

E-Bulletin of the International Union of Geological Sciences (No. 34, August 30, 2008)

SUCCESSFUL 33RD INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS

Geoscience World Congress 2008 - Earth System Science: Foundation for Sustainable Development - <http://www.33igc.org>

After the Patron of the 33rd IGC, His Majesty King Harald V of Norway, officially opened the 33rd International Geology Congress on 6 August, the following 8 days saw 5,925 participants, 310 accompanying persons, and 24 youths from 113 countries take part in the Congress. Scientists participated in lively discussions within almost every conceivable aspect of geology at this successful 33rd IGC through 6300 presentations.

After four years of intensive work by the Nordic Organising Committee in preparation for the largest academic congress ever to be held in Norway, and in collaboration with the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), many other international and national organisations, and the National IUGS Committees in the five Nordic (Norden) Countries: Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden, the Congress Secretary General Professor Anders Solheim described the 33rd IGC as a fantastic experience: "In general, almost all participants have been both positive and content, and have given very good feedback to us through the Congress committees. The lectures and scientific programme have been of high quality."

In parallel with the Congress symposia program, each day of the Congress also featured special Themes of the Day sessions which highlighted a theme in which major aspects of Earth Sciences are particularly relevant for society today. More than 80 international leading experts contributed to that programme for the seven days of plenary lectures.

The seven themes selected for particular emphasis included Global geology; Early life and evolution; Climate change; Geohazards; Water, health, and environment; Mineral resources; Energy resources and the future; and Planetary geoscience. These themes all related to the priorities of the International Years of Planet Earth and details of the presentations can be viewed on the website (see "Themes of the Day" in the Main Menu on the front page). Many lectures from the 33 IGC are also available as webcasts on the front page of the website. The webcasts include footage of the lecturer and presentation slides. The daily Congress activities have been recorded on the IGC website.

In addition the Congress saw 85 exhibitor booths in the GeoExpo exhibition of geo-related industry, and governmental and private organisations operating in the geosciences. Excursions (37 in total) throughout the Nordic countries were undertaken before, during and after the Congress and comprehensive field guides can also be downloaded from the website.

IGC GEOHOST PROGRAM

A significant GeoHost stipend programme was established to help deserving young scientists to attend the 33 IGC. The Geohost Stipend Programme gave priority to young scientists with academic Earth Science qualifications. In total there were 577 stipends allocated, 351 to men and 226 to women from 71 countries. This represented 61 percent of the total number of applications. All 577 were granted waiver of the registration fee, whereas 469 received free accommodation in Oslo for the duration of their stay at the Congress.

FUTURE IGC VENUES

In 2008 the 34th International Geological Congress will be held in Brisbane, AUSTRALIA. On Sunday 10th August the IUGS-IGC Council decided that Cape Town, South Africa will host the 35th International Geological Congress in 2016. The decision was made by vote of Council representatives following presentations from India, Morocco, and South Africa.

2008-2012 IUGS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

As defined by the IUGS Statutes the terms of appointment of IUGS Executive Committee Members correlate with the 4-year periods between the IGC event. At the IUGS-IGC Council meeting on 10 August 2008, several Committee members came to the end of their appointment terms, and several new members were appointed.

Outgoing IUGS Executive Committee Members 2004-2008: PRESIDENT Prof. Zhang HONGREN (China); TREASURER Prof. Antonio BRAMBATI (Italy); VICE PRESIDENTS: Prof. Sylvi HALDORSEN (Norway); Prof. Eldridge M. MOORES (USA). COUNCILLORS: Prof. Ryo MATSUMOTO (Japan); Dr. Gabriele SCHNEIDER (Namibia); Prof. Jean-Paul CADET (France)

The IUGS expresses their thanks to all Members for their devotion to the Executive Committee activities 2004-2008.

The following IUGS Executive Committee for 2008-2012 was approved at the Council meeting: PRESIDENT - Prof. Alberto RICCARDI (Argentina); SECRETARY GENERAL - Dr. Peter T. BOBROWSKY (Canada); TREASURER - Prof. William CAVAZZA (Italy); VICE PRESIDENTS: Prof. Jacques CHARVET (France); Prof. Ochir GEREL (Mongolia). COUNCILLORS 2006-2010: Prof. Mikhail A. FEDONKIN (Russia); Prof. Marta MANTOVANI (Brazil); COUNCILLORS 2008-2012: Prof. Ezzoura ERRAMI (Morocco); Colin J. SIMPSON (Australia). COUNCILLORS 2010-2014: Wesley HILL (USA); Prof. Tandon Sampat KUMAR (India)

MESSAGE FROM THE IUGS PRESIDENT, ALBERTO RICCARDI

As the new IUGS President I want to send my best greetings to all officers and members of IUGS National Committees, Affiliate Organizations, Commissions, Task Groups and Joint Programmes, as well as those from organizations with which IUGS has cooperative enterprises.

It is also my wish to convey to everybody our intention, for the next four years: to improve interaction with the National Committees and Affiliate Organizations, to support the work of IUGS Commission and Tasks Groups with regard to the establishment and source of information on international standards for the Geological Sciences, to reinforce collaboration with UNESCO, ICSU, and other international organizations on different scientific programs, such as IGCP, GARS, ILP, especially with regards to education and capacity building, water, hazards, world heritage, environment, data and information. We will also be working to improve IUGS's communications and visibility, and to support the Australian Local Organizing Committee of the next International Geological Congress to materialize the best possible meeting for the world geological community.

In summary, as IUGS President I will reinforce in many ways most policies devised in the last four years, following the last IUGS President dictum: Transparency and democracy are important preconditions to get the trust and support of the member countries. To unite the world geological community it is essential to minimize 'black box' operations and develop democracy to a higher level. To achieve all that I expect the support and help of all, to whom I give my thanks in advance.

2008 JAMES M. HARRISON AWARD TO WOLFGANG EDER

The James M. Harrison Award for Outstanding Achievement was established by the IUGS in 2004 to honor those individuals who have served the Union in an extraordinary fashion and have done so without an official position in the Executive. The award is bestowed on the occasion of the International Geological Congress. For 2008, the Harrison Award was given to Dr. Wolfgang Eder, former Director of the UNESCO Division of Earth Sciences and long time supporter of IUGS efforts. Dr Eder has also had considerable involvement with the IUGS through his participation in the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP), GeoHeritage issues, and many other activities. The full citation and response will be published in Episodes.

GLOBAL LAUNCH OF ONEGEOLOGY <http://www.onegeology.org>

On the 6 August 2008 at the IGC the OneGeology project was officially launched and marks a new era for the global geoscience community. With the help of 79 participating nations OneGeology is creating a dynamic web-based global database of digital geological map data, combining existing data from each country. OneGeology represents a breakthrough for international cooperation within the geological survey community.

Users will be able to access OneGeology using a browser and requesting data for an area of interest, much the same as with Google Earth. In addition, links to the owners of the data are available if more information is required.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANET EARTH 2007-2009 (Earth Sciences for Society) <http://yearofplanetearth.org/index.html>

Keep up-to-date on the changing global activities of this major program via the website. At the last count 72 countries have established an IYPE National Committee to assist with promotion of activities. The main activities of the IYPE operate within its Science and Outreach programmes. Funding for projects in both programmes is sought from industry, Foundations and governments worldwide. The Science Programme consists of 10 broad, societally relevant and multidisciplinary themes: health, climate, groundwater, ocean, soils, deep Earth, megacities, hazards, resources, and life.

Brochures on each of these themes are available in hard copy, and can be downloaded from the Year's website.

THE INTERNATIONAL POLAR YEAR <http://www.ipy.org>

The International Polar Year (IPY) is a large scientific programme focused on the Arctic and the Antarctic. It is organized through the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and is actually the fourth polar year, following those in 1882-3, 1932-3, and 1957-8. In order to have full and equal coverage of both the Arctic and the Antarctic, IPY 2007-8 covers two full annual cycles from March 2007 to March 2009 and will involve over 200 projects, with thousands of scientists from over 60 nations examining a wide range of physical, biological and social research topics. It is also an unprecedented opportunity to demonstrate, follow, and get involved with, cutting edge science in real-time.

UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS NETWORK (GGN) <http://www.globalgeopark.org>

The latest GGN Newsletter issue No 3 for 2008 is now posted on the website at <http://www.globalgeopark.org/publish/portal1/tab59/info3058.htm>
Also check out the latest Geoparks activities and information on their website.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

<http://www.iugs.org/Calendar.html>

For a listing of forthcoming geoscience meetings, conferences, and workshops of interest check the Calendar section of the IUGS website.

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My special thanks to Sylvi Haldorsen for her great efforts in managing the IUGS E-Bulletins. I hope to be able to keep the Bulletins up to her standards.

Sincerely,
Colin Simpson
IUGS Councillor
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