climate fluctuations in a variety of ways including: exposure to extreme weather events; disruption of ecosystems, agriculture, and food production; expansion of infectious diseases; and increased levels of harmful air particulates. To learn more about how climate change affects human health, join the New York Academy of Sciences along with the “la Caixa” Foundation and Biocat at a cross-disciplinary conference that aims to increase public awareness of the health impacts of climate change, and foster translation of recent scientific and medical data into well-informed adaptation policies.

More on the [NYAS website](#).

### **SEMINAR ON USE OF GROUNDWATER FOR EMERGENCY SUPPLIES OF DRINKING WATER, VILNIUS (JUNE 3–5, 2015)**

The Working Group on Drinking Water of the IUGS Commission on Geoscience for Environmental Management (IUGS–GEM) and the Geological Survey of Lithuania are jointly organizing an International scientific seminar titled “Use of Fresh Groundwater for Drinking Water Supplies to Populations in Emergency Situations”, which will take place at the Geological Survey of Lithuania, in Vilnius, on June 3–5, 2015. Public emergencies may arise from natural and anthropogenic disasters such as rockfall, landslides, subsidence, floods and sudden pollution of surface water. These can lead to destruction of infrastructure including clean water supply sources. This seminar aims at sharing experiences in the rapid development of sources for water supply based on fresh groundwater. Approaches and methods required for necessary further research will also be discussed.

Researchers with interests in this topic are requested to confirm participation and to send a title of their presentation to Organizing Committee not later than April 20, 2015 after which the program will be finalized.



Preliminary agenda:

June 3 – Arrival, informal discussion

June 4 – Presentations, discussions

June 5 – Field trip to Vilnius waterworks and conclusion of the seminar

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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:Amaury@geo.uni-potsdam.de>
- 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>
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