

Candidate for IUGS Executive Committee

Position: Councilor (2024-2028)

Name: Dr Rasik Ravindra

Affiliation:

Former Director, National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa, India
Consultant, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India

Nominating Organization:

Indian National Science Academy (INSA)
Committee for IUGS-INQUA.



Biography:

Born in a Himalayan State of Kashmir of India, I completed my post-graduation in Applied Geology from University of Saugor (Sagar) in central India and Ph. D. in Geomorphology from Barkatullah University, Bhopal. After short spells as a Research Scholar in University of Roorkee (now an Indian Institute of Technology, IIT) and as a Ground water Geologist with a State Government, I joined the prestigious Geological Survey of India (GSI) in 1971 and continued serving the Survey in various capacities for 35 years till 2006, when I was selected to take over the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, Goa-an Indian institute devoted to Polar studies, as its Director.

Between 1971 and early 2006, I conducted wide ranging geological, geophysical and mineral exploration investigations over different geological terrains, such as the Precambrian shield area of western India (Rajasthan), north-eastern states of India, high altitude and inaccessible regions of Bhutan and Polar areas of Arctic and Antarctica.

My main fields of scientific interest related to crustal evolution; tectonic setup, elucidation of litho-stratigraphy of deformed metamorphic terrain and geomorphological evolution of landforms. I undertook three scientific expeditions to Higher Himalaya in Bhutan, to map geologically the inaccessible area in the higher reaches of Himalaya and had an opportunity to head the Mineral Investigation training Centre of the GSI, where national and international participants are imparted advanced training in Mineral exploration. Subsequently, as Deputy Director General of GSI, I supervised and guided geological and geotechnical operations in three Indian states of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

Between 2006 and 2012, as Director of National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research I had close interaction with ICSU bodies, especially SCAR and IASC. I held the position of Vice Chair of SCAR and Co- Convener of Scar Open Science Conference held at Portland in 2012. I contributed to all the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings held between 2006 and 2012 as Head of the Indian Delegation, contributing to protection and preservation of the governance and environmental protection of the Antarctic Continent. I was also a Council Member of the International Arctic Science Committee and facilitator for initiating IODP drilling operation in Arabian Sea. I was an Indian Contact during IPY 2007, when several projects on climate Change were launched in Southern Ocean and Polar Region to mark Indian participation in this international event. I had fruitful association with International Partnership in Ice core Drilling (IPPICS), PAGES etc. which resulted in several collaborative projects later on.

It was very satisfying to perform as a Member of the UN Commission of Legal Continental Shelf (CLCS) between 2014 and 2017 and come in contact with 21 leaders in the field of geology, geophysics and hydrography. I also held the position of Secretary General 36th IGC for about a year- a major IUGS event that had to be called off at the last moment due to outbreak of COVID pandemic.

Statement:

The activities of International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) have always fascinated me because of its wide reach and spread to different segments of earth scientists, societies including social scientists and others fields that rub shoulder with basic and applied geosciences and scores of its off shoots.

I am the current Chair of its INSA-SCAR (Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research) Committee and am associated with Society of Earth Scientists of India (- a non-governmental body) that is keen to preserve the rich Geoheritage of India and eventually establishment of national Geoparks in India. IUGS has made exemplary progress in identifying such sites globally. Headway made in this field by IUGS in naming the Mawmluh caves of the Meghalaya (India) among its First 100 Geological Heritage Sites, has thrilled us.

I also had a close interaction with IUGS Executive during the period 2019-2020 when intense preparation for 36th IGC were initiated. The 36th IGC was all set to take place with 6932 Abstracts accepted for presentations in multiple sessions along with geological field excursions and exhibitions, when it had to be called off just about a week before it was scheduled, due to outbreak of COVID pandemic.

Though I would like to work in the field of Geoheritage/Geo-tourism or public awareness about impact of climate change on the Polar Region, coastal areas and eco-sensitive areas such as Himalaya, I am open to take up any role that the IUGS will find me suitable to.