



IGU E-NEWSLETTER

Quarterly

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This Newsletter is circulated to nearly 2000 individuals and bodies. Announcements, information, calls for participation in scientific events, programmes and projects are welcome. Please send them to giuliano.bellezza@gmail.com or g.bellezza@homeofgeography.org



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1) REMARKS FROM PRESIDENT YUKIO HIMIYAMA

There have been a number of important meetings and notable developments since the last newsletter was published. I would like to draw your attention to some of them.

May I first congratulate Professor Fu Bojie and his collaborators for their successful establishment of a new Commission on *Geography for Future Earth*. Future Earth is a grand platform for sustainability research, and must succeed to make a significant contribution towards realization of a sustainable world. Future Earth needs wide support and cooperation from the global academic community for its success, and well-established international science organizations committed to enhancement of sustainability - such as IGU – are essential partners.

Future Earth now places high priority on its contribution to the UN SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), so it is hoped that the new IGU Commission takes the lead in making progress on some of these research challenges.

The 12th Korea-China-Japan Conference on Geography (and the 3rd Asian Conference on Geography) was held from 23-26 August 2017 at Jeju National University, Jeju Island, South Korea. The three countries host the conference in turn. This regional annual event was initiated by a few young geographers from Korea, Japan and China, and grew steadily even when the regional political climate was harsh. It is notable that leading geographical societies of all three countries have welcomed this bottom-up initiative, and supported it strongly, presumably because of its success in attracting visibly high proportion of young participants, as well as its importance for regional friendship and cooperation. I have thoroughly enjoyed participating in this Conference now for three successive years.

The IGU Thematic Conference on Land Use/Cover Change, Biodiversity, Health and Environment, Local and Regional Development, held during 11-15 September 2017 at Bucharest-Tulcea, was the second IGU Thematic Conference held this year. It was hosted by the Institute of Geography, Romanian Academy, and the University of Bucharest, and four related IGU Commissions were involved. I was pleased to learn from the organizers that the IGU travel subsidy helped seven junior researchers and two outstanding senior scholars to attend the Conference. The one day cruise in the Danube Delta was particularly memorable for its superb on-boat lectures on the region, as well as the beautiful and interesting views from the boat.



Khotso Mokhele facilitating discussion at the joint ICSU-ISSC meeting which agreed to formally merge the two organisations into a new body to be known as *International Council for Science*

On 26th October 2017, ICSU (International Council for Science) and ISSC (International Social Science Council) formally decided in their historic joint meeting in Taipei to merge and create a new entity to be called the *International Science Council*. It implies that the term ‘science’, which has often been used in a narrow meaning referring to natural sciences only, will from this

time on be used in a far more inclusive sense with the whole range of social and human sciences in it. The birth of the *International Science Council* is not a mere technical or fiscal matter, but a far-reaching structural change of significance, which will influence not only sciences and scientific communities, but also the global, regional and local societies, education, environment, etc. – most particularly because it aims to address – among others - key global challenges related to sustainability.

The IGU has been an active and long-standing member of both ICSU and ISSC and heartily welcomes this new situation. One of changes that hopefully will emerge from the new body is the enhancement of science education, including the social and human sciences. IGU has been a strong advocate for promotion of education in ICSU and ISSC, as they have tended to treat education only marginally. In the merger meeting, the IGU, which was represented by Secretary-General Mike Meadows and myself, proposed to add a committee for education as an advisory body in the Statutes of the new Council. The proposal was narrowly rejected formally by show of hands, but about half of the participants were actually in favour of it and we remain confident that education will become a more high-profile focus for the *International Science Council* in due course as, with deeper involvement in education, it can achieve far more than otherwise.

For latest information about the merger of ICSU & ISSC, please see:

<http://mailchi.mp/icsu/in-historic-vote-icsu-and-issc-members-vote-to-create-a-new-merged-organisation-called-international-science-council?e=d1de6618c4>

Yukio Himiyama,
President of IGU



2) MINUTES OF THE IGU EC MEETING, QUÉBEC

a) English Version

International Geographical Union

Minutes of the IGU Executive Committee Meeting

University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

6th to 10th September 2017

Welcome, Meeting Logistics and Introductions

The meeting was chaired by President Himiyama, who welcomed Past President Vladimir Kolosov, Secretary-General Mike Meadows, First Vice-President Joos Droogleever-Fortuijn and Vice-Presidents, Barbaros Gönençgil, Iain Hay, Nathalie Lemarchand, Elena dell’Agnese and Chenghu Zhou. Apologies were received from Vice-Presidents RB Singh and Rémy Tremblay. Ms Xiaoyi Ma attended as observer.

Adoption of the Schedule and Agenda

The schedule and agenda was discussed and adopted. Droogleever-Fortuijn outlined logistical issues for the meeting. The Deputy HOD of the Department, Professor Sako Musterd, formally welcomed the IGU Executive Committee to the Department Geography, Planning and International Development Studies.

Minutes

The minutes of the Québec meeting in November, previously approved via email, were tabled and confirmed. It was noted that the minutes of the Québec meeting still need to be translated into French (Tremblay); the minutes of the present meeting are to be translated by Lemarchand.

Organization and Operations

Executive Committee Member Reports. All EC members tendered reports on their activities since the last meeting. New contacts for countries with whom IGU has lost contact have been made; these need to be incorporated into the database, website and email distribution list (Meadows).

. Executive Committee Meeting Calendar 2018 onwards. Himiyama reported on arrangements for the first meeting of 2018 in Tokyo. Arrivals on 9th April 2018, meeting 10th and 11th, transfer to Sendai on afternoon of 11th and stay overnight, returning to Tokyo on 12th with departures 13th April 2018. There will be an EC meeting immediately prior to the Québec Regional Conference in August 2018 (dates are 6th to 10th August 2018) – i.e. arrivals on 4th August, meeting on 5th August and morning of 6th. Newly elected EC members will be invited to attend the Québec meeting. Arrangements for the final meeting of 2018 can only be made once the outcome of the election of new EC members is known (mid-2018).

IGU Financial Report and Projection. Meadows presented a brief update on the financial situation in the three accounts held in Cape Town, as well as on the status of the Promotion and Solidarity Fund held in the United States under responsibility of former IGU President Abler. The IGU financial situation is stable and, indeed, the Promotion and Solidarity Fund (endowment) continues to grow (the balance now exceeds US\$100k); the substantial contribution to the endowment from China-Beijing following the 2016 Congress was noted with appreciation. Abler needs to be consulted regarding the future of the endowment fund (Meadows). The importance of following up on additional possible corporate sponsors was noted. In this regard,

Hay agreed to consult with Abler and IYGU Director Benno Werlen regarding ESRI in particular, but all EC members were asked to supply names and contact details of potential additional (responsible) corporate sponsors. It was further noted that IGU remains very dependent financially on membership subscriptions, and on the contributions of six major national committee contributors in particular.

IGU National Membership update. There have been no new national memberships since the last meeting; positive indications have been received from some national contacts (Sri Lanka and Vietnam for example) with a view to re-establishing IGU national membership. EC members reported on contact with those countries where links have been lost. Meadows will update the database, website and email circulation list accordingly. There are ongoing communication inefficiencies between IGU and the IGU National Committee chairs, and between chairs and their own geographical communities. The ‘National Committee’ model varies greatly between countries and, whereas it is practice on some for the committee to convene a face to face meeting up to four times per year (Japan for example), for some others there is no *de facto* committee and connection with IGU is simply via a responsible ‘contact’ person. More news of activities from the various National Committees would certainly be welcome; this issue can be raised at the IGU ‘chairs’ meeting planned for the Québec Regional Conference. Meadows agreed to contact the Québec LOC to request that the programme accommodates such a meeting (Meadows).

IGU Commission and Task Force update

Annual (2017) reports for each Commission and Task Force have been called for and are due for submission by mid-December. It was noted that the Steering Committee of the recently established Commission on Global Understanding still needs to be appointed and formalized (Meadows to remind Werlen). The new IGU Commission on Agricultural Geography and Land Engineering held its inaugural meeting in Yulin, China-Beijing, in the last week of August and was attended by 200 participants. The conference announced a ‘Global Rural Plan’ to highlight the situation arising from the global pattern of rural-urban migration. The new Commission on African Studies is planning its inaugural conference in Namibia in November 2017 and is actively seeking additional sponsorship. A new Commission proposal: ‘Geography for Future Earth’ submitted by Academician Fu Bojie (President of the Geographical Society of China, China-Beijing) was tabled for discussion. The link to Future Earth is recognized as a strategic and positive aspect of the proposal and, although the objectives are ambitious, there is strong support for the approval of this new Commission. It was noted that there are two candidate steering committee members from Japan and that one will have to step aside. It was further noted that the geographical distribution of steering committee members requires attention, as well as the balance between social and natural scientists. It was suggested that the proposed ‘Co-Chairs’ should be re-labelled ‘Vice-Chairs’. Developing the relationship between the Commission and the Future Earth programme (and indeed the future of this programme) needs to be considered more carefully. It was agreed that this new Commission can be approved following attention to the technical details and some modification. Zhou agreed to convey these views to the proposed Chair.

E. dell’Agnese commented on the situation regarding the three Commissions reported as suspended at the Beijing General Assembly. Regarding the Arid Lands Commission, there has been contact with a possible a new chair (a new chair is in any case necessary according to the

statutes) and steering committee members. It was suggested that the current chair be advised of the potential for re-launching the Arid Lands Commission under new leadership, seeking his cooperation and support. Regarding the Indigenous Peoples commission, it was suggested that the LOC of the Québec Regional meeting be requested to timetable a round table on this topic, especially given the significance of this issue in Canada (dell'Agnese, Meadows). The outgoing chair of the IGU Commission on Islands needs to be reminded again about the need to appoint a new Chair (Himiyama). The issue of open access had been raised independently by two of the Commission chairs, noting the hegemony of the major publishing houses in relation to academic journals in the discipline. The matter had also been discussed at the joint meeting held with EUGEO (see agenda item below). An online, open access 'metajournal', facilitating links to published scholarly articles has been suggested but there is at this stage considerable doubt that the additional editorial effort required to produce this would be efficient given the prominence of other online sources including Google Scholar. Many scientific organizations have their own journals (e.g. INQUA); IGU may, in due course, wish to consider the possibility of publishing its own journal (on an open access basis) but this would need considerable further planning, including the development of a business model, possible structure etc. Hay and dell'Agnese agreed to work together on this issue in time for the next EC meeting.

There was a further suggestion around recruitment and that IGU should inform the community of geographers around the world of the benefits of being affiliated to an IGU Commission or Task Force, and the ease with which this can be accomplished. Meadows agreed to circulate the 'How to joining the IGU' information that is on the website <http://igu-online.org/about-us/joining-the-igu/> to all national committees with a request that the respective chairs inform their own national community of geographers about this.

Kolosov reported on the meeting of the IGU Centennial and Sesquicentennial Task force that took place in association with the 25th International Congress on History of Science and Technology (CIHST) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. There were several presentations that focused on the history of geography and of relevance to the work of the Task Force. Regarding its own activities, the main project of this Task Force is to publish two volumes on the history of the IGU, planned in time for the Extraordinary Congress (with Springer as a possible publisher). Volume 1 will be devoted to the 'documentary approach' and volume 2 is intended to be a 'research-based' contribution. There is agreement that the volumes should not be too long, should represent both human and physical geography, illustrate balance in terms of the country of origin and gender of the contributors. The Task Force believes that the balance can best be achieved if chapters are compiled by a physical and human geographer. The next Task Force meeting will take place in Leipzig in February 2018. Kolosov was advised to contact former IGU Secretary-General Ehlers to assist in tracing some of the material that appears to be missing from the archives for the period 1995-2001. A request for funding to assist the Task Force further in developing the volumes was made and was approved subject to submission of the usual pro forma invoice to the secretariat (Kolosov).

IYGU. The IYGU Director had submitted several documents for review including the usual summary report. There have been many excellent activities in IYGU and more than 800 different events have taken place globally during the course of the project. IYGU is now part of the UNESCO strategy 'New Humanities Agenda for the 21st Century', and the concept 'Global Understanding' is clearly a 'brand'. In combination with the proposed UNESCO chair, the new

IGU Commission should be able to direct the future of this initiative. Droogleever-Fortuijn was requested to attend the IYGU closing ceremony as representative of IGU given that others were not able to participate. (Meadows to inform Werlen).

Serbia Olympiad Report. Droogleever-Fortuijn reported on her attendance at the IGU Olympiad in Belgrade. This had been a successful and joyful event with 42 teams represented. The problem of the team name for China-Taipei had surfaced at the meeting and a formal complaint had been received regarding the matter. Meadows indicated that the co-chair of the Olympiad Task Force has been informed that the current IGU (i.e. ICSU) convention of naming member countries (and Olympiad teams representing those countries) must be followed at all subsequent events of a similar nature.

IGU EC elections. The call for nominations will be made in mid-October, with a closing date of end-January 2018; the e-mail ballot of eligible member countries will take place thereafter up to 31st March 2018. Meadows will circulate the call and administer the election process with the assistance of an independent teller.

IGU Website and social media. The IGU website continues, as usual, to be updated periodically. Both the Facebook and Twitter social media links continue to be used. There is a need to place information regarding the past-Presidents, Secretary-Generals and Congresses on the website (Meadows).

IGU Journals Project. The database is occasionally updated as required.

IGU Bulletin. Volume 59-60 (for the years 2015 and 2016) is still with the printers and will be ready within the next few weeks for distribution. Printed copies will be airmailed as usual but the next opportunity for manual circulation will be the 2018 Québec Regional Conference. A pdf of the volume will be posted on the IGU website as soon as it becomes available.

IGU eNewsletter. The efforts of former Vice-President Bellezza were again acknowledged with much appreciation. The latest edition was published and circulated in July 2017.

OurSus (Droogleever-Fortuijn). Ton Dietz was reported to be still working on the potential of greater involvement of the Commission in *OurSus* activities.

Partner publishing proposal. Hay reported on his correspondence with several publishers regarding the idea of promoting their products on the IGU website. The contact for MIT press, who had initially indicated strong interest in the idea, has not been in contact for some time. There have been very positive responses from two other publishing houses, although alternative possible funding models are emerging. For example, Springer has suggested the establishment of an IGU student paper award, although there is uncertainty as to how this idea could be effected. Following considerable discussion, Hay agreed to communicate further with Springer and attempt to come back with an appropriate model that is mutually beneficial both to IGU and Springer at the next EC meeting. Elgar has also indicated strong interest in sponsoring IGU via a website link once the technical details are agreed (Meadows). Elgar has further suggested

publication of a new IGU book series, an idea for which there is in-principle agreement subsequent to further clarification of details (Hay).

IGU archives. Himiyama emphasized the importance of the IGU archives, highlighting the lack of knowledge in general regarding the IGU archives held in Leipzig. Information about the IGU archives should be accessible from the IGU website via an additional item and link (on the ‘About us’ drop-down menu (Meadows). Commission and Task Force and National Committee chairs should be reminded about the importance of submitting all IGU materials (publications meeting reports, photographs etc.) and of using the archives themselves. It was suggested that, if possible, the IGU archivist could present details on the IGU archives to both the Commission and Task Force and National Committee chairs at their respective meetings at the Québec Regional Conference (Meadows).

Cooperation and Outreach

Festival International de Géographie (FIG). Lemarchand reported that there will be a round table discussion, scheduled for 30th September 2017, at the festival with contributions from representatives of various French geographical organizations; three key issues are being tabled: ‘Geography is fun’, ‘Geography saves’ and ‘Geography gives fun’ in the expectation that this will attract broad interest.

IGU Representatives on International Bodies. There was nothing to report on this matter.

ICSU (incl. GeoUnions) and ISSC. President Himiyama and Meadows will attend the upcoming General Assembly of ICSU, the parallel meeting of ICSU and the joint ICSU/ISSC General Assembly in Taipei at the end of October. Following its recent meeting in Potsdam on 5th September (IGU was unable to be represented), the GeoUnions sent a letter to Heide Hackman as CEO of ICSU in which it was noted that the financial implications of the proposed merger have not yet been adequately explained and that some of the proposed actions arising from the Oslo meeting in October 2016 had yet to be implemented. Himiyama and Meadows reported that they had concurred with the spirit of this letter and had therefore endorsed it on behalf of IGU. Meadows noted with concern that the ICSU/ISSC interviews with and survey of ‘stakeholders’ (recommended by the 2016 joint meeting) had not, at least thus far, included IGU. While it is the view of the EC that IGU should support the merger, it is argued that the proposed strategy does not adequately reflect the need to maintain fundamental strengths of the individual disciplines (across both the natural and social sciences) and that, if this is not achieved by the merged organization, any new interdisciplinary projects and initiatives will be less likely to succeed. There remains, for IGU, a sense that the merged organization is expecting to benefit from the combined expertise of the Unions in interdisciplinary initiatives (an entirely reasonable goal), but that there is a real risk that this may weaken the role of ICSU/ISSC in supporting the core disciplines of the Unions themselves. Kolosov made the point that ISSC (as the smaller partner) representation on the governing committees of the new body needs to be protected beyond the initial transition period. IGU has been invited to attend the Belmont Forum information session that follows on from the Taipei General Assemblies but both Himiyama and Meadows are unable

to represent IGU at this event. JC Lin, chair of the IGU Geomorphology and Society Commission is to be asked if he can attend and monitor possible developments (Meadows).

CIPSH. Kolosov reported on the first CIPSH World Humanities Congress that took place in Liège, Belgium, from 6th to 12th August 2017. One of the key themes was ‘Borders and Migrations’ and IGU hosted a session within that theme albeit with rather disappointing attendance. The General Assembly re-elected Luiz Oosterbeek as Secretary-General and Kolosov was elected to membership of the CIPSH Board. There is potential for this body to increase in status and profile following the proposed merger of ICSU and ISSC and the organization needs to be made more visible to the IGU community. Kolosov agreed to develop some initial ideas as to how this can be done and circulate for comment.

EUGEO. Several IGU executive members attended the EUGEO conference in Brussels, Belgium (September 2017) along with more than 300 other delegates. Kolosov reported on the meeting between representatives of the IGU and EUGEO that took place there. There was agreement to cooperate in the field of education, including defining and disseminating what is best practice in teaching geography, both at school and at university, and in the preparation of a book on new ideas in teaching geography at universities (different curricula, content, methods, etc.). There was agreement that future EUGEO conferences should preferably be held during years when there is no IGU Congress or Regional Conference. The ‘metajournal’ concept, as a kind of revival of *Bibliographie Géographique Internationale* (supported by IGU but no longer published) was raised with a view to further exploration by both IGU and EUGEO. The CNFG has proposed ‘Le Nuit du Géographie’ (the night of geography’) as a potential field of cooperation with considerable support indicated from several European nations. Liaison between IGU and EUGEO is clearly needed to coordinate cooperation and Droogleever-Fortuijn, supported by Lemarchand were nominated. A joint IGU-EUGEO event at the Istanbul Congress 2020 is planned. Two additional projects were proposed, *viz.* i) how to increase the visibility and the status of geography across the world ii) wider distribution of the Charter on Geographical Education, translated into various national languages. IGU National Committees and national geographic societies can play a key role in both initiatives. The next EUGEO congress will be held in Warsaw, Poland, April 13-14, 2018 (to celebrate the centennial of the Polish Geographical Society). The 2019 event is scheduled for the third week of May, in association with the annual congress of the Irish Geographical Society in Galway, Ireland.

EGAL/UGAL. dell’Agnese had been unable to attend the La Paz conference due to health issues. The next event will be in Ecuador during 2019. It was agreed that, if possible, an IGU Thematic Conference should be held in association with this major meeting. Dell’Agnese agreed to explore this opportunity further.

IAG (International Association of Geomorphologists) Meadows is attending the upcoming (November) IAG Congress in Delhi, India and will discuss further the proposal to initiate a joint IGU/IAG Commission/Working Group along the lines of the Toponymy model.

Relations with other organizations (e.g. AAG, RGS, ICA (All)). The Executive Director of the RGS is retiring at the end of 2017 and the IGU has been asked to contribute to the ‘book of

tribute'. Meadows will draft the tribute on behalf of IGU. Kolosov attended the 150 year celebrations of the Società Geografica Italiana and presented a gift on behalf of IGU.

International Geographical Congresses, IGU Regional Conferences and Thematic Conferences

Regional Conference, Québec, Canada, 2018. The MoU is now ready for signatures in both English and French versions and was signed at the meeting. Meadows thanked the Québec LOC for translating the Conference and Congress MOU into French. The Olympiad Task Force has requested an increased LOC subvention of US\$7500 (from US\$5000); it was agreed that this was too late for the Québec and Istanbul events but could be implemented for subsequent IGU Congresses and Regional Congresses. Meadows proposed that IGU funds be used to supplement the Olympiad in Québec in the amount of US\$2500. This proposal was approved.

IGU Congress 2020 Istanbul. Gönençgil presented a brief progress report on the 2020 International Geographical Congress. The dates are now confirmed at 17th to 21st August 2020 at the University of Istanbul. The proposed regular participant registration fee is Euro 350 (early bird). The Congress budget was presented based on the attendance of approximately 1500 to 1750 participants in total. Questions were raised about the viability of the event given the perceived security risk and the current political situation in the country. It was suggested that IGU Commission and Task Force chairs be consulted as to whether they will likely participate or not. It was decided, however, not to do so at this stage and to reconsider the situation at the next EC meeting. Gönençgil emphasised that, despite perceptions Istanbul is as safe as other European cities and that, notwithstanding national politics, the 2020 Congress is a scientific meeting. Kolosov suggested that the Istanbul LOC could compile a short article for the *eNewsletter* about progress in organising the Congress emphasising the importance of the event for the Turkish geographical community (Gönençgil). The new website design at www.igc2020.org has now gone live.

IGU Extraordinary Congress, Paris 2022. Lemarchand reported briefly on progress and the scheduled meeting at the end of October at which bids from three potential commercial congress organizers will be presented; following this meeting, the local organizing committee will select the winning bid.

IGU Congress Dublin 2024. There is nothing to report at this stage.

Thematic conferences. Himiyama noted that he will attend the Bucharest IGU Thematic Conference.

Kolosov indicated that the organization of the June 2018 Thematic Conference is underway. The welcome party is scheduled to be held at the Moscow Club of Scholars, with scientific sessions at the Academy of Sciences. Kolosov noted that the conference would represent an ideal opportunity to reestablish the suspended IGU Mountains Commission. Several post-conference field excursions are planned. Proposals for sessions are still being accepted.

Other Business

IGU Awards: Lauréat d'Honneur. Meadows has contacted Ruth Fincher, as chair of the Awards subcommittee, who has agreed to initiate the nomination process for this award in good time for the Québec Regional Conference 2018. There was discussion regarding who may be appropriate nominees for this award; nominations will need to be made following publication of the announcement. Kolosov reminded the meeting of the possibility, raised some time ago, of an award for a senior scholar who has made an outstanding contribution to practice. This suggestion is to be put to the appropriate subcommittee.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 17h35 on 8th September 2017. Droogleever-Fortuijn was congratulated and thanked warmly for her fine arrangements and warm hospitality in facilitating the meeting.

b) Version Française

Union géographique internationale
Procès-verbal de la réunion du Comité exécutif de l'UGI
Université d'Amsterdam, Pays-Bas
6 au 10 septembre 2017

Bienvenue, réunion logistique et présentations

La réunion était présidée par le Président Himiyama, qui a accueilli le président sortant Vladimir Kolosov, le Secrétaire général Mike Meadows, la Première Vice-présidente Joos Droogleever-Fortuijn et les vice-présidents, Barbaros Gönençgil, Iain Hay, Nathalie Lemarchand, Elena Dell'Agnese et Chenghu Zhou. Les vice-présidents RB Singh et Rémy Tremblay ont envoyé leurs excuses. Mme Xiaoyi Ma a assisté en tant d'observatrice.

Adoption de l'ordre du jour et annexes

Le calendrier et l'ordre du jour ont été discutés et adoptés. Droogleever-Fortuijn a souligné les problèmes logistiques de la réunion. Le vice-doyen du Département, le professeur Sako Musterd, a accueilli officiellement le Comité exécutif de l'UGI au Département de géographie, d'urbanisme et d'études internationales du développement.

Procès-verbal

En novembre, préalablement approuvé par courrier électronique, le procès-verbal de la réunion de Québec a été déposé et confirmé. Il a été noté que le procès-verbal de

la réunion de Québec doit être traduit en français (Tremblay); le procès-verbal de la présente réunion doit être traduit par Lemarchand.

Organisation et opérations

Rapports des membres du Comité exécutif. Tous les membres du Comité exécutif (CE) ont remis leur rapport d'activités depuis la dernière réunion. De nouveaux contacts pour les pays avec lesquels l'UGI les avait perdus ont été faits ; ceux-ci doivent être intégrés dans la base de données, le site Web et la liste de distribution par courriel (Meadows).

Calendrier des futures réunions du Comité exécutif. Himiyama a fait état des préparatifs de la première réunion de 2018 à Tokyo. Arrivée le 9 avril 2018, réunion les 10 et 11, transfert à Sendai l'après-midi du 11 et retour à Tokyo le 12 pour le départ des membres le 13 avril 2018. Il y aura une réunion du CE immédiatement avant la conférence de Québec d'août 2018 (6 au 8 août 2018), c.-à-d. arrivées le 4 août, réunion le 5 août et le matin du 6. Les nouveaux membres élus au CE seront invités à assister à la réunion de Québec. Les dispositions pour la réunion finale de 2018 ne peuvent être prises qu'une fois les résultats de l'élection des nouveaux membres du CE seront connus (mi-2018).

Rapport financier de l'UGI et projection. Meadows a présenté une brève mise à jour de la situation financière dans les trois comptes détenus au Cap, ainsi que sur l'état du Fonds de promotion et de la solidarité tenue aux États-Unis sous la responsabilité de l'ancien Président de l'UGI, Ron Abler. La situation financière de l'UGI est stable. En fait, le Fonds de promotion et de solidarité (dotation) continue de croître (le solde dépasse désormais 100 000 USD); la contribution substantielle à la dotation de la Chine à Beijing après le Congrès de 2016 a été notée avec satisfaction. Abler doit être consulté sur l'avenir du fonds de dotation (Meadows). L'importance d'assurer le suivi auprès de commanditaires a été soulignée. À cet égard, Hay a accepté de consulter Abler, le Directeur Benno Werlen de l'YIGU en ce qui concerne ESRI en particulier, mais tous les membres du CE ont été invités à fournir les noms et les coordonnées de commanditaires potentiels supplémentaires. En outre, il a noté que l'UGI reste très dépendant financièrement des cotisations des membres, et des contributions de six principaux comités nationaux contributeurs en particulier. Bien que cela ne doive pas être une préoccupation immédiate, les membres du CE devraient encourager les comités nationaux à proposer des candidats pour les postes au CE.

Mise à jour des membres nationaux de l'UGI. Il n'y a pas eu de nouvelles adhésions nationales depuis la dernière réunion; des informations positives ont été reçues de certains contacts nationaux (Sri Lanka et Vietnam par exemple) en vue de rétablir leur adhésion à l'UGI. Les membres du CE ont discuté des liens perdus avec certains pays membres. Meadows mettra à jour la base de données, le site Web et la liste de diffusion des courriels en conséquence. Il y a un manque de communication entre l'UGI et les présidents de comités nationaux, et entre les présidents et leurs propres communautés géographiques. Le modèle de « comité national » varie considérablement entre les pays et, alors qu'il est

pratique courante dans certains comités de convoquer une réunion en face à face jusqu'à quatre fois par an (Japon, par exemple), pour d'autres il n'y a pas de comité *de facto* et les liens avec l'UGI se font par une personne chargée du dossier. Plus de nouvelles sur les activités des différents comités nationaux seraient certainement les bienvenues; cette question peut être soulevée lors de la réunion des présidents de l'UGI prévue à la conférence régionale de Québec. Meadows a accepté de communiquer avec le comité local d'organisation (LOC/CLO) de Québec pour demander que le programme compte une telle réunion (Meadows).

Mise à jour des Commissions et des Groupes de travail

Les rapports annuels (2017) pour chaque Commission et Groupe de travail doivent être remis vers la mi-décembre. Il a été noté que le Comité directeur de la Commission sur la compréhension globale récemment créée doit encore être nommé et formalisé (Meadows contactera Werlen). La nouvelle Commission de l'UGI sur la géographie agricole et l'ingénierie du territoire a tenu sa première réunion à Yulin, Chine-Pékin, dans la dernière semaine d'août et a réuni 200 participants. À cette occasion, on a fait l'annonce d'un «plan rural global» pour mettre en évidence la situation découlant du modèle global de migration rurale-urbaine. La nouvelle Commission des études africaines prévoit organiser sa conférence inaugurale en Namibie en novembre 2017 et cherche activement des commanditaires. Une nouvelle proposition de la Commission a été faite: « Géographie pour la Planète du Futur » présentée par l'académicien Fu Bojie (président de la Société géographique de la Chine, Chine-Pékin). Cette Commission est perçue comme étant stratégique et positive même si les objectifs sont ambitieux. Il y a un fort soutien pour l'approbation de cette nouvelle Commission. Il a été noté qu'il y a deux membres du comité de direction venant du Japon, l'un devra se retirer. Il a été noté en outre la nécessaire attention à la répartition géographique des membres du comité de direction ainsi qu'à l'équilibre entre spécialistes des sciences sociales et des sciences naturelles. Il a été suggéré que l'appellation « Co-président » soit remplacée par « vice-président ». Le développement de cette Commission doit être un peu plus soigneusement examiné, de même que la relation entre la Commission et le programme *Future Earth* (et même l'avenir de ce programme). Il a été convenu que cette nouvelle Commission soit approuvée une fois les détails techniques analysés et quelques modifications apportées. Zhou a accepté de transmettre ces commentaires à la présidence proposée.

Dell'Agnese a commenté la situation en ce qui concerne les trois commissions suspendues à l'Assemblée générale de Beijing. En ce qui concerne la Commission sur les terres arides, le président potentiel a été contacté (un nouveau président est nécessaire selon les statuts) et les membres de la direction. Il a été suggéré que le président actuel soit informé de la possibilité de relancer la Commission des terres arides sous une nouvelle direction, avec sa coopération et son soutien. En ce qui concerne la Commission des peuples autochtones, il a été suggéré que le Comité Local d'Organisation (LOC/CLO) de la réunion régionale du Québec soit invité à programmer une table ronde sur ce sujet, et ce, étant donné l'importance de cette question au Canada (Dell'Agnese, Meadows). Le président sortant de la Commission de l'UGI sur les Iles doit être informé à nouveau de la

nécessité de nommer un nouveau président (Himiyama). La question des publications en accès libre a été soulevée par deux présidents de Commission, étant donné l'hégémonie des grandes maisons d'édition par rapport aux revues académiques dans la discipline. La question a également été discutée lors de la réunion conjointe tenue avec l'EUGEO (voir le point à l'ordre du jour ci-dessous). Un accès libre, en ligne, un « métajournal » facilitant les liens vers des revues savantes a été suggéré, mais l'on doute que les efforts pour produire un tel outil soient efficaces compte tenu de l'importance des autres sources déjà disponibles en ligne, dont Google Scholar. De nombreuses organisations scientifiques ont leurs propres revues (par exemple l'INQUA); l'UGI envisage la possibilité de publier sa propre revue (en accès libre) mais cela aurait besoin d'une planification plus considérable, y compris le développement d'un modèle d'entreprise, etc. Hay et Dell'Agnese ont accepté de travailler ensemble sur cette question à temps pour la prochaine réunion du CE.

Il a été question de la participation des géographes à l'UGI, que l'UGI devrait informer la communauté des géographes à travers le monde des avantages d'être affiliés à une Commission ou un Groupe de travail, et de la facilité avec laquelle cela peut être accompli. Meadows a convenu de faire circuler le « Comment se joindre à l'UGI » information qui se trouve sur le site <http://igu-online.org/about-us/joining-the-igu/> à tous les comités nationaux et de demander que les présidents respectifs informent leur propre communauté nationale de géographes à ce sujet.

Kolosov a rendu compte de la réunion du groupe de travail du centenaire et du cent-cinquantième de l'UGI qui a eu lieu en association avec le 25e Congrès international sur l'histoire de la science et de la technologie (CIHST) tenu à Rio de Janeiro, au Brésil. Il y avait plusieurs présentations qui mettaient l'accent sur l'histoire de la géographie et de la pertinence des travaux de ce Groupe de travail. En ce qui concerne ses propres activités, le projet principal de ce groupe de travail est de publier deux volumes sur l'histoire de l'UGI, prévu pour le Congrès extraordinaire (avec Springer comme éditeur possible). Le volume 1 documentera l'approche historique et le volume 2 sera une contribution axée sur la dimension scientifique. Il est convenu que les volumes ne devront pas être trop longs, qu'ils devraient représenter à la fois la géographie humaine et la géographie physique, illustrant l'équilibre en termes de pays d'origine et le sexe des contributeurs. Le Groupe de travail estime que l'équilibre peut être atteint si les chapitres sont compilés par un géographe physique et un géographe humain. La prochaine rencontre du Groupe de travail aura lieu à Leipzig en février 2018. Kolosov contactera l'ex-Secrétaire général Ehlers afin de retrouver une partie du matériel qui semble manquer dans les archives. Une demande de financement pour aider le Groupe de travail pour la publication des volumes a été faite et a été approuvée sous réserve de présentation de la facture pro forma au secrétariat (Kolosov).

L'IYGU. Le Directeur de l'IYGU a soumis plusieurs documents pour examen, y compris le rapport habituel de synthèse. Il y a eu beaucoup d'activités excellentes et plus de 800 événements différents ont eu lieu dans le monde dans le cadre de ce projet. L'IYGU fait

désormais partie de la stratégie de l'UNESCO intitulée « New Humanity Agenda for the 21st Century » et de son concept de « Global Understanding », concept clairement perçu comme une « marque de commerce ». En association avec la chaire UNESCO proposée, la nouvelle Commission de l'UGI devrait pouvoir préciser l'avenir de cette initiative. Droogleever-Fortuijn a été invitée à assister à la fermeture de cette cérémonie de l'IYGU à titre de représentante de l'UGI car les autres participants de l'UGI n'étaient pas en mesure d'y assister. (Meadows en informera Werlen).

Rapport sur les Olympiades de Serbie. Droogleever-Fortuijn a fait rapport de sa participation à l'Olympiade de l'UGI à Belgrade. L'événement a été une réussite avec 42 équipes représentées. Le problème relatif au nom de l'équipe pour la Chine-Taïpei a refait surface lors de la réunion et une plainte officielle avait été formulée à ce sujet. Meadows a indiqué que le co-président du Groupe de travail sur les Olympiades a été informé que la convention actuelle de l'UGI (c. -à-d. la CIUS) de nommer les pays membres devra être suivie lors de tous les événements ultérieurs de même nature.

Élections au CE de l'UGI. L'appel de candidatures sera fait à la mi-octobre avec une date de clôture à la fin de janvier 2018. Le vote électronique des pays membres éligibles se tiendra jusqu'au mois de mars 2018. Meadows fera circuler l'appel et administrera le processus électoral à l'aide d'un compteur indépendant.

UGI Site Web et médias sociaux. Le site de l'UGI est mis à jour périodiquement. Il est nécessaire d'y ajouter des informations sur les anciens présidents, secrétaires généraux et les Congrès (Meadows). Facebook et Twitter continuent à être utilisés.

Projet UGI Revues. La base de données est mise à jour occasionnellement.

Bulletin de l'UGI. Les volumes 59 et 60 (pour les années 2015 et 2016) sont toujours chez l'imprimeur et seront prêts dans les prochaines semaines pour distribution. Des copies imprimées seront envoyées par la poste comme à l'habitude. Lors de la conférence de Québec en 2018, des exemplaires papiers seront distribués. Un PDF des volumes sera affiché sur le site Web de l'UGI dès qu'il sera disponible.

UGI eNewsletter. Les efforts de l'ex-Vice-président Bellezza ont été reconnus et très appréciés. La dernière édition a été publiée et diffusée en juillet 2017.

OurSus (Droogleever-Fortuijn). Ton Dietz a assisté à la réunion de la Commission urbaine de l'UGI au Brésil où il espérait profiter d'une plus grande participation internationale dans ce projet. Il n'a pas encore fait de rapport sur le potentiel d'une plus grande implication possible de la Commission dans les activités de *OurSus*.

Proposition de publication en partenariat. Hayes a rendu compte de ses discussions avec plusieurs éditeurs en ce qui concerne l'idée de promouvoir leurs produits sur le site de l'UGI. La personne-ressource aux MIT Press a manifesté un vif intérêt pour ce projet

potentiel, mais n'a pas été en contact depuis un certain temps. Il y a eu des réponses très positives de deux autres maisons d'édition, bien que des modèles de financement possibles alternatifs émergent. Par exemple, Springer a suggéré la mise en place d'un prix de la communication étudiante de l'UGI, bien qu'il règne une incertitude quant à la façon dont cela pourrait être réalisé. Après une longue discussion, Hay a accepté de communiquer davantage avec Springer et de revenir lors de la prochaine réunion du CE avec un modèle approprié qui serait mutuellement bénéfique tant pour l'UGI que pour Springer. La maison d'édition Edward Elgar a également manifesté un vif intérêt pour le parrainage de l'UGI via un lien sur son site Web une fois les détails techniques réglés (Meadows). Edward Elgar a également suggéré la publication d'une nouvelle série de livres de l'UGI, une idée pour laquelle un accord de principe a été établi. Des détails restent à discuter (Hay).

Archives de l'UGI. Himiyama a rappelé l'importance des archives de l'UGI, en soulignant le manque de connaissances en général concernant celles localisées à Leipzig. L'information sur les archives de l'UGI devrait être accessible depuis le site Web de l'UGI, sous l'onglet déroulant « About us » (Meadows). Les présidents des commissions, de groupes de travail et des Comités nationaux doivent être rappelés de l'importance de soumettre tous les documents relatifs à leurs activités (publications rapports de réunion, photographies, etc.) et d'utiliser eux-mêmes les archives de l'UGI. Il a été suggéré que, si possible, l'archiviste de l'UGI présente les archives de l'UGI à ces derniers lors de la réunion de Québec (Meadows).

Coopération et sensibilisation

Festival International de Géographie (FIG). Lemarchand a rapporté qu'il y aura une table ronde prévue pour le 3 septembre 2017 au festival avec des contributions des représentants de diverses organisations géographiques françaises; trois sujets clés ont été soumis : « la géographie, c'est amusant », « la géographie donne du boulot », « la géographie sauve des vies » et ce, dans l'espoir d'attirer l'attention des participants.

Les représentants de l'UGI au sein d'organismes internationaux. Rien à signaler à ce sujet.

ICSU (incl. GeoUnions) et ISSC. Le président Himiyama et Meadows assisteront à la prochaine assemblée générale de l'ICSU, à la réunion parallèle de l'ICSU et à l'assemblée générale conjointe de l'ICSU/ISSC à Taipei à la fin d'octobre. Suite à sa récente réunion à Potsdam le 5 septembre dernier (l'UGI n'a pu être représentée), les GeoUnions ont envoyé une lettre à Heide Hackman à titre de président de l'ICSU dans lequel il a été noté que les incidences financières de la fusion proposée n'ont pas encore été expliquées de manière adéquate et que certaines des actions proposées à la réunion d'Oslo en octobre 2016 n'avaient toujours pas été mises en œuvre. Himiyama et Meadows ont indiqué qu'ils étaient d'accord avec l'esprit de cette lettre et l'avaient approuvée au nom de l'UGI. Meadows a noté

que les entretiens de l'ICSU/ISSC avec les « parties prenantes » (recommandé par la réunion conjointe 2016) n'ont pas, du moins jusqu'à présent, inclus l'UGI. Bien que le CE de l'UGI endosse cette fusion, il a fait valoir que la stratégie proposée ne reflète pas de manière adéquate la nécessité de maintenir les forces fondamentales des différentes disciplines (tant dans les sciences naturelles que sociales) et que, si cela n'est pas atteint avec l'organisation fusionnée, de nouveaux projets et initiatives interdisciplinaires seraient moins susceptibles de réussir. Il reste à l'UGI le sentiment que l'organisation fusionnée s'attend à bénéficier de l'expertise combinée des Unions dans des initiatives interdisciplinaires (un objectif tout à fait raisonnable), mais qu'il existe un risque réel que cela affaiblisse le rôle de l'ICSU / CISS en soutenant les principales disciplines des Unions elles-mêmes. Kolosov a fait remarquer que la représentation de l'ISSC (en tant que partenaire plus petit) aux comités directeurs du nouvel organisme doit être protégée au-delà de la période de transition initiale. L'UGI a été invité à assister à la séance d'information du Forum Belmont qui fait suite aux Assemblées générales Taipei, mais Himiyama et Meadows ne sont en mesure d'y représenter l'UGI. JC Lin, président de la commission de géomorphologie de l'UGI, sera invité à participer à ce Forum et d'en suivre les développements (Meadows).

CIPSH. Kolosov a fait rapport du premier congrès du CIPSH qui a eu lieu à Liège, en Belgique, du 6 au 12 août 2017. L'un des thèmes principaux était « frontières et migrations » et l'UGI a organisé une session mais peu s'y sont rendus. L'Assemblée générale a réélu Luiz Oosterbeek en tant que Secrétaire général et Kolosov a été élu comme membre du conseil d'administration du CIPSH. Il est possible que cette association gagne davantage de crédibilité suite à la fusion proposée de l'ICSU et de l'ISSC et l'organisation doit être plus visible auprès de la communauté de l'UGI. Kolosov a accepté de développer des réflexions à ce sujet et de les faire circuler pour commentaires.

EUGEO. Plusieurs membres du comité exécutif de l'UGI ont assisté à la conférence de l'EUGEO tenue à Bruxelles, Belgique (septembre 2017) avec plus de 300 autres délégués. Kolosov a rendu compte de la réunion des représentants entre l'UGI et l'EUGEO qui a eu lieu à cette occasion. Il a été convenu de coopérer dans le domaine de l'éducation, y compris la définition et la diffusion de ce que sont les meilleures pratiques dans l'enseignement de la géographie à l'école (lycée, etc.) et à l'université, et de publier un livre sur les idées nouvelles en enseignement de la géographie dans les universités (différents programmes d'études, les contenus, pédagogiques, les méthodes, etc.). Il a été convenu que les futures conférences de l'EUGEO doivent de préférence avoir lieu durant les années où il n'y a pas de congrès ou de conférences régionales de l'UGI. Le concept de « métajournal », comme une sorte de renaissance de la Bibliographie géographique internationale (soutenu par l'UGI mais qui n'est plus publiée) a été soulevé et devrait être exploré à la fois par l'UGI et l'EUGEO. Le CNFG (Centre national français de géographie) a proposé « La nuit de la géographie » comme un événement potentiel de coopération, appuyé par plusieurs pays européens. Des liens étroits entre l'UGI et l'EUGEO sont nécessaires pour coordonner cette coopération et Droogleever-Fortuijn et Lemarchand ont été nommées pour prendre en mains ce projet au nom de l'UGI. Un événement conjoint UGI-

EUGEO est prévu au congrès d'Istanbul 2020. Deux projets additionnels ont été proposés, à savoir i) la façon d'accroître la visibilité et le statut de la géographie à travers le monde; ii) une plus large diffusion de la Charte sur l'éducation géographique, traduite en plusieurs langues. Les comités nationaux de l'UGI et les sociétés géographiques nationales peuvent jouer un rôle clé dans ces deux initiatives. Le prochain congrès d'EUGEO se tiendra à Varsovie, Pologne, les 13 et 14 avril 2018 (pour célébrer le centenaire de la Société de géographie polonaise). Celui de 2019 est prévu pour la troisième semaine de mai, en association avec le congrès annuel de la Société géographique irlandaise.

EGAL / EGAL. Dell'Agnese n'a pas pu assister à la conférence de La Paz en raison de problèmes de santé. Le prochain événement aura lieu en Équateur au cours de 2019. Il a été convenu que, si possible, une conférence thématique de l'UGI ait avoir lieu en association avec cette importante réunion. Dell'Agnese a accepté d'explorer cette opportunité.

IAG (Association internationale des géomorphologues) Meadows participera au prochain congrès l'IAG qui se tiendra à Delhi, en Inde en novembre. Il y discutera de la proposition de mettre sur pied une commission ou groupe de travail conjoint UGI-IAG inspirée du modèle de la commission sur la toponymie.

Relations avec les autres organisations et associations (par exemple AAG, RGS, ICA (All)). Le directeur exécutif de la RGS prendra sa retraite à la fin de 2017 et on a demandé à l'UGI de contribuer à un livre lui rendant hommage. Meadows rédigera l'hommage au nom de l'UGI. Kolosov a participé aux célébrations des 150 ans de la Società Geografica Italiana et y a offert un cadeau au nom de l'UGI.

Congrès géographiques internationaux, conférences régionales thématiques de l'UGI

Conférence régionale, Québec, Canada, 2018. Le protocole d'entente en versions française et anglaise est maintenant prêt et a été signé lors de la réunion. Meadows a remercié le comité local d'organisation (COL/LOC) de Québec pour la traduction du MOU de la conférence en français. Le groupe de travail de l'Olympiade a demandé une subvention de 7 500 \$ US (plutôt que du montant habituel de 5 000 \$ US); il a été convenu que la requête est arrivée trop tardivement pour les congrès de Québec et d'Istanbul mais qu'elle pourrait être acceptée pour les congrès ultérieurs de l'UGI. Meadows a proposé que des fonds de l'UGI soient utilisés pour l'Olympiade de Québec au montant de 2 500\$ US. Cette proposition a été approuvée.

Congrès IGU 2020 Istanbul. Gönençgil a présenté un bref rapport d'étape sur le congrès international de géographie. Il aura lieu du 17 au 21 août 2020 à l'Université d'Istanbul. Les frais d'inscription réguliers proposés pour les participants sont de 350 euros (enregistrements précoces). Un budget a été présenté sur la base d'environ 1 500 à 1 750 participants au total. Des questions ont été soulevées quant à la viabilité de l'événement

compte tenu de la perception du risque de sécurité et de la situation politique actuelle dans le pays. Il a été suggéré que les présidents de commissions et groupes de travail de l'UGI soient consultés sur leur participation à ce congrès. Il a été décidé, cependant, de ne pas le faire à ce stade-ci et de réexaminer la situation lors de la prochaine réunion du CE. Gönençgil a souligné qu'Istanbul est aussi sûre que les autres villes européennes. Kolosov a suggéré qu'un court article sur les progrès dans l'organisation du Congrès soit publié dans le *bulletin électronique* de l'UGI, en y mettant l'accent sur l'importance de l'événement pour la communauté géographique turque (Gönençgil). Le nouveau site Web du congrès (www.igc2020.org) est maintenant actif.

Congrès extraordinaire l'UGI, Paris 2022. Lemarchand a brièvement rendu compte des progrès accomplis et d'une réunion prévue à la fin d'octobre au cours de laquelle les offres de trois organisateurs de congrès commerciaux potentiels seront présentées; après cette réunion, le comité local d'organisation sélectionnera un organisateur.

Congrès UGI Dublin 2024. Rien à signaler à ce stade-ci.

Conférences thématiques. Himiyama note qu'il assistera à la conférence thématique de l'UGI de Bucarest. Kolosov a indiqué que l'organisation de la conférence thématique de Moscou de juin 2018 est en cours. La célébration de bienvenue est prévue au "Moscow Club of Scholars", avec des sessions scientifiques à l'Académie des sciences. Kolosov a noté que la conférence représenterait une opportunité idéale pour rétablir la commission de l'UGI sur les montagnes qui a été suspendue. Plusieurs excursions sur le terrain sont prévues après la conférence. Les propositions de sessions sont toujours acceptées.

Autres affaires

Prix de l'UGI: Lauréat d'Honneur. Meadows a contacté Ruth Fincher, présidente du sous-comité des prix, qui a accepté d'amorcer le processus de mise en candidature pour ce prix pour la conférence régionale de Québec 2018. Il y a eu une discussion concernant les personnes qui pourraient être des candidat.e.s approprié.e.s pour ce prix; les nominations devront être faites après la publication de l'annonce. Kolosov a rappelé la possibilité de créer un prix pour un chercheur chevronné qui a apporté une contribution exceptionnelle à la pratique de la discipline. Cette suggestion doit être soumise au sous-comité approprié.

Levée de l'assemblée

L'assemblée est levée à 17h35, le 8 septembre 2017. Droogleever-Fortuijn a été félicitée et remerciée pour les arrangements et son hospitalité chaleureuse.



3) REPORT FROM THE NEW COMMISSION ON AFRICAN STUDIES

At its recent a new Commission on African Studies. The IGU EC in Quebec, Canada, the IGU approved the establishment of a new Commission on African Studies. The intention is to foster networking and develop teaching and research in all aspects of African geography.

Since the formation of the IGU in Brussels, Belgium, in 1922, it has grown in both scientific activity and the number of Commissions and Task forces. Notable developments include the Latin American Commission which deals with the geographies of Latin America. Although geographers from the African continent have consistently participated and featured in many of the IGU Commissions and sessions thereof, it seems as though the absence of a platform that deliberately and categorically speaks to and champions issues in and/or of Africa could have stifled and suffocated geographical debate on and about the continent. The African continent in and of itself offers a plenitude of ‘material’ for geographical scholarship that would benefit the discipline and humanity. Against this background, it is strongly anticipated that the formation of an African Commission will not only undo the foregone loss to scholarship and humanity caused by the absence of a dedicated commission that looked into things African, but will also assist in promoting and elevating African geographies in the IGU fold of programmes and activities and the cause of science, in general.

Based on the above aim, the objectives of the proposed African Commission are to:

1. Provide a platform for academic and scientific debate for scholars in Africa and abroad on Africa-specific issues, challenges and problems
2. Establish a channel for the international showcasing of African geographies
3. Establish a channel for the international showcasing of geographical research and scholarship in Africa
4. Achieve adequate representation of Africa in the IGU
5. Stimulate, improve and/or increase participation in IGU scientific activities by Africa-based scholars and researchers
6. Grow, nature and expand IGU scientific and other activities in Africa

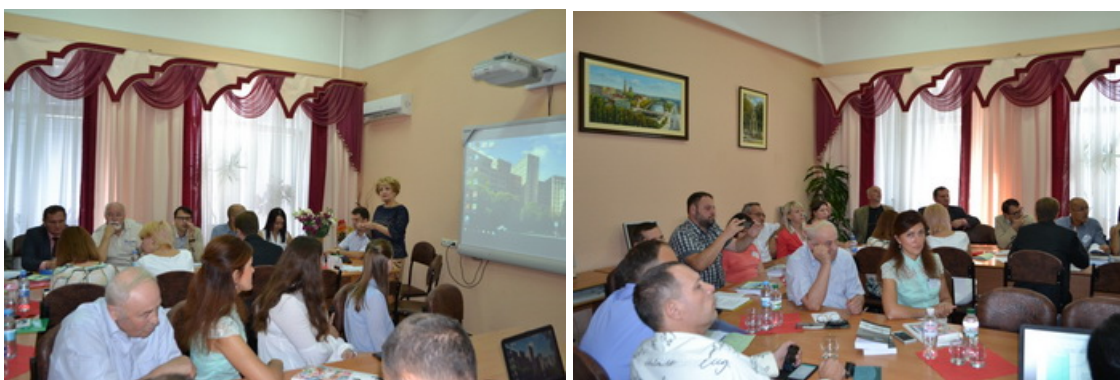
Dr Innocent Moyo, e-mail: minnox@yahoo.com.



4) REPORTS OF RECENT EVENTS

4.1) International Scientific and Practical Conference "Region-2017: Strategy for Optimal Development" (Kharkiv, Ukraine, September 19-20, 2017)

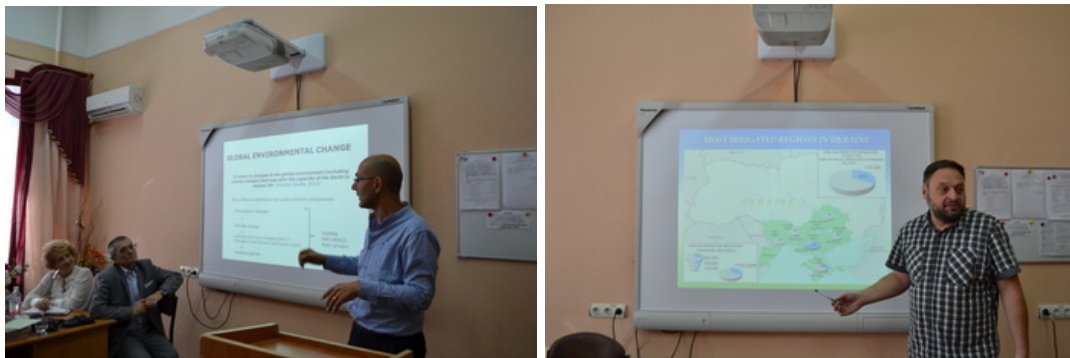
The Department of Human Geography and Regional Studies, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (Ukraine) hosted the 14th International Scientific and Practical Conference "Region-2017: Optimal Development Strategy" on September 19-20, 2017. More than 70 applications from Ukraine (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kherson State University, Nizhyn Gogol State University, Kharkiv Humanitarian University "People's Ukrainian Academy", Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University), Spain (University of Girona), Germany (RWTH Aachen University) submitted their theses.



Prof. Ludmila Niemets opening the plenary session of the conference- Pparticipants in the conference

A plenary session of the conference was held on September 19. Professors Mezentsev K.V. (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine), Nemets K.A. (V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Ukraine), Baranovsky M.O. (Nizhyn Gogol State University, Ukraine), assistant professor Mezentseva N.I. (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine) made presentations who considered the issues of modern urban geography in Ukraine, application methods of multidimensional statistical analysis in Human Geography, financial decentralization in Ukraine, as well as features of the public spaces study at the local level (case study of two microdistricts of the city of Kyiv, Ukraine).

The International Scientific and Practical Workshop "Anthropogenic factor of landscape changes and their human-geographical consequences" was held on September 20. The workshop was attended by scientists from Spain, Germany, and Ukraine. Professor Josep Vila Subirós (University of Girona, Spain), Professor Kostrikov S.V. (V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Ukraine), associate professor Vorovka V.P. (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine), assistant professor Pilipenko I.O. (Kherson State University) delivered their reports. They highlighted issues of contemporary global environmental changes in the world, identification of landscape changes through the use of GIS, problems of the coastal strips management of the Azov Sea, geographical features of nature and population co-adaptation in the Steppe zone of Ukraine.



Left: Prof. Josep Vila Subiros (Spain) giving presentation

Right: Prof. Pilipenko I.O. (Dean of the Faculty of Biology, Geography and Ecology) presenting

4.2) Annual Meeting of the IGU Commission on Water sustainability in the XX Century, Istomino-Baikal August 2017

Time and venue of conference

The conference was held from 16 to 21 of August 2017 at the premises of the International Ecological and Educational centre “Istomino” at the shores of Lake Baikal (located some 130 km from the City of Ulan-Ude in the Selenga River delta). For details of the research station please use the following link: <http://www.eu-interact.org/field-sites/observer-stations/russia/baikal-istomino-field-station/>.

Structure of conference

The conference consistent of two major parts: the paper presentations and discussion at various sessions and a 3-day field excursion led by local experts on water-related aspects of Lake Baikal as the world’s single largest freshwater reservoir and unique ecosystem.

All papers were presented to the plenary in either English or Russian. In both cases simultaneous translation was provided.

In order to achieve a well-balanced programme the conference reflecting the interests and membership of the IGU Commission for Water Sustainability the Organising Committee included not only local scientists of the hosting organisation (Baikal Institute for Nature Management) but also scientists from other institutions and countries:

Frank Winde – Prof. Dr. habil., Chair IGU Commission for Water Sustainability, North-West University, South Africa

Nikolai Kasimov – Academician of the RAS, I vice-president of the Russian Geographical Society,

President of the Faculty of Geography of the Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia

Arnold Tulokhonov – Academician of the RAS, member of the Committee on International Affairs, of the scientific leader of the BINM SB RAS, Russia

Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation,

Endon Garmaev – Dr. habil., Professor of the RAS, Director of the BINM SB RAS, Russia

Natalia Frolova, Vice Chair of the IGU Commission for Water Sustainability, Head of the Land Hydrology Department of the Faculty of Geography of Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia.

Sessions

The conference comprised of the following 5 different sessions covering water quantity as well as water quality and water management-related aspects:

- 1) Water resources in the conditions of changing climate
- 2) Water Management: Principles, Methods, Results
- 3) Water cooperation in transboundary river basins
- 4) Water Pollution and Health Impacts
- 5) Extreme hydrological events

In total 20 papers from speakers representing 6 countries from 4 continents (Africa, Asia, Europe, North America) were presented. Due to unforeseen circumstances registered participants from Armenia and Romania could unfortunately not attend.

As usual, participants from the host country and from countries in close proximity are accounting for the majority of speakers. Yet, with papers from North America, Europe, South Africa and Mongolia the conferences managed to achieve a significant degree of geographical coverage.



Left, Istomino Baikal Research Center. Right, At the visitor centre near Tanchoi

Sessions

The conference comprised of the following 5 different sessions covering water quantity as well as water quality and water management-related aspects:

- 6) Water resources in the conditions of changing climate
- 7) Water Management: Principles, Methods, Results
- 8) Water cooperation in transboundary river basins
- 9) Water Pollution and Health Impacts
- 10) Extreme hydrological events

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Africa and Mongolia the conferences managed to achieve a significant degree of geographical coverage.

Field trips

Three different field trips on water-related aspects of Lake Baikal were conducted forming a highlight of the conference. This includes a boat trip through the Selenga River delta, a visit of the ecotrail at the Baikal State Biosphere Reserve at Tankhoi and a boat trip with overnight stay at a floating hotel to the Chivyrkuy Bay Nature Reserve including a visit to the nearby hot springs. A fourth trip was organised to the monastery of Posolsk beautifully appointed at the shore of the lake. For snapshot from these trips please refer to the website of the Commission (www.igu-water.org).

Commission matters

Members of the Steering Committee met informally during breaks to discuss strategic and administrative aspects of the Commission. The chair used the opportunity to introduce the revamped website of the Commission to the Members.

In order to harvest ideas and input from participants a formal request was made during the conference to provide comments on a pre-drafted conference report. Among others this initiated spontaneous meetings of participants discussing the conference and how to keep the momentum it generated. The inputs of members have been considered in this report.

Identified priority areas for future activities

It is envisaged to continue with the vision of the Commission and build on the encouraging results of this conference. A first step will be to report on the outcomes on our website and archive the associated records such as the conference programme and the abstracts and delivered presentations, where possible. In a second step, the possibility of publishing selected papers from the meeting in a dedicated special issue of a peer-reviewed journal or book series will be explored.

With the sustainability concept generally gathering importance, specifically in the field of water resources utilization, we believe that the identified areas of research as reflected by this and earlier conferences of the Commission, are still very much relevant.

During the conference first talks were held to explore opportunities for collaboration between the Tongji University of Shanghai (China) and the Fraunhofer Institute of Ilmenau (Germany) and as well as of colleagues from USA, Austria and Germany on the possibility of writing a joint position paper on the role of Geography in the water sciences.

Furthermore, Leonid proposed to explore the applicability of the GIS-methodology specifically developed by the Geographical Institute Irkutsk for the Hydrological Atlas in the Baikal Region to other catchments. This is certainly a proposal worth following up.

Proposal for future follow-up meetings

The next annual meeting of the Commission will be held in 2018 as part of the IGU conference in Quebec (Canada). For that event the Commission will propose sessions in due course.

4.3) IGU PLANET AND HUMANITY MEDAL GIVEN TO LESTER BROWN, WASHINGTON, 17 OCTOBER 2017

Lester Russell Brown was the recipient of the 2012 International Geographical Union’s Planet and Humanity Medal *for early, incisive, and tireless advocacy of measures to promote public and policy maker awareness of global ecological issues via trenchant publications and public presentations, and for founding the Worldwatch Institute and the Earth Policy Institute.*

Brown was unable to attend the 2012 IGU Congress in Cologne, Germany to receive the medal in person, and subsequent difficulties in having a medal struck delayed the presentation until 17 October 2017 in Washington, DC. IGU Vice President Rémy Tremblay presented the medal at the Cosmos Club of Washington in the company of Ronald F. Abler, Past President of the IGU and Douglas Richardson, Executive Director of the American Association of Geographers.

The IGU Planet and Humanity Medal was inaugurated in 1996 to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the First International Geographical Congress held in Antwerp in 1871 by recognizing individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the resolution of human and environmental problems. Prior recipients of the medal were Gro Harland Bruntland (Norway) and Al Gore (USA) in 1996; Christian Pierret (France), Mary Robinson (Ireland), and M. S. Swaminathan (India) in 2000; Nelson Mandela (South Africa) in 2002; Mikhail Gorbachov (Russia) in 2004; and Marti Ahtisaari (Finland) in 2010. Carl Folke was awarded the medal at the 2016 IGU Congress in Beijing, China.



Left, the Medal. Right: Ron Abler, Lester Brown, Remy Tremblay and Doug Richardson



5) NEW COMMISSION ON GEOGRAPHY FOR FUTURE EARTH COUPLED HUMAN EARTH SYSTEMS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

1. Organization structure

Chair: Dr. Prof. Bojie Fu

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Vice-Chairs:

Dr. Prof. Mark Stafford Smith

Chief Coordinating Scientist in Institute of Land and Water, CSIRO, Australia; Chair of Science Committee, Future Earth

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Members:

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Institute for Environmental Studies, Faculty of Science

VU University Amsterdam, Netherlands

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Dr. Prof. Hanqin Tian

Director of International Center for Climate and Global Change Research; Solon and Martha Dixon Professor at Auburn University.

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2. Commission aim and emphasis

The mission of the proposed commission of **Geography for Future Earth: Coupled Human-Earth Systems for Sustainability** is to promote Geography for people to thrive in a sustainable and equitable world. Under the banner of IGU and Future Earth, the commission will serve as the focal point for developing, coordinating, and implementing interdisciplinary research and education related to coupled human-earth system dynamics and sustainable development; the commission will seek to build and connect knowledge to increase the impact of research, to explore new development paths, and contribute to achieving goals on global sustainable development by finding new ways to sustainable development.

Highly intertwined with humanity, the land systems is the most complex and important sub-systems of the coupled human-Earth systems. The proposed commission of **Geography for Future Earth: Coupled Human-Earth Systems for Sustainability** will initially focus on the human-land systems and its interfaces with coastal ocean and atmosphere. We will promote wider analysis and innovative thinking about global land sustainability through the bridging and synthesis of physical geography, human geography, ecology, hydrology, atmospheric, climate and social sciences. With this mission, the commission aims at promoting and facilitating the following six thematic areas:

- (1) Fundamentals of Geography for Future Earth, and especially new theories and hypothesis on coupled human-earth systems for sustainability;
- (2) Open and inclusive platforms for Geospatial Big Data and observations of coupled human-earth systems;
- (3) Integrated Earth system models to deepen our understanding of complex Earth systems and human dynamics across different scales;
- (4) Linkages and dynamic analysis among ecological process, services, and human wellbeing;
- (5) Human Contributions and Responses to global climate/environmental changes and sustainability;
- (6) Evaluation tools for sustainable development, multi-scale sustainability evaluation, and sustainable scenarios for transformative development pathways.

3. Commission tasks

The candidate commission of Geography for Future Earth: Coupled Human-Earth Systems for Sustainability will strongly follow the purpose of IGU to promote Geography through initiating and

coordinating geographical research and teaching around the world. We will endeavor to collaborate with global scholars in the field of ecological services & human needs, natural and anthropogenic processes, human-earth systems dynamics and modelling, sustainability evaluation and sustainable development solutions. Listed tasks are to be planned and implemented in the future under the guidance of IGU:

- (1) To hold regular conference and thematic workshops on relative topics, such as propose a session at the Quebec Regional Conference, host the annual conference on Geography for Future Earth, and organize annual symposium on Coupled Human-Earth Systems for Sustainability;
- (2) To carry out experiments of natural and human processes at typical regions in the world. This tends to set experimental sites in different continents and countries;
- (3) To jointly educate students and exchange scholars among the member universities and institutes, to focus on developing sustainable development solutions at national and global scale;
- (4) To jointly organize professional scientific investigation and apply for international projects and do research of different case areas in the world;
- (5) To jointly promote scientific program at global scale, write high quality scientific papers and books, and release academic reports on Geography for Future Earth.



6) NEW FROM ICSU JULY 2017



World's leading bodies of social and natural sciences agree to merge in 2018, becoming the "International Science Council" to serve as the global voice for science

At a historic joint meeting, members of two leading international science councils

voted to merge, launching a process that will see the formation of a single global entity called the International Science Council that unites the scientific community, including all social and natural sciences.

Taipei, 26 October 2017 – Members of the world’s leading international science bodies agreed today in a historic vote to merge and create a unified, international organization whose vision will be to advance all sciences as a global public good.

The agreement took place at a landmark joint meeting in Taipei of the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC), with members voting overwhelmingly to form a new organization that provides a strong foundation for advancing science across the disciplinary spectrum and in all parts of the world, and promoting its vital role in shaping humanity’s future on planet Earth.

The new International Science Council brings together the current members of ISSC and ICSU, including 40 international scientific unions and associations, and more than 140 national and regional organizations such as academies and research councils.

The organization will be launched at a founding General Assembly to be held in Paris, France in 2018. Its mission will be to serve as the global voice of science, providing leadership in catalyzing, incubating and coordinating international action on issues of major public concern. To mark the occasion, the new Council will inaugurate a new interdisciplinary international science summit which will be a flagship event.

Alberto Martinelli, President of ISSC, said: “This vote comes at a crucial moment for science. Now more than ever before, a powerful and credible voice is needed to advocate the value and values of all science to society. The challenge of living sustainably and equitably in a rapidly changing world means that the need for scientific understanding has never been greater. The unified science council will champion all the sciences and their role in responding to today’s global challenges.”

Gordon McBean, President of ICSU, said: “ICSU has been a pioneer in the 20th century for interdisciplinary science programmes and policy impact. I am immensely proud that our members have voted to endorse this historic merger which carves out a new space for our proud historic legacy - to be the global voice of all sciences in a digitally connected world.”

The final vote count in favour of the merger for ICSU was 97.6% and 90% for the ISSC. It came at the end of two days of intensive discussions on issues ranging from the new strategy, statutes and governance arrangements and the legal framework.

Today’s vote paves the way for the start of the legal implementation phase which will include the finalization of a merger treaty which contains the new name, Statutes and Rules of Procedure. Members of both Councils will endorse this treaty in an electronic vote scheduled to take place in the first half of 2018, and a new, merged Secretariat will be put into place at the organization’s headquarters in Paris.

Commenting on the outcome, Philip Campbell, Editor-in-Chief of Nature said: “I welcome such a merger because it reflects the inevitable and essential greater proximity and even joining up of all branches of research to achieve new intellectual and societal aims. We, in the Nature group of journals, are moving in exactly the same way.”

The decision to create the International Science Council follows a joint meeting between the ISSC and ICSU in October 2016, at which members of both organizations

voted overwhelmingly in favour of an in-principle decision to merge the two councils, and formed working groups to draft a strategy and statutes for the new organization. That vote was based on the recommendation of a joint working group on the relationship between the two Councils which worked between December 2015 and June 2016. Their final report recommended a merger, and this was subsequently endorsed by the executives of both organizations.

Further background information on the merger is available on the dedicated [Gitbook page](#) and on the [ICSU](#) and [ISSC](#) websites.

To see photos of the event, please see our [Flickr](#) album.

All Power Point presentations from the Joint Meeting are available on the [ShareFile](#).

ADDITIONAL REACTIONS

Helga Nowtony, Chair **ERA Council Forum Austria**: „I warmly welcome a merger of ICSU and ISSC – it is an idea whose time has come. The merger of these two highly experienced international organisations offers enormous complementary potential in addressing some of the most pressing issues of our time. Science as a unique public good can – and must – offer actionable knowledge, advice and guidance“
Craig Calhoun, President **Berggruen Institute**: “The merger of ICSU and ISSC brings a welcome unity of science and a new level of global cooperation to help face the enormous challenges before humanity – and before the planet.”

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE

The International Council for Science (ICSU) is a non-governmental organisation with a global membership of national scientific bodies (122 Members, representing 142 countries) and International Scientific Unions (31 Members).

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

The International Social Science Council (ISSC), a membership-based non-governmental organization, is the primary global body representing the social sciences, including economic and behavioural sciences. Its mission is to strengthen social science to help solve global priority problems. Through its members and programmes, the ISSC reaches hundreds of thousands of individual social scientists working across a wide range of disciplines and representing all parts of the world.

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7) NEWS FROM FUTURE EARTH



29 September: Conference on Biomass Burning in Colorado

LINK: <http://futureearth.org/news/workshop-biomass-burning-held-colorado>

12th October: Future Earth latest Annual Report.

LINK: <http://futureearth.org/news/read-future-earths-latest-annual-report>

17 October: Volcanic eruptions linked to social unrest in Ancient Egypt

LINK: <http://www.futureearth.org/blog/volcanoes>

27 October: Future Earth at the Bonn Climate Change Conference

LINK: <http://www.futureearth.org/news/cop23>

27 October: Blogging from International Workshop on Climate and Water

LINK: <http://futureearth.org/blog/2017-oct-19/blogging-international-workshop-climate-and-water>

Summary of the 46th Plenary Session on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

LINK <http://www.futureearth.org/news/event-summary-46th-plenary-session-intergovernmental-panel-climate-change-ipcc>"



8) FORTHCOMING EVENTS

(more information in the Home of Geography website, Events 2017)

8.1) IFLA-APR "Blue Green Congress", Bangkok, 2-5 November

8.2) Politics of uncertainty in local Refugee Reception, Goettingen, 15-16 November

8.3) Cities, Borders and Identities, winter school in Royal Netherlands Institute, Roma, 18-26 November

- 8.4) Conflicts et Résistance au Maroc et dans les Pays Colonisée, Maroc, Novembre 2017
- 8.5) World Bosai Forum, Sendai, 25-28 November
- 8.6) National Association Geographers of India, Delhi, 5-6 December
- 8.7) Medical Geography 12th International Seminar, Perugia, 14-16 December

