

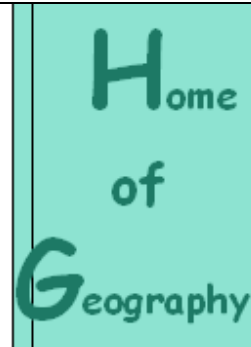


## IGU E-Newsletter

Quarterly

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# 6

October

2006

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*This Newsletter is circulated to more than 1000 individuals and bodies. Announcements, information, calls for participation in scientific events, programmes and projects are welcome.*

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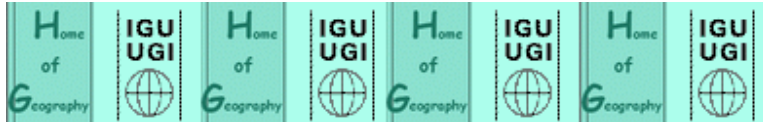
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### **Update: Activities at the Home of Geography**



### **Message: TAKING STOCK**

By Adalberto Vallega  
President, International Geographical Union

This issue of the IGU E-Newsletter focuses on the role of the *Regional Responses to Global Changes. A View from the Antipodes*, the theme of the IGU Regional Conference held in Brisbane, Australia, 3-7 July, 2006, not only due to the intrinsic importance of this event but also owing to the intensive discussions there on the role of regional organisations in optimising the Union's effectiveness by meeting the distinct needs and prospects of the individual geographical communities.

During the Brisbane Regional Conference the IGU Regional Network for Southeast Asia, Australasia, and the Pacific was established. It joined the three existing networks in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Mediterranean, and the Latin American Region. In Brisbane, talks were begun to evaluate the possibility and opportunity to establish a Network pertaining to the European Union. This prospect is expected to be discussed further at the IGU Executive Committee Meeting that will be held in Tunis in November 2006.

Following these steps, it is evident that the regional approach is passing from the take off stage of the IGU 2000-2004 term, toward maturity in the 2004-2008 period. The key question now is how to encourage this process. Efforts should be concentrated on implementing communication and networking not only within the individual networks but also among them in order to discuss issues and prospects of common interest and to share experiences. Secondly, bottom-up inputs from the individual networks to the IGU Executive Committee should be expanded to enable the Executive Committee to help the former ones efficiently. Finally, special sessions of the Regional Networks, to be convened at the Tunis International Geographical Congress, could be useful to discuss how the regional organisation could improve and how a 2008-2012 programme could be sketched out.

In this respect, opinions, comments, and proposals from the Regional Networks to be included in the ongoing issues of the IGU e-Newsletter would be highly appreciated.

Adalberto Vallega



## **1) REGIONAL RESPONSES TO GLOBAL CHANGE: A VIEW FROM THE ANTIPODES (BRISBANE, 3-7 JULY, 2006)**

### **Some data:**

- Web address: [www.igu2006.org](http://www.igu2006.org)
- Number of participants: 939
- Number of plenary sessions: 10
- Number of parallel sessions: 201
- Number of pre-conference meeting of IGU bodies: 6
- Number of pre-conference field trips: 2
- Number of post conference excursions: 2

Conference Chairman: John Holmes M.A. (Sydney), Ph. D. (New England), F.A.S.S.A., Emeritus Professor of Geography, The University of Queensland.

### **1a) Regional Responses to Global Changes. A View from the Antipodes**

*Reflections on the role of Regional Conference*

[From the IGU President's speech to the Opening Session]

The Regional Conferences convened in the early twenty-first century by the International Geographical Union are concerned with crucial parts of the world. In Durban, on the occasion of the 2002 Conference, attention focused on the *problématique* of the sub-Saharan area, which is a critical nucleus of the UN strategy against underdevelopment. Now, in Brisbane, attention is focused on the Pacific, which is the most progressive part of the world. In 2010, on the occasion of the Tel Aviv Conference, attention will focus on the Mediterranean region, where the most demanding *problématique* of intercultural dialogue has emerged.

These events may be regarded as steps of a unique discourse focusing on modernity, its problems and prospects. Along this discursive pathway, the Brisbane Conference on *Regional Responses to Global Changes: A View from the Antipodes*, enjoys a central position in many respects. Where this complex changing framework is borne in mind, it may be agreed that, in this present time in history, the IGU has to address an unprecedented range of conditions, and needs to tailor its approaches and organisation to changing conditions and prospects. Hence a wide menu of operational fields has arisen on the horizon of the new century.

1 — The work and outcomes of the IGU research bodies, namely the Commissions, Task Forces and other occasional bodies, need to be gathered together and better valued. Those results that could help convene international research projects and programmes, hopefully framed in interdisciplinary perspectives, such as the Oceans 21, Mediterranean Renaissance, and Cultures

and Civilizations for Human Development programmes, may be regarded as initiatives pertaining to this stream.

2 — Efforts to co-operate with non-geographical organisations must be made. In this respect, the co-operation which has been established in the context of Geo-Unions, and the role of founder partner assumed by the IGU in the framework of the International Year of Planet Earth, are significant steps forward.

3 — Following the recommendations made by Kofi Annan, collaboration with UN intergovernmental organisations should be broadened and optimised. In this respect, efforts have been made to co-operate with UNESCO, FAO and UNU.

4 — Education has gained a central role in the framework of the IGU's activity. Establishing educational guidelines, designing educational approaches, and convening Olympiads – thus paving the way to collaboration by local geographical organisations – on the one hand, and interacting with local educational authorities and agencies, on the other, have shaped a demanding operational field.

5 — To deal with the specific issues affecting individual parts of the world, co-operation among geographers is also needed on the regional scale. In recent times, three regional networks have been established with respect to the Commonwealth of Independent States, Latin America and the Mediterranean. Finally, a network has just been established in the Pacific with reference to the South Asia, Australasia and the Pacific *sensu lato*.

6 — The more a bottom-up approach expands and gains relevance in the framework of the IGU, the better the world's geographical community can tackle the changing framework set out above.

### **1b) Regional Responses to Global Changes. A View from the Antipodes**

*From Brisbane to Tunis: A Demanding Pathway*

[From the IGU President's speech to the Closing Session]

During the past regional conferences, as well as during the past international congresses, the role of these events was much simpler than it is today. Those events were productive fora where geographers could meet, have discussions, share opinions, and argue about conceptual and methodological concerns paying little or no heed to their scientific and social external environments. Thus, the perception of geography was essentially self-referential: this discipline was essentially perceived in itself. Meanwhile, each event had its own unique history and was important in its own right.

By way of contrast, the interface represented by the Brisbane Conference is somewhat more complicated and, at the same time, more stimulating, demanding and fascinating. Within the globalising era, discussions held in an individual conference or congress do not pertain only to geography, but to varying degrees they relate to other disciplines also; they must be sensitive to the demand for geographical investigations and representations of the world which have arisen from intergovernmental organisations, and from society. This is one of the main consequences of the globalising era.

The other consequence is concerned with the links arising from the regional conferences and international geographical congresses. The geographer of the globalisation era should move towards a vision, within which each event is closely linked with the next one, in such a way as to build up a discursive pathway where the outcomes of the past event become the inputs, and the starting bases, for the next one.

In this respect, the Brisbane Conference has played this role of gateway perfectly while maintaining its basic role, which was that of focusing on the regional scale of a range of crucial issues relating to the globalising era. In the Conference framework, an IGU Commission on Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples Rights had its debut, thus catalysing attention on cardinal issues of cultural geography; an IGU Commission on Islands was established, thus providing a geographical response to the UN Barbados Action Plan; a geographical network, concerned with an extensive and important part of the Pacific, was launched; discussions relating to international programmes and projects were held, including the International Year of Planet Earth and the Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development initiatives. Now, the task that lies before us is to build on these efforts and achievements in preparation for the next major event, namely the International Geographical Congress on *Building together our territories!*, which will be held in Tunis in 2008.



## 2) THE IGU REGIONAL NETWORKS: A comprehensive view

### 2a) LATIN AMERICAN NETWORK

Geographical coverage: Latin America, from Mexico to Chile

Co-ordinator 1: Ana María Liberali, Argentina [humboldt@uolsinectis.com.ar](mailto:humboldt@uolsinectis.com.ar)

Co-ordinator 2: Alvaro Sánchez, Mexico [asc@igiris.igeograf.unam.mx](mailto:asc@igiris.igeograf.unam.mx)

Liaison of the IGU Executive Committee: José-Luis Palacio Prieto, Mexico  
[palacio@servidor.unam.mx](mailto:palacio@servidor.unam.mx)

#### Activity Report: January 2005-September 2006

*Presented by*

*Prof. Ana Maria Liberali (Buenos Aires, Argentina) and*

*Dr. Álvaro Sánchez-Crispín, (Mexico City, Mexico).*

#### 1. The network's objective

The overall objective of this network is the promotion and development of close working relations among specialized academic bodies in Latin America, both regional and national, which share the common interest of *enhancing the place of Geography* in the fields of education and research, from elementary school to postgraduate studies.

This is particularly important considering the present educational and research ambience in Latin America which, in most cases, is not sympathetic to the teaching of subjects, such as Geography, that could provide a solid basis for the formation of good citizens, sensitive to the problems affecting the place in which we live.

## **2. Geographical coverage**

As of September 2006, this network incorporates most Latin American nations. The list of participant countries is basically the same as that of the Latin American Geographical Union. Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela are members of that Union. In one way or another, these countries are also linked to the Latin American Network of the IGU.

## **3. Operational fields**

The *overlay* of the network and the Union can be traced back to 2004, the year the network was founded. As soon as news spread about the creation of the network, the incorporation of Union representatives to the network started. Ever since, communication between the network and the Union has been constant and fluid, especially because the network's chairperson (Professor Liberali) is also the webmaster of the *Red Humboldt*, a website promoting links and academic activities among geographers in Latin America and the rest of the world ([www.centrohumboldt.org.ar](http://www.centrohumboldt.org.ar)).

Every other year, Latin American geographers gather in a previously designated location. The last meeting was hosted in Sao Paulo in 2005 and the next, in 2007, will be held in Bogota. At the Sao Paulo meeting, the network's chairperson and secretary had the chance to interact with various academics, teachers and researchers, dedicated to the promotion of Geography in their own countries. Several initiatives were agreed regarding the publication of books and the organisation of scientific meetings, in particular in Argentina, through the Red Humboldt.

Yearly, the network's chairperson takes the responsibility of organising a regional geographical meeting in Argentina attended by several professionals from Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay. They present their research findings in fields such as Education, Political Geography and GIS, to name but a few. This is another forum where the network has actively participated.

Finally, this network supports the IGU initiative *Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development*, originally proposed by the current IGU President, Prof. Adalberto Vallega. The way in which this network can contribute to this initiative is still being discussed; in due time, it will be announced through various means of communication.

## **4. Expected outcomes**

As a result of the operation of the network in the fields indicated above, over the coming months, we expect the following outcomes:

1. *A book on the state-of-the-art of Geography in Latin America.* This will be a major contribution to the understanding of the state of Geography in several countries in the region. The book is co-ordinated by the secretary of the network (Dr. Sanchez-Crispin). We would like to present this book at the Bogota meeting, in March 2007. The book will receive contributions in Spanish and Portuguese.

2. *The presentation of a paper at the Second Global Conference on Economic Geography* to be held in Beijing, China, in June 2007. On this occasion, both the network's chairperson and the secretary will be presenting the results of a general investigation into the state of teaching and research in the field of Economic Geography in different countries of Latin America. Considering the expected number of geographers attending this conference and its geographical setting, we presume that the impact of our paper will be significant.

## **5. Call for collaboration**

We appeal to the goodwill of geographers in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and Haiti, to join our network. We know very little about Geography and geographers in these three nations, not yet incorporated into either the IGU network or the Latin American Geographical Union. Moreover, we would like to include in our list, the names of geographers living or working in the Caribbean island-states, as this part of the Americas is often labeled under the name of Latin America.

Anyone who wants to become a member of this network, or collaborate with particular members, can do so easily by e-mailing a message to the following address: [cehumboldt@yahoo.com.ar](mailto:cehumboldt@yahoo.com.ar). Please specify your wish to become a member of the Latin American Network of the IGU.

## **6. Proposed future directions**

The network will continue its efforts to bring together the collective work of geographers based in different countries of the region, from Northern Mexico to Patagonia.

The network will support the organisation of academic meetings (colloquia, symposia, congresses) in order to provide a favourable forum in which geographers, from all corners of Latin America, can come and share the results of their own work.

The publication of books and other materials significant to the enhancement of teaching and research in Geography, written by our own Latin American geographers, will be a priority for our network. While current geographical literature, in English, is abundant, the publication of books on Geography in Spanish is practically non-existent. We want to contribute to filling that gap by editing and publishing *at least one book per year*, in Spanish and Portuguese, mostly including Latin American authors.

Finally, the network will strengthen its pre-existing ties with other Networks and Commissions of the International Geographical Union by attending congresses or regional meetings in the coming years.

## **7. Contact details of the Network's Chairperson and Secretary**

**Chairperson: Prof. Ana Maria Liberali**, an Argentinian geographer, based in Buenos Aires. She is an original founder of the Centro de Estudios Humboldt, a non-profit organization devoted to the promotion of Geography in Argentina and elsewhere in South America. Over the last decade, she has significantly contributed to the fields of Economic Geography and Educational Geography in her own country.

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**Secretary: Dr. Alvaro Sanchez-Crispin**, a Mexican geographer, working for the National Autonomous University of Mexico in Mexico City. He currently chairs the Latin American Geographical Union. His professional interests include Economic Geography, Regional Geography of Mexico and Educational Geography.

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## **2b) REGIONAL NETWORK FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA, AUSTRALASIA AND THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC (SEAASWP)**

Following the establishment of the IGU Regional Network on Southeast Asia, Australasia and the Southwest Pacific (IGU Newsletter #5 July 2006), the Network has been awarded AUD\$ 16,000 by the University of Sydney's International Program Development Fund (IPDF) grant scheme. This will provide seed money for the establishment of SEAASWP as a collaborative set of research and teaching initiatives, mentoring activities and mutual support between geographers from different countries in the region. The key network themes were described in the earlier IGU newsletter article, and the initiative is open to new collaborative themes.

The network will adopt a nodal strategy, with the University of Sydney, Australia and Nanyang University of Technology, Singapore taking the lead. SEAASWP anticipates involving a key contact person in each country. The network welcomes involvement from geographers in the region and also those with an interest in the region but based elsewhere.

The Network will be taken forward in a number of ways. From 28-30 November 2006, the Southeast Asian Geography Association (SEAGA) will hold its biennial conference at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore <http://www.seaga.co.nr>. A one-day SEAASWP workshop will be held ahead of the conference on Monday 27 November. Two geographers from the Southwest Pacific (Fiji and Papua New Guinea) will be supported by the University of Sydney's IPDF program to attend the Singapore conference. The pre-conference workshop will cover organizational issues and will identify key areas of collaboration for program development within the network. It will also include presentations on the legacy and current situation of development geography in a number of SEAASWP countries.

The SEAASWP website will be up and running soon, allowing for online program development. The website will be hosted by the Australian Mekong Resource Centre (<http://www.mekong.es.usyd.edu.au>) at the University of Sydney. For further information on SEAASWP, and to be included on the email contact list, please contact Kate Griffiths [kate.griffiths@geosci.usyd.edu.au](mailto:kate.griffiths@geosci.usyd.edu.au).

### **Philip Hirsch**

SEAASWP Regional Network Coordinator

## **2c) COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (CIS)**

Geographical Coverage: Member Countries of the CIS

New Co-ordinator: to be appointed



### 3) KEY INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES:

#### 3a) CULTURES AND CIVILISATIONS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

##### *Introduction*

As has been reported in previous issues of the E-IGU Newsletter, the Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development (CCHD) initiative was launched with the aim of helping intercultural and intercivilizational dialogue as an essential tool to pursue human development. The CCHD initiative will be operated at two levels:

- The first level, which is presented in the *CCHD Action Plan*, consists of a set of actions to be carried out in the medium term focusing on i) education, ii) the media, iii) society, and iv) collaboration with decision-making centres.
- The second level will consist of a proposal to the United Nations to proclaim an International Year on Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development.

In spite of being conceived and designed by the International Geographical Union, CCHD is essentially interdisciplinary, and multi-perspective from a cultural point of view.

##### *Sponsoring organisations*

At the present time, CCHD is supported by:

- four moral sponsor organisations from four countries, including one non-geographical sponsor;
- eighteen operational sponsor organisations from thirteen countries, including six non-geographical sponsors;

##### *Collaboration from the IGU National Committees*

A call for participation and collaboration was circulated to 58 IGU National Committees (NCs). At the present time, 17 of them, equal to 29 percent of the total number contacted, have expressed their willingness to collaborate. Recently, the NCs were invited to convene a national report on cultural diversity with specific reference to the 2005 “Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions”.

##### *Collaboration from geographical societies and associations*

A call for participation and collaboration was circulated to 131 national geographical bodies. At the present time, 12 of them, equal to 9 percent of the total number contacted, have expressed their willingness to collaborate.

*Cardinal co-operation: United Nations*

*UNESCO, Culture Sector* — In April, this branch of UNESCO responded positively to IGU's invitation. In order to initiate collaboration, some papers were sent to the Division of Cultural Policies and Intercultural Dialogue.

*United Nations University, UNU* — In March, Hans J. A. van Ginkel, Rector of UNU, sent a letter in which the UNU agreed to be included in the Roster of Operational Sponsors and to jointly convene actions concerned with education.

*Co-operation with the Holy See* — Following a meeting held in Rome, possible collaboration with the Holy See, Pontifical Council of Culture, is expected to be explored in the coming months.

*Co-operation with International Council for Science* — The ICSU Office for Africa expressed its willingness to establish operational collaboration.

*Co-operation with International Social Science Council* — The CCHD will be presented at the ISSC General Assembly of November 2006. Close collaboration is expected to be established, including the organisation of an international scientific event on cultures and civilizations.

*Co-operation with The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)* — Following the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed last December by IGU and ALECSO, effective collaboration is expected to take place in the framework of CCHD. In this respect, an *ad hoc* meeting recently took place with Mr Mongi Bousnina in Tunis (see 3b).

*CCHD and the IYPE*

Close interaction between the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE) and the CCHD is regarded of mutual interest. In this respect, a sort of feedback could be envisaged between the IYPE and the UN Year on CCHD. The operational aspects of this potentially close collaboration are yet to be defined.

*Contacts at the national scale* — A number of letters have been received from eminent geographers and bodies from all over the world expressing their intention to explore whether their local government could play the role of promoter in the framework of UNESCO and the UN. The countries concerned are listed below (the name of the IGU liaison person is mentioned in brackets):

- Finland (Markku Löytönen)
- Japan (Hiroshi Tanabe)
- Norway (Tor Halfdan Aase)
- South Africa (Lindisizwe M. Magi)
- Tunisia (Ali Toumi)
- China (Wuyi Wang)
- Denmark (Christian Wichmann Matthiessen)
- Egypt (M.S. Abulezz)
- New Zealand (R.D. Bedford)
- Romania (Dan Balteanu)
- Saudia Arabia (Mohammad S. Makki)

- Slovak Republic (Jan Feranec)
- Switzerland (Antoine Bailly)

### *Prospects*

Following recent developments, drafting of the CCHD Action Plan 2 is expected to be completed shortly. It will be more operational than the Action Plan that was adopted in 2005. In particular, it will include those actions that are expected to be operated in 2007 and 2008, up till the International Geographical Congress.

### **3a-i) The activity of Indian Geographers**

Special mention must be given to the activity of some Indian Geographers, eagerly working for the CCHD Project since the December 2005 Workshop in Rome. Part of the work of Prof. Rana P.B. Singh and Dr. R.B. Singh has already been reported on the Home of Geography website, and on 5-7 October, much time was dedicated to our Project during the 1<sup>st</sup> International Indian Geography Congress, where Anne Buttimer, Past President of the IGU, and Giuliano Bellezza, Director of the Home of Geography, were invited to participate.

A report of the initiative written by Anne Buttimer follows:

## **First International Indian Geography Congress**

on

*Environment, development and geo-informatics*

October 5-7, 2006

Osmania University, Hyderabad, India

They came from every state in India, nearly 400 strong, with contributions to this first ever international Indian geography congress. A small number from abroad - 15 expected - 11 arrived (these included individuals from Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Sri Lanka and USA). The initiative for this event was taken by the National Association of Geographers of India (NAGI) with most of the congress organization and local arrangements handled by Professors Kalpana Markandey and S. Simhadri of Osmania University, Hyderabad. A total of 250 paper presentations were scheduled at 25 parallel sessions held at three distinct locations during the 3-day event, with one plenary session designed to highlight the central congress themes. A book of Abstracts, containing 396 submitted summaries, and greetings from IGU President Adalberto Vallega, was made available for all who attended the meeting.

The Opening Session featured welcome addresses by local organisers from Osmania University, NAGI President Sudesh Nangia and Secretary-General R.B. Singh. Giuliano Bellezza read out greetings from IGU President Adalberto Vallega and this was followed by a special lecture by Dr. Siva Kumar from the Indian Government Ministry of Science and Technology which emphasised the importance of geo-informatics for technological innovation and economic growth. Anne Buttimer, Past-President of IGU, then presented a summary view of IGU structure and recent international initiatives, particularly those involving other ICSU "geo-unions", encouraging participation by Indian geographers in not only IGU Commissions and Task Forces, but also in the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE).



Prof. Kalpana Markandey speaks during the Opening Session

The congress programme involved a wide variety of contributions all initially orchestrated around nine specific themes: 1) Geo-informatics and environment, 2) Natural disasters and environmental challenges, 3) Geo-informatics and the technology-society interface, 4) Human resources and development strategies, 5) Socio-cultural power spaces and governance, 6) Population explosion and urbanisation, (7) Spatial infrastructure and alternative planning strategies, 8) Geopolitical economy of development and globalisation, (9) Environmental pollution and quality of life.



Giuliano Bellezza reads the address of Prof. Adalberto Vallega

Conceptually distinct as these categories may appear to be, there was no clear-cut separation of topics among the sessions. Hosts seemed to place primary emphasis on making everyone feel welcome to share their ideas. Accommodations and last-minute adjustments were characteristic throughout. Each session therefore included contributions with highly diverse substantive foci.

The Congress Plenary Session opened with a paper by NAGI President Sudesh Nanghia on Arthur Geddes' ideas about environment and development in India (it was Arthur Geddes, son of Parick Geddes, who choose the site for Osmania University), and closed with the invited paper by Anne Buttimer on issues of scale in sustainable development. In between was a special focus on "Cultures and civilisations for human development", chaired by Home of Geography Director, Giuliano Bellezza, who presented the overall project design by Adalberto Vallega, adding evocative ideas on analytical possibilities for this endeavour now available via satellite imagery. The session itself involved a specially invited lecture Professor K. R. Dixit, followed by an extended speech by NAGI Secretary-General R.B. Singh, who affirmed his commitment to gaining support from the Indian Government for the proposed UN Year of CCHD. Professor Rana P. B. Singh (Varanasi) then presented a passionate plea for renewal of Gandhian approaches to the study of cultures and civilisations. All three Indian presentations underscored the need to anchor geographical ideas of "cultures and civilisations" in the lived realities of human relationships with nature and bio-physical conditions. (note by G. Bellezza: Afterwards, the organizers specifically dedicated a slot to Anne Buttimers' presentation on "*Issues of Scale in Sustainable Development*").

The predominant feature of most papers was an emphasis on empirically-based description of actual situations, many of which involved environmental challenges, e.g., floods, hydro-electric installations, air pollution and agricultural change. While there were few proposed solutions to pressing problems, there was no lack of critique (and often criticism) of official public policy on environmentally-related topics. The technical quality of powerpoint presentations was truly excellent - geo-informatics very cleverly deployed to not only bridge the themes of "environment" and "development", but also astutely illustrating the inter-connections of human and physical geography. Young scholars, female and male, showed enthusiasm and competence in their empirically-based approaches to contemporary issues of society and environment.



*Kalpana Markandey during the Valedictorian ceremony*

Hyderabad 2006 was a memorable event, an unforgettable experience. It showed clearly how keen Indian geographers are to meet one another, strengthening inter-regional and inter-generational encounters within this vast country, while also reaching out to participate in IGU-related events. Host venue for the Second International Indian Geography Congress at Rajasthan (February 2008) has already been announced. For those of us from Euro-America, so attuned as we are to mechanically-organised and tightly-scheduled items in time and space, this open-ended and accommodating meeting style affords important lessons. Returning from Hyderabad, participants undoubtedly felt inspired and encouraged by fresh ideas in their practices of geography.

*Anne Buttimer, IGU Past-President, University College Dublin*

*The lecture given by Giuliano Bellezza: Is it possible to see intangible culture in the land?*

*The intangible part is not just one of the most important parts of the entire cultural heritage of a human community: as a geographer, I would now like to show you that, even though it is intangible, this part can be “read” in land. Certainly, the chances of it being read depend on the number of “literate” people whom the observer knows, not just in physical and human fields, but also in the cultural field. I would also like to show that the term “false-colour” in the context of many photographs or satellite images, is not entirely appropriate. To be more precise, in reality it is the typical so-called “political” maps which regularly use truly false colours: take any map of the subcontinent and you can see a light brown India, surrounded by a pink Pakistan, a pale green Nepal, a yellow Bangladesh and a light blue Sri Lanka: the colours are usually light, but nonetheless arbitrary.*

*Let’s now look at the first image, bearing in mind that this and the subsequent images were obtained from data from the Landsat satellite in the seventies and the eighties. Many people, even those who are not experts in the field, know that in these images vegetation appears in various shades of red, and some people also know that human settlements are shown in colours varying between grey and pale blue. Experts, naturally, can tell evergreen and deciduous vegetation apart (various shades of red); they easily see whether the plants are growing, flowering, ripening or shedding their leaves, and thereby say in which season the image was taken.*

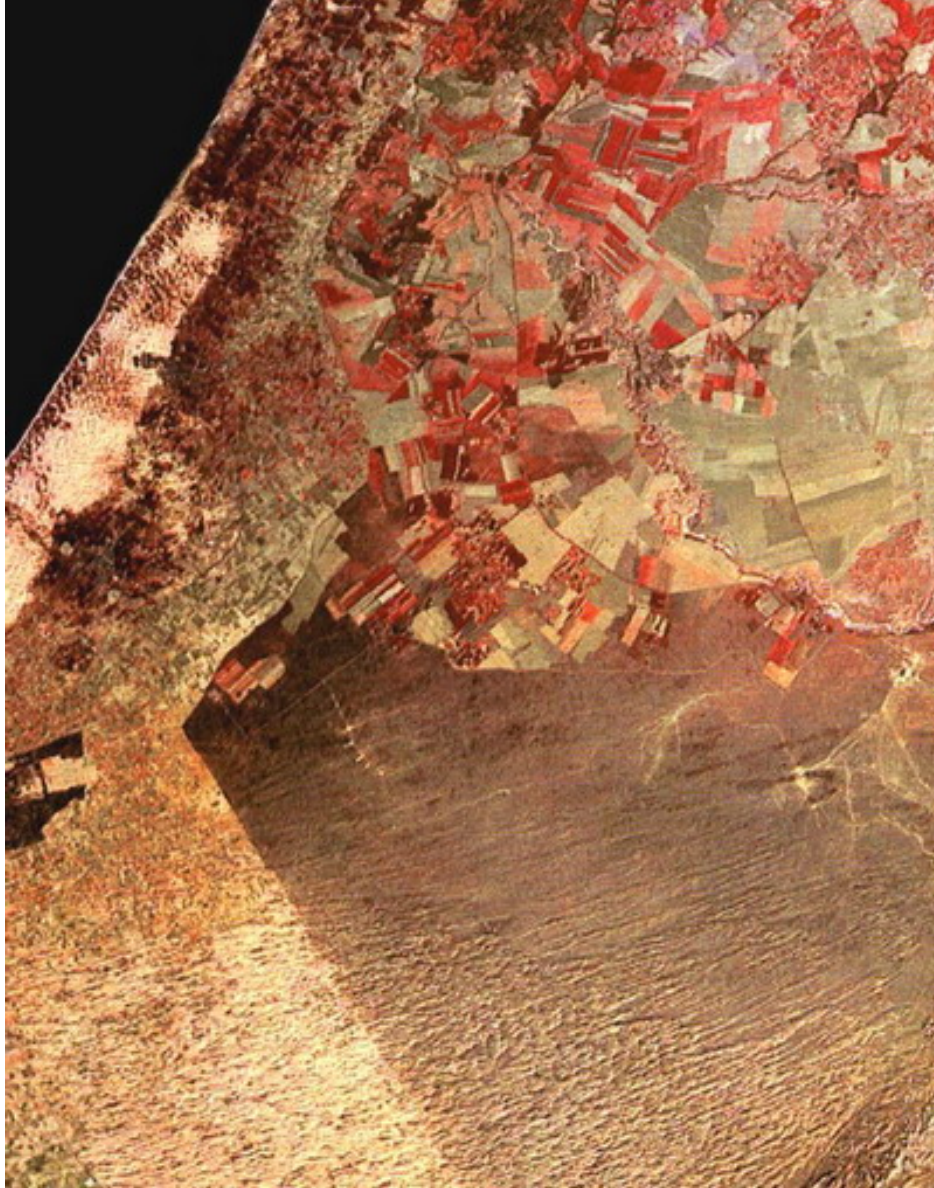


*The first image is divided by a straight line, separating the various ways the land has been organised. It is very clear how the vegetation covers much larger areas in the northern part, and we shall see that they are both agricultural zones as well as forest. The boundary is a section of the border between a highly industrialized country with a low population density (USA) and a predominantly agricultural one with double the population density (Mexico). Looking at the image, you may think that the predominantly uncultivated land is in the United States and the agricultural land is in Mexico. This would be a logical conclusion but would be wrong, because you would have only considered one natural and one economic aspect, but this does not suffice to interpret an image in a satisfactory way. Satellites record but do not reveal reality: we must reason using a holistic approach, using broad correlations, considering reality in all its complexity, in systemic terms.*

*We must refer to relations between the two countries, and above all, mention the braceros who, intent on crossing the border any way they can, do not grow anything on their own side anymore. Consider the difference in population density, the average income in the two countries and the fact that the fortunate few who manage to elude the USA border police and work illegally for a couple of months can go home and live comfortably for a year, and you have fully explained the different ways in which the land at the USA-Mexico border reacts to the electromagnetic radiation emitted by satellite sensors. The difference between forest and agricultural land is easily seen: the boundaries of the former in general are in keeping with the land morphology, whereas the latter is often demarcated by straight lines.*

*Continuing with our interpretation, the colouring of the human settlements is grey-green. In the south, Tijuana is a denser area where no road structures can be made out (at this scale). In San Diego, on the other hand, we can depict the square-based layout typical of United States cities, similar to what we see in the fields. This is a cultural element which is reflected in space management. The turbidity of the water due to discharges is clearly visible: with a vastly greater population, San Diego has, obviously, a much more efficient purification system, but it should also be noted that the discharges occur chiefly at the southern edge of the city, as close as possible to Tijuana. Furthermore, the Californian coastal current flowing past the US towards Mexico helps carry the discharges from the US cities southwards.*

*The second image also shows a border between states with a very different organization of the land. Between Israel and Egypt the border is clearly indicated by the overgrazing which has stripped the Egyptian side of its vegetation (high reflection and light colour), whereas Israel has maintained a vegetation covering, albeit sparse (which appears in grey). Next to the sea, part of the Gaza Strip is visible, and in this case too the boundary with the Israeli State can be clearly seen in the false-colour. The Gaza territory consists of arid sandy dunes (whitish) towards the sea, showing the strong reflection of the sand. Wherever possible, horticultural farms (reddish) are interspersed with built-up areas (shades of grey); at this scale it is impossible to discern individual fields, given that we are dealing with a chaotic mass of plots of land only a few tens of metres square. In Israel, on the other hand, we can easily distinguish the individual large, regular kibbutzim collective farms; some settlements appear in grey and, in particular when the shade is darker, it is possible to make out fallow fields, whose care and irrigation give rise to greater humidity even after the harvest than in Gaza (greater humidity = less reflection = colour appears darker). Many of these expanses are used to grow fodder to feed cattle which does not graze, but is kept in sheds.*



*The third image was taken of the world at the highest technological level, and shows a central portion of the USA-Canada border; in this case too, given the difference in land use from one metre to another, the border in question is perfectly visible. Let's start the interpretation in the form of an exercise, noting that its orientation is not the normal one for a map, where north is at the top: we are going to empirically work out which part is the USA and which part is Canada. Looking at the image, even an untrained eye can see that one side has been intensively worked and cultivated, whereas in the other one (where many agricultural expanses also appear) there is a predominance of rather dark red shades: experts will tell us that these shades are typical of forests whose photosynthetic activity is currently high. Moreover, it can be seen how both sectors have a checked structure, perfectly visible in the agricultural areas, but also clearly recognizable in the forest areas. Both countries have vast surface areas, but the US population is approximately ten times greater, and consequently its density is substantially higher. The economic development of both countries being equal, land is used more intensively where the*

*population density is greater, and this leads us to conclude that the more agricultural side is the USA, and that with more forest is Canada.*



*Forgive me for misleading you, since in fact the opposite is true, and is something which will appear logical by broadening your thinking (there was a time when I would have said that we need to think in a more geographical way, but in order to be more in step with the times, I will say that we need to take a holistic approach). To the west of the Great Lakes, the USA-Canada border runs along the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel north, in a region dominated by a cold continental climate, and as far as the USA is concerned, we find ourselves among the least favourable areas for agriculture; as for Canada, on the other hand, we are in the south of the country, that is, in the only arable part. This is sufficient to clarify the main reason for the difference in land use, but there is more, because the image has not finished telling us facts, for those who know how to consult it. The US areas shows the checked pattern typical of the grid system formulated in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century by Jefferson, with townships 6 miles wide, a system which allowed the Federal Government to carry out an ordered registration of western lands before they were even explored. Also on the Canadian side the checked pattern is present (imitating the US), but a structure with long stripes is just as visible, to the extent that it seems almost superimposed on the checks: this is the continuation of the original system from the time of French colonization, which many colonies, even English-speaking ones, took westwards as late as the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is the rangs system, whereby dwellings were positioned alongside a road or waterway, not far from each other, and each family's land stretched out behind the house, as far as possible.*

*In conclusion, I remind to you the images taken in the day of Maha Khumb Mela in Allahbad, when millions of people are bathing in the river: these images have for me an emblematic value. In simple geographical terms, we are at the confluence of the Yamuna with the Ganges, and this is what outsiders see. For Hindu believers, on the other hand, the exceptional importance of the ritual stems from the confluence with a third waterway: the Sarasvati, the river of knowledge, which is, however, invisible. Awareness of the existence and holiness of the invisible river should be considered, in my opinion, a paradigm of the importance of intangible culture. The*

*conspicuousness of religion and tradition in this transcendence of the bounds of natural reality, which has taken on a meaning, acquires, in my view, a paradigmatic value of intangible culture in the context of interpreting reality, which is the specific province of cultural geography. Moreover, it is not a coincidence, again in my view, that the CCHD project convened by Prof. Vallega has seen the most enthusiastic reaction precisely in India, with the greatest number of initiatives to raise awareness of it found in this country. This is why I would again like to express my heartfelt thanks to the organisers of this Congress.*

### **3b) AGREEMENT BETWEEN IGU AND ALECSO**

The meeting took place in Tunis on 12 October 2006, with the following participants: Prof Mongi Bousnina (Director General, ALECSO), Prof Adalberto Vallega (President, IGU), Prof Adnane Hayder (President, Tunisian Geographers Association (AGT) and the Organizing Committee of the 31st International Geographical Congress Tunis 2008 (CNOC Tunis)), Prof Ali Toumi (Secretary General of the CNOC Tunis)), and Mrs Dhouha Boukhris (Head Of External Relations, ALECSO). The meeting was held in the framework of the ALECSO-IGU Memorandum of Agreement (December 2005), and the following points were discussed:

#### **ALECSO-IGU Memorandum of Agreement: representation**

The members of the Monitoring Committee established by the Memorandum of Agreement are: REPRESENTING IGU: Prof Vallega; Eckart Ehlers (Germany), past IGU Secretary General; and Ali Toumi (Tunisia), Secretary General of CNOC Tunis 2008 REPRESENTING ALECSO: Prof. Bousnina; Mrs Dhouha Boukhris; and Mr. Adel Lahmar (Head of Communication).

#### **The joint Action Plan for 2007-2008**

Prof. Bousnina was particularly interested in IGU's proposal to organise a joint conference on Euro-Arab Relations with Sub-Saharan Africa: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. It was decided to hold this conference in Tunis towards the end of December 2007. IGU proposed providing a financial contribution of USD 3000.

#### **Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development initiative**

In the context of the first phase of CCHD, Prof. Vallega reported in particular about IGU's relations with the International Social Science Council and the United Nations University, the establishment of various projects within certain IGU Commissions (which will strengthen partnership links with ALECSO) and the creation of a CCHD website. Prof. Bousnina agreed in principle to ALECSO becoming a member of the Management Committee envisaged by IGU to oversee the second phase of the CCHD initiative. Prof Vallega pointed out that this second phase will include: a) studies and research within IGU Commissions and bodies concerning education and training in interculturality; b) an initiative with a view to putting forward a proposal to the United Nations that it proclaim a year on "Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development". Prof. Bousnina requested more CCHD documentation to enable him to approach UNESCO bodies in order to seek support for this initiative. He also expressed ALECSO's willingness to reflect on, and make technical proposals concerning, geography textbooks in the context of education on interculturality themes (comparative studies, guides and so on).

#### **The International Geographical Congress, Tunis 2008**

Prof. Vallega's invitation to ALECSO to participate in the special session on Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development was favourably received by Prof Bousnina. Prof Bousnina went on to specify that ALECSO could participate in one of the following ways:

- a) participation of the various ALECSO departments (Education, Culture, Science, Communication) within the CCHD initiative;
- b) an ALECSO special session (Assessment and Prospects for Actions by ALECSO concerning dialogue between cultures and civilisations);
- c) participation in the CCHD initiative and organisation of an ALECSO special session. ALECSO could also participate: in the exhibition-fair (ALECSO publications) and by supporting certain special publications for the Congress on Arab geographical cultural heritage. Prof. Bousnina also expressed ALECSO's willingness to promote broad participation of Arab geographers in the Congress. In order to discuss certain technical issues further, especially the expected Arab participation in the 2008 Tunis Congress, it was agreed that an ALECSO-CNOC Tunis 2008 working meeting should be organised for the end of December 2006.

### 3c) INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANET EARTH

At its meeting in Brisbane June 27-July 1, 2006, the IGU Executive Committee asked Anne Buttimer to design a strategy for IGU's contributions to the UN International Year of Planet Earth. Some days later, the IGU Regional Conference in Brisbane afforded an excellent occasion to discuss this with colleagues who have already participated in those ICSU Geo-Unions collaborative projects which have actually laid the foundations for IYPE. Before leaving Brisbane, individuals had generously volunteered to assume leadership roles on six of the IYPE themes; since then two others have responded positively.

Groundwater	Anthony Jones ( <i>jaj@aber.ac.uk</i> )
Climate	Annick Douguédroit ( <i>annickd@up.univ-aix.fr</i> )
Earth and Health	Mark Rosenberg ( <i>rosenber@post.queensu.ca</i> )
Deep Earth	Irasema Alcantara Ayala ( <i>irasema@igg.unam.mx</i> )
Megacities	Frauke Kraas ( <i>f.kraas@uni-koeln.de</i> )
Resources	Yukio Himiyama ( <i>himiyama@asa.hokkyodai.ac.jp</i> )
Hazards	Susan Cutter ( <i>scutter@sc.edu</i> )
Soil	Marek Degorski ( <i>m.degorski@twarda.pan.pl</i> )

Theme leaders will promote international collaboration and information exchange among colleagues who engage on the respective themes. They will assume responsibility for the coordination and presentation of results during the triennium, and most especially at the XXXI IGC in Tunis (August 2008). While direct correspondence will be possible with each of these leaders, IGU has also asked the Home of Geography to design a central web page where all "scientific" and "outreach" IGU-IYPE activities could be browsed ([www.homeofgeography.org/IYPE](http://www.homeofgeography.org/IYPE)). The new page was posted on the site in September 2006.

For more information, we encourage you to visit [www.yearofplanetearth.org](http://www.yearofplanetearth.org) and [www.homeofgeography.org](http://www.homeofgeography.org)

Following a request by Anne Buttimer, the organizers of the 2007 Festival International de Géographie (FIG) have agreed to place the term "Planet Earth" in the announcement of its main theme for 2007. Contributions from IGU are therefore welcomed and reports from theme leaders are eagerly anticipated. The ultimate harvest of IGU-IYPE endeavours will, of course, be at the XXXI IGC in Tunis, August 2008.

### **3d) MEDITERRANEAN RENAISSANCE PROGRAMME**

An IGU programme for the Mediterranean Human Development

*Report, September 2006*

Prepared by Mahmoud Ashour, MRP Coordinator, and Maria Paradiso, MRP Executive Secretary

The Mediterranean Renaissance Program (MRP) is a special project of the IGU, initiated by its President, Prof. Adalberto Vallega. The project aims to establish a Mediterranean regional network, focusing on the study of the region from all geographical perspectives, discussing the present problems of the Mediterranean with respect to North-South economic collaboration, the need to mitigate geopolitical stress in the region, and to encourage intercultural dialogue, and broadening geographical focus towards the Middle East, the Black Sea and more oriental perspectives. From an operational point of view, various conferences worldwide have been convened also under MRP denomination, and recently actions have been undertaken calling for collaboration and structuring the network on two levels: steering committee and corresponding members.

#### **Future Plans**

As agreed in Brisbane (IGU Regional Conference, July 2006), a meeting is due to be held at the Home of Geography in Rome for the Chairs of all relevant IGU Commissions to discuss the achievements, future plans and cooperation themes.

#### **1. MRP sessions for 2008 IGU Congress in Tunis**

MRP has begun to plan sessions and joint initiatives for the IGU 2008 Tunis Congress. MRP will provide Mediterranean content for the congress theme: "Building together our territories!". A call has been made to Commissions and National Committees for initial non-binding ideas for sessions and initiatives focusing on the geographical study of the Mediterranean. Examples of sessions, some of them already agreed upon, may include: Water; The Sea; Culture and Tourism; Politics, Communications and Information; Physical Geography; Local Development. Other relevant topics include: free trade energy; use of space and marine environment in Mediterranean regions; and community environments.

#### **2. Project of an Educational workshop 'Educational Workshop on Coastal Planning using GIS and Remote Sensing', 2008 IGU Congress in Tunis**

The workshop may be entitled: 'Educational Workshop on Coastal Planning using GIS and Remote Sensing', focusing on spatial software and data, modelling, analysis, management and planning. It will be a one-day workshop aimed at Ph.D students (max. 10). If sponsorship permits, the workshop can be extended to two days on the same topic.

EDUCATIONAL AIMS: The workshop should provide awareness and initial training for elements of spatial software and data problems, modelling concepts and tools, human impact analysis, and coastal zone management and planning.

#### **3. Letter to raise interest: mapping geographic research and networking for IGU Commissions and National Committees**

A letter to raise interest in the mapping of geographical research on the Mediterranean and networking with IGU Commissions and National Committees was sent in early September, calling for existing data, programs, research and case studies and seeking corresponding members from each country willing to serve as local referees to map relevant local studies, the presence of international networks, to be points of contact and to inform or establish initiatives. The data will be posted on the website of the Home of Geography. Anyone interested will be able to find out about pertinent studies and the availability of scholars, as well as other aspects such as the

formation of networks of excellence (EU research type) or submit research proposals for the new upcoming VII Research Framework, also including Social Sciences and Humanities.

All comments and contributions are very welcome.

Please contact: Mahmoud Ashour, MRP Coordinator, University ain Shain, Cairo, Egypt ([mmashour\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:mmashour_99@yahoo.com)); Maria Paradiso, MRP Executive Secretary, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy ([paradiso@unisannio.it](mailto:paradiso@unisannio.it)).

- The MRP Steering Committee is composed of: *Mahmoud Ashour*, Coordinator, Chair of IGU Commission on Arid Lands, Humankind, and Environment ([mmashour\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:mmashour_99@yahoo.com))
- *Adalberto Vallega*, IGU President ([a.vallega@iol.it](mailto:a.vallega@iol.it))
- *Ronald F. Abler*, IGU Secretary General and Treasurer ([rabler@aag.org](mailto:rabler@aag.org))
- *Antoine Bailly*, Chair of IGU Commission on Applied Geography ([antoine.bailly@geo.unige.ch](mailto:antoine.bailly@geo.unige.ch))
- *Giuliano Bellezza*, Director of Home of Geography ([g.bellezza@homeofgeography.org](mailto:g.bellezza@homeofgeography.org))
- *Aharon Kellerman*, Chair of IGU Commission on Information Society ([akeller@univ.haifa.ac.il](mailto:akeller@univ.haifa.ac.il))
- *Maria Paradiso*, Executive Secretary (Executive Secretary of the IGU Commission on Information Society, [paradiso@unisannio.it](mailto:paradiso@unisannio.it))
- *Mohamad Riad*, Ain Shams University Cairo ([osprey@Link.net](mailto:osprey@Link.net))
- *Maria Sala*, Co-ordinator of the Mediterranean Network ([sala@trivium.gh.ub.es](mailto:sala@trivium.gh.ub.es))
- *André-Louis Sanguin*, Chair of IGU Commission on Political Geography ([alsanguin@wanadoo.fr](mailto:alsanguin@wanadoo.fr))
- *Theano S. Terkenli*, Aegean University, ([t.terkenli@aegean.gr](mailto:t.terkenli@aegean.gr))
- *Ali Toumi*, General Secretary of the Association des Géographes Tunisiens, and General Secretary of the Comité National d'Organisation de Congrès 2008 ([alitoumi2003@yahoo.fr](mailto:alitoumi2003@yahoo.fr)).

### 3e) AGREEMENT BETWEEN IGU AND SAUDI GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY



**COOPERATION AGREEMENT**  
between  
***The Saudi Geographical Society***  
and  
***The International Geographical Union***

The *Saudi Geographical Society*, hereinafter SGS, headquartered in Riyadh, represented by its Chairman, Professor Mohammad Shawqi Makki,

and

The *International Geographical Union*, hereinafter IGU, headquartered at the university institution to which the General Secretary is attached, represented by its President, Professor Adalberto Vallega.

Whereas the SGS seeks, in accordance with its Statutes, to develop and activate scientific thought in areas of specialization of the society, provide consultations, carry out scientific studies so as to promote performance in areas of SGS interests for all kinds of public and private institutes, promote the scientific & vocational performance of SGS members, and also to exchange scientific production and ideas in the areas of interest of SGS, with organizations and institutes inland & abroad;

Whereas the IGU seeks, in accordance with its Statutes, to promote the study of geographical problems, to provide for the participation of geographers around the world in the work of international scientific research institutions, to facilitate the collection and diffusion of geographical data, knowledge and documentation throughout the world and to enable their exchange between member countries, and also to participate in any form of regional and international co-operation with the object of advancing the study and application of geography;

Given the multiple significant commonalities in their operations;

Considering the need to enhance the visibility of Arab geography in the IGU and throughout the world, to raise awareness of IGU's activities and news in Arab countries, and to increase involvement in geographical events and initiatives, including the Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development initiative;

Believing that collaboration between the two parties will lead to a greater knowledge and understanding of geography, and Arab geography in particular, in the world geographical community and the wider public;

Whereas the abovementioned needs require collaboration to focus on disseminating information, networking geographers, and strengthening communication between geography and other disciplines with a view to encouraging interdisciplinary approaches;

**the two parties agree to the following:**

**Article 1**

The SGS will send to the Home of Geography (hereinafter HG) any news it considers to be of interest to the international community of geographers. The HG will include it on its website, and will disseminate it through the IGU Electronic Newsletter, and via other hard and electronic communication tools.

**Article 2**

The SGS will translate into Arabic, and will edit the Arab version of the IGU Electronic Newsletter.

**Article 3**

As far as the IGU Electronic Newsletter is concerned, the SGS will have broad discretion to select those parts it believes to be of greater interest to the regions where Arabic is spoken, and to summarise news deemed too long or even remove items judged to be of minimal interest to the Arab world. Furthermore, the SGS may include in the Arabic version of the Newsletter news which it considers to be of particular interest, supplying the HG in advance with an English version of the text.

**Article 4**

A section dedicated to Arab geography will be established in the IGU Archives, Rome, Italy, managed by the Home of Geography. It will include those materials mentioned in the above articles, and any other additional material provided by the SGS.

**Article 5**

The IGU will offer assistance in using document resources of the IGU Home of Geography to be available to Saudi researchers visiting Villa Celimontana.

**Article 6**

The IGU encourages the participation of Saudi geographers in the international Programmes and study groups.

**Article 7**

The present agreement may be modified with the consent of both parties.

**Article 8**

The present agreement may be terminated by either party provided that the other party has been given at least six months' notice.

**Article 9**

The present agreement shall enter into force as soon as it is signed by the representatives of the two parties.

Done in two copies.

On behalf of the Saudi Geographical Society

The Chairman

*Prof. Mohammad S Makki*

On behalf of the International  
Geographical Union  
The Chairman

*Prof. Adalberto Vallega*



#### **4) IGU COMMISSIONS AND TASK FORCES**

##### **4a) A NEW IGU COMMISSION: ISLANDS**

The Commission on Islands was approved by the Executive Committee. It will be co-ordinated by:

David Chang-Yi Chang  
Professor, Department of Geography  
National Taiwan University  
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Taipei 106, Taiwan  
Tel: +886-2- 33665827

Fax: +886-2- 23625820

E-Mail: [changyi@ntu.edu.tw](mailto:changyi@ntu.edu.tw)

The Commission's Steering Committee includes geographers from all the island world.

### ***Mission***

1. *Research* – To promote island studies in geographical sciences among international geographical research communities. The proposed *IGU Commission on Islands* would work together with related IGU Commissions and other relevant national and international organizations in promoting research on and awareness of island development issues. The research activities of the Commission will also contribute to the implementation of the Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development initiative by focusing on the significance of the wealth of diversity of island cultures.
2. *Networking* – To provide a platform in connecting island studies with existing international programs and to actively contribute to the research and development activities of regional and international networks and organisations.
3. *Education* – To promote the study of island geography in education programs at all levels, especially but not exclusively in island societies.
4. *Publication* – To support and promote the publication of island geographic research.
5. *Dialogue and development* – To collaborate with international and regional organizations to enhance dialogue on sustainable development of island societies.

### ***Interaction within IGU***

The Commission will co-operate with other IGU Commissions, including Coastal Systems(C04.05); Geography of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change (C04.16); Global Change and Human Mobility (C04.18); Local Development (C04.26); Marginalization, Globalization and Regional and Local Responses (C04.27); Marine Geography (C04.28); and Sustainability of Rural Systems (C04.33), and interact with the Oceans 21 programme. The Commission will also work closely with the IGU program for Mediterranean Human Development and the Mediterranean Renaissance Programme (MRP) in 2008.

### ***Interaction in extra-IGU arenas***

In addition, Vulnerability Research of IHDP program will share mutual interests with Small Islands research.

### ***Communication***

The Commission will communicate through a list-server, a website (managed by the Taiwan National Committee) and a digital newsletter. The Commission will also use existing channels to communicate to a broader population of researchers and practitioners interested in island matters, for instance by arranging links to the Commission newsletters and submitting information about events to the ISISA website (<http://www.geol.utas.edu.au/isisa/newsletter.htm>) and newsletter, the GIN website (<http://www.globalislands.net>), and other appropriate forums.

The scientific research results of the Commission will be published in international peer-reviewed geographical journals, as well as more accessible outreach forms of publication in local languages to secure access of results and benefits to island societies. Some of the proposed steering committee members are on the editorial board of the new *Island Studies* journal, and on the Executive Committee of ISISA, which will facilitate cooperation with these institutions.

#### **4b) 2006 BELFAST GEOPARKS CONFERENCE**

Narciso Barrera Bassols, Chair of the IGU Task Force on Geoparks, was unable to attend, and at the request of the IGU-EC Anne Buttimer was not only able to attend, but also to write the following report:

### **Geoparks 2006 UNESCO Conference**

Belfast, 17th-21st September, 2006

*Anne Buttimer, Past President of the International Geographical Union*

Several hundred earth scientists, from 40 countries and all five continents attended the Second UNESCO International Conference on Geoparks at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, 17-21 September 2006. Since the first conference in Beijing 2004, the number of geoparks has doubled, each one now eager to share information and enthusiasm via newsletters and networks. Hosted by the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland, this four-day event involved over 90 paper presentations, several poster displays and eight workshops. Published materials by GSNI and other bodies were of superb quality, and a cordial atmosphere prevailed.

The Opening Session, chaired by Garth Earlse (GSNI), featured greetings from the major sponsors of the Geoparks initiative. Walter Erdelen, UNESCO Assistant Director for Natural Science, outlined the evolution of this idea from earlier initiatives on world heritage sites, noting the now combined goals of heritage protection and economic development. Peter Bobrowski, President of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) reported on the collaborative projects by ICSU Geo-unions, various steps undertaken by IUGS/UNESCO since 2004, and the potential contributions of geoparks to the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE). A stirring lecture by Aubrey Manning (Edinburgh) on "Life and the Earth: Interlocking Histories" reiterated the importance of IYPE. "Rocks tell a story" Stuart Munro reminded the audience and again with splendid illustrations, demonstrated the importance of tactile and emotional aspects of environmental education and the vital need for cross-disciplinary collaboration. Peadar McArdle (GSI), welcomed participants to Ireland and then two illustrative case studies were presented, one from the Aegean by Nicolaus Zouros, the other from Ireland by Pádraig McKeever. Most of Europe's 25 geoparks have some national support, but vitally important development funding has also come from EU LEADER schemes and Interreg III.

Nine thematic conference sessions involved short presentations on particular geoparks, with well illustrated details on the where, why and how, for whom and by whom actions were undertaken. Twenty papers were presented in the popular session on "new and aspiring geoparks", fifteen on "geology and tourism", eleven on "the role of geoparks in the protection of geological heritage", ten each on "marketing geological heritage" and "how to make a successful geopark", with five each on "geoparks and outreach", "geoparks and geosites" and "Marketing geological heritage". While European case studies were most numerous, there was a variety of contributions from abroad with ten from China, six from Africa, three from Australia, two each from Japan and India, with at least one each from Iran, Malaysia, Russia and Turkey. Throughout the four days the dominant chords were certainly geological, "geo-scientific", and all discussions were held in English. Powerpoint displays with maps and landscape details revealed a much broader range of interests than just geology. There was an air of genuine enthusiasm for the

practical agenda of geoparks, for sharing insights from experience on their design and management, and for establishing (or renewing) inter-personal contacts. While little overt attention was paid to conceptual or epistemological aspects, a number of challenges did emerge - implicitly and explicitly - from the case studies. Rather than attempt a summary of paper contents therefore, it seems appropriate to describe some of these common issues of structure and institutional design, of conceptual grounding and analytical focus, and of practical strategy, all of which will no doubt need to be addressed in the future.

EGN, GGN and a plethora of networks

The Geoparks initiative traces its origin to the 1991 symposium held at Digne-les-Bains (France) on geological heritage. The European Geoparks Network (EGN), founded in 2000, made an agreement of cooperation with UNESCO in 2001 and in 2004, on the occasion of the First International Conference, the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) was founded. The Madonie Declaration (2005) defined EGN as the integrating organization for all global networks. Since then, a plethora of "networks" has surfaced, EGN and GGN now finding themselves juxtaposed with a range of already established regional, thematic and discipline-based networks whose substantive foci overlap substantially with theirs. For each of the numerous area-based programmes in place over the latter decades of the XX century, e.g., national parks, nature reserves, natural protected areas, heritage sites, areas of outstanding beauty, etc., there is a corresponding network. And as Aubrey Manning pointed out in the Opening Session, this causes much public confusion.

The central role assumed by EGN for all geopark networks in Europe does imply major responsibilities. Speakers offered toolkits to aid in the definition, auditing and monitoring of geoparks, and there were proposals for inventories of best practices, branding of successful spaces, such as "quality coast" labels. While general guidelines based on experiences to date are no doubt valuable, it may be prudent, however, to reflect carefully on the appropriateness of criteria now negotiated for earlier European geoparks to developments in other cultural and geo-physical contexts around the world? EGN members are keenly aware of this. Some of the restrictions on economic activities which are now applied within Europe may not be feasible elsewhere, as Schneider's paper on the proposed geopark in Namibia pointed out. Other basic details, now proclaimed by EGN, might also merit further reflection: spatial boundedness of geoparks, harmonising the interests of natural heritage and sustainable development, bridging the concepts of "geodiversity" and "biodiversity", locality as frame for inter-disciplinary, inter-generational and inter-cultural dialogue, and perhaps most importantly, the value of geoparks for environmental education.

Geoparks as bounded domains: the "paper park phenomenon"

Clear-cut spatial boundaries are among the fixed imperatives for a geopark. There are no specific guidelines on size and scale except that each should adumbrate the two essential conditions of (1) protection of geological heritage and "geodiversity", and (2) sustainable economic development. Existing geoparks range greatly in size and detail. They vary also in structures of management, in relationships with governmental authorities, universities and schools. All, however, are bounded areas. Spatially-circumscribable boundaries for geoparks make sense for the protection of geological heritage in the context of particular sites, e.g., Ayer's Rock, Grand Canyon, Giant's Causeway and other geo-physically circumscribable places. Yet the historical record of zonally-defined protected areas with prescriptions and proscriptions for access and use would suggest some caution about this approach. In some cases, e.g., where a geopark is nestled within a national park, as in the case of Fforest Fawr in Wales, consensus on appropriate policies may be easier. But the "cookie-cutter" approach to spatial planning can lead to a confusing mosaic of

overlapping and often conflicting codes of conduct for park activities. Spatially circumscribed planning zones have tended to not only drive "undesirable" activities elsewhere, but have also tended to "fossilise" activity within the domain itself. And how might the humanly-defined "fossils" co-exist spatially? As Wang Lianyong illustrated in the case of Sichuan province in China, much of the ground occupied by the twelve geoparks in that province has already acquired multiple designations (national park, scenic and historic interest, nature reserve, outstanding universal geological interest, heritage conservation, etc.). China is not the only place where one needs to 'avoid the paper park phenomenon'.

Sustainable development?

Geotourism is regarded in most European cases to be a viable basis for economic development. This implies a commercial "selling" of geological heritage, potentially a supply-induced demand for visitors. How sustainable might this be in the long term? And what would the implications be for other livelihoods within the parks? Unlike the geomorphology of natural forms, or the processes underlying the relatively stable landscapes of the biosphere, the processes of economic development today are better framed in terms of nodally-organized - spatially footloose - networks radiating from global metropolitan centres. To focus on geo-tourism as the main (and sometimes exclusive) path toward economic development implies an acceptance of this globally unsustainable model. Glimpses on alternative earth-friendly modes of economy did come through in some papers; dominant emphasis, however, was on geo-tourism. While tourism currently plays a major role in European economic development, it is questionable whether this would be necessarily appropriate in other parts of the world. Globally what is needed are alternative, more earth-friendly livelihoods at scales which are less energy-consuming and involve less long-distance circulation of goods and people. "Bottom-up" involvement of locally-based long-term inhabitants of places now designated as geoparks - farmers, fishermen or local entrepreneurs - should therefore be vital. Many may need more convincing about the values of geological heritage; geopark enthusiasts may also need better understanding of locally-based livelihoods.

Geodiversity and Biodiversity

Other conceptual issues evoked some passion at the Belfast conference, i.e., definitions of geodiversity and biodiversity. It was argued, with some justification, that flora and fauna (biodiversity) had more successfully claimed attention on issues of climate change and environmental integrity than rocks (geodiversity). Definitions of geodiversity varied, but there was a strong tendency to equate the term with rocks, minerals and caves. In the case study of Psiloritis Natural Park (Crete) geodiversity was defined in terms of the "non-living environment". A subsequent presentation on the formation of the Moravian Karst Geopark used a much broader definition: geodiversity included ways in which farmers, pastoralists, foresters and other livelihoods had clearly left their mark on the landscape. Besides, it was proposed, the numbers of tourists were to be restricted. To separate geo- and bio-diversity may be analytically convenient, but for practical landscape management it would seem unnecessary. For geographers, geodiversity would be better defined in terms of processes yielding tangible earth surface and landscape effects, not only the long-term movements of tectonic plates or short-term tsunami events, but also the dynamic processes underlying land use, transport and settlements that shape the living landscape. Bridges are needed to span the perspectives of economy and ecology, geography and geology in elucidating landscape geo diversity.

Geology, geography and geoparks

There were geographers at this meeting though few seemed eager to acknowledge this. At session 9, however, a Canadian geographer (B. Sharpe) argued for "A Place for Geography in the Geopark Initiative" displaying the relevance of disciplinary concepts, tools and techniques. This

led to some affirmation of geography's actual and potential contributions to the initiative (GISD in particular) and the prospect of linking geoparks initiatives to the IYPE was applauded. One might also query whether there is a place for geoparks in geography? Most of the presentations at this conference afforded poignant reminders of geography's chorological tradition, a genre dismissed in mid-twentieth century by the "new geography" of locational analysis. The divorce of "human" and "physical" branches of the field with the rising tide of logical positivism, led to a virtual exclusion of environmental issues or anything to do with humanity's relationships to the natural environment for at least two generations. The rejection of local area-based geography in post-war Euro-America, of course, stemmed quite as much from ideological as from epistemological reasoning: the exploitation of Heimatkunde and the cultivation of Lebensraume for Nazi propaganda and totalitarian geopolitics was a shadow from which geographers sought escape. As enthusiasm for geoparks waxes ever more strongly within national settings today, it might be wise to remember the lessons of history. Within geography today there is indeed a return to more comprehensive, place-based integrated approaches and indeed perhaps geoparks could afford one powerful catalyst for this renewal, beginning with school and local area study.

#### Geoparks and environmental education

It is on the educational frontier indeed that inter-disciplinary collaboration seems far more feasible. The place where young minds first encounter natural science and environmental questions, most delegates agreed, was in courses on geography, at primary and secondary school levels. To open geoparks to visits by teachers and students of geography was one goal on which there was unanimous approval. Marble Arch in Fermanagh, Kirstin Lemon reported, has success stories to tell about "spreading the geological message" not only to students, but also to parents, week-end and holiday occasions for families now highly popular. Countryside Rangers play the major tour-guide and educational role in the Northwest Highlands Geopark in Scotland, M Krabbendam revealed, and Jutta Weber's account from Bergstrasse-Odenwald described novel concepts to demonstrate connections between geological heritage and everyday ways of life: soils and farming, nature and art, culinary tastings, e.g., wine and water, rocks and wine. Satisfied guests and producers become "geopark ambassadors"; so, too, are teachers of geography.

This Second International Conference on Geoparks (2006) was a memorable event for many. Several new geoparks were announced, many in China. Projects are underway in Romania, Czech Republic, Pakistan, Japan and elsewhere in Ireland. Enthusiasm grows and an atmosphere of genuine openness for dialogue, cooperation and partnership across national, linguistic and disciplinary fences was there in abundance. Hopefully the International Year of Planet Earth will also benefit from the harvest of the Geoparks programme internationally.

#### 4c) 2007 Conference in Beijing

### **International Forum on the Geoparks : Interpretation and Sustainable Development (Outline)**

#### **Background**

UNESCO initiated the International Network of Geoparks programme. This programme has the dual objective of enhancing the value of sites which act as key witnesses to the Earth's history whilst creating employment and promoting regional economic development.

## A UNESCO Geopark:

- Is a territory encompassing one or more sites of scientific importance, not only for geological reasons but also by virtue of its archaeological, ecological or cultural value;
- Will have a management plan designed to foster socio-economic development that is sustainable (most likely to be based on geotourism);
- Will demonstrate methods for conserving and enhancing geological heritage and provide means for teaching geoscientific disciplines and broader environmental issues;
- Will be proposed by public authorities, local communities and private interests acting together;
- Will be part of a global network which will demonstrate and share best practices with respect to Earth heritage conservation and its integration into sustainable development strategies.

Thirty-three National Geoparks (21 European and 12 Chinese) have been evaluated and are members of the UNESCO Network now.

The first and second international Conference on Geoparks in China and North Ireland in 2004 and 2006 and also a series of symposiums on world geoparks concentrated on the geological field. Geographers also make many efforts for the development of Geoparks. IGU established the Geopark Task Force in 2004 and Prof. José L. Palacio-Prieto is also a member of the World Geopark Assessment Committee with UNESCO, and IGU is also a founding member of GEOSEE (A Geoparks Approach: Science, Heritage, Communication, abbreviated to: GEOSEE). It is necessary for Geographers, especially IGU members, to come together to discuss the development of Geoparks and make more efforts in this area.

China is among the first pioneers to construct geoparks and has made remarkable contributions to the World Geoparks Network. So far, there are 138 national geoparks across the country, 12 of which have been designated as world geoparks. In order to promote exchange between geographers about geoparks, encourage the development of geoparks and raise the level of management and scientific research, we are cooperating with Yuntaishan World Geopark Management Committee to hold the International Forum on Geoparks: Interpretation and Sustainable Development.

## Objectives

- To promote research concerning Geoparks in the field of Geography;
- To share information and experiences on the Interpretation System and the sustainable development of Geoparks;
- To identify the major challenges regarding Interpretation and sustainable development faced by Geoparks and ways to overcome such challenges;
- To facilitate communication and networking among geographers about Geoparks;
- To raise public awareness on Interpretation and sustainable development in Geoparks;
- To discuss collaborative activities within IGU and other relevant organizations.

## Organizers and Supporters

Co-organized by: Beijing Normal University

Yuntaishan World Geopark Management Committee  
University of Missouri-St.Louis(UMSL)

Supported by: International Geographical Union(IGU)  
Xiuwu County Government  
Jiaozuo City Government  
China Society of Geography  
UNESCO  
National Association for Interpretation(NAI)  
GEOSEE  
(Others expected)

## **Participants**

- Approximately 60-80 participants are expected to participate. The meeting is closed and registration is required for participation. The working language is English and Chinese translation will be available.

## **Tentative Program**

### **Thursday, 11 October**

09:00-10:30 Opening Remarks

10:30-12:00 Keynote Speeches

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:30 Discussion in groups

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:30 Discussions on

- The role of the IGU Geopark Task Force in the development of Geoparks
- Cooperation between IGU and other relevant organizations

18:30- Reception

### **Friday, 12 October**

09:00-15:30 Discussion in groups

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:30 Concluding Session

17:30 Close of the Meeting

### **Sunday, 13 October and Monday 14 October**

Visit to Yuntaishan World Geopark

### **Tuesday, 15 October**

10:00 - 16:00 Visit to the Great Wall in Beijing

18:00 Dinner

### **Thursday, 16 October**

9:00-16:00 Visit to the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square, and Heaven Temple



## **5) 2008 INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL CONGRESS**

### **Building together our territories! Tunis 12-15 August 2008**

Dear Friends

The Tunisian Association of Geographers has the great honour to announce that it is organizing, in collaboration with the International Geographic Union, the 31<sup>st</sup> International Congress of Geography. Being of the highest importance for the international community of geographers, this event will enable geographers all over the world to present the results of their research and to compare their ideas. It will also be an opportunity to debate current issues which show the place of geography in knowledge production and its contribution to the improvement of humans' life conditions and their environment. Thus we have the immense pleasure of inviting you to take part in the activities of this event which, we hope, will mark a milestone in IGU history.

Aware of the importance of the event, Tunisian geographers have spared no effort to ensure that it will be a success. We are keen to remind you that this congress is in fact yours. Its success will also depend on your participation. Thus, we hope a great number of you will attend from all continents and all specializations. Your friends and companions will also be welcome.

We are looking forward to seeing you soon among us.

On behalf of the IGU 31<sup>st</sup> Congress Organizing Committee

The President

Adnane Hayder

All the relevant material, constantly updated, can be found on the website of the Home of Geography: <http://www.homeofgeography.org>

## **6) 2010 IGU REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN TEL AVIV**

**The Israeli National Commission for Geography  
is delighted to invite you to attend the  
IGU REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
Summer 2010, Tel-Aviv**

The region provides visitors with an opportunity to explore the dynamism of a growing Mediterranean economy, trying to accommodate both lifestyle-driven development and ecological challenges in an arid region. An engagement with the region combines a first-hand encounter of the factors driving wider economic, political and social change coupled with the role played by local actors or institutions. Israel presents you with a most diversified geographical experience:

- Varied Mediterranean coasts, shaped by sand and rocks, as well as the beautiful Red Sea, Dead Sea
- and Lake of Galilee coastlines.
- Natural landscapes ranging from high, snowy and rocky mountains in the North to deserts in the south.
- A stimulating contemporary and critical political geography.
- Sacred and historical monuments and holy sites.
- A wide mix of cultural, ethnic, and gendered landscapes.
- A unique rural environment well-known for its social innovation.
- Leading high-tech parks blended into globalizing cities.
- Diversity of planned and unplanned towns and cities.

Numerous exciting field trips before, during and after the conference will permit exposure to these unique places.

The Israeli academic geographical community is prominent in all Israeli universities as well as in several colleges. Israeli geographers are active in the various sub-areas of the discipline, as well as in teaching, planning, administration, etc.

Tel-Aviv is a bustling metropolitan area of close to 3 million inhabitants. It stretches along the Mediterranean coast line, enjoying a beautiful promenade along which most hotels are located. With no rain in the summer, average temperatures range between 25-33 degrees Celsius. Tel-Aviv and its surrounding area offer an abundance of accommodation facilities ranging from youth hostels to five-star hotels.

**Conference steering committee:**

**Prof. Daniel Felsenstein**, Co-program organizer, Department of Geography, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

E-mail: [msdfels@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:msdfels@mscc.huji.ac.il).

**Prof. Tovi Fenster**, Co-program organizer, Department of Geography, Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv.

E-mail: [tobiws@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:tobiws@post.tau.ac.il).

**Prof. Aharon Kellerman**, Chair, Department of Geography, University of Haifa, Haifa.

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**Prof. Itzhak Schnell**, Co-local organizer, Department of Geography, Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv.

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Sponsored by the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities

## 7) Festival International de Géographie at Saint Dié des Vosges

The main theme of the 17<sup>th</sup> FIG was *Les Géographes redécouvrent les Amériques*. The Festival opened on 28<sup>th</sup> September with the speeches of Prof. Christian Pierret, FIG Founding President, and Prof. Laurent Carroué, President of the Scientific Committee, followed by the opening lecture of Prof. Julia Kristeva, philosopher and leading international figure in the field of semiotics.

Over the following days, the thousands of people who gather every year in Saint Dié to enjoy the Festival had a choice of more than 220 events to attend, from highly scientific ones, to the “geographical cafés”, where a specialist introduces an issue and everybody is invited to join in, or to demonstrations of high-class cuisine. At all hours of the day there were various street bands playing everything from jazz to steel-band style to Andean pipe music.

A session was dedicated to the cooperation between the FIG and the IGU, and our President Adalberto Vallega introduced the theme of Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development..



Prof. Adalberto Vallega presenting the CCHD Project

Professors Vallega, Abler and Bellezza, as representatives of IGU, met with Prof. Pierret in order to discuss the ongoing cooperation between the two entities, and as a follow up there has been a dialogue between Prof. A. Buttner and Prof. G. Dorel, who afterwards wrote to Prof. Vallega the following letter:

*Dear President,*

*I have taken note of the Memorandum of Agreement between IGU and FIG. As agreed with Anne Buttner, we have deliberately included in the title of next year's theme ("Planet Earth and its*

*Energy Shortage”) the specific term “Planet Earth”, in order to establish a strong link with IGU’s major issues with a view to its forthcoming congress in Tunis.*

*I have already asked our ADFIG section to consider what kind of presentation to prepare for the stand that you propose making available to us at this congress.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Gérard Dorel,*

*ADFIG President*



## **8) OBITUARY: Gilbert F. White**

### **Gilbert F. White; Altered Flood-Plain Management**

By Patricia Sullivan, Washington Post Staff Writer

Monday, October 9th 2006

Gilbert F. White, 94, a geographer whose lifework on human interaction with the environment proved influential in the world ecological movement, died of dehydration on Oct. 5 at his home in Boulder, Colo.

"Floods are 'acts of God,' but flood losses are largely acts of man," he said in his 1942 doctoral dissertation. Natural hazards are best avoided rather than "managed" by building dams, levees and walls, which often do more harm than good, he showed. His research laid the foundation for the federal flood insurance program.

His initial interest in flood plains soon broadened to how humans live with the natural world. Dr. White, who won the National Medal of Science in 2000, helped forge international cooperation on water systems in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Africa, fought the spread of deserts and warned in the 1970s about the impact of human behavior on the global climate. He led an international scientific body that concluded that an all-out nuclear war would cut off sunlight sufficiently to produce a "nuclear winter." The 1985 report, which he drafted, said the danger was real.

Despite dealing with what could be a grim topic, Dr. White was a self-effacing optimist who believed that people working together could solve most problems, his son said. "He had an underlying belief in his fellow man" that stemmed from his deeply held Quaker faith, said William D. White, a Cornell University professor. "He learned Russian so he could talk to Russian scientists during the Cold War. He worked with Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian scientists for improved water use in the Middle East. . . . During the Vietnam War, he said if we could just stop fighting, we could improve the [development and conservation of the] Mekong River for the people of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia."

Dr. White, a native of Chicago, received a bachelor's degree in 1932 and a master's degree in 1934 in geography from the University of Chicago. He interrupted his doctoral studies at Chicago to be part of the New Deal in Washington. While studying recurrent Mississippi River floods, he

challenged the then-pervasive notion that natural hazards were best controlled by engineers and construction. His point of view was radical at the time, but land-use planners, scientists and government officials around the world today look at the landscape the way Dr. White did: balancing a range of alternatives that includes upstream watershed treatment, flood-proofing of buildings, emergency evacuation procedures and dams. He is known as the "father of flood-plain management."

Dr. White, who as a college student was attracted to his grandparents' Quaker beliefs, listened to his father's recommendation that he try ROTC for two years to understand another point of view. Dr. White did so, but when World War II started, he registered as a conscientious objector. He became a relief worker with the American Friends Service Committee in France and was taken prisoner in 1943. He was interned in Germany for a year until a prisoner exchange freed him to return to the United States, where he worked for the Quakers until the end of the war.

In 1946, Dr. White became the youngest college president in the nation when he joined Haverford College in Pennsylvania at age 34. Nine years later, he returned to the University of Chicago. He moved to the University of Colorado in 1970, where he was director of the Institute of Behavioral Science and founded the Natural Hazards Research Center. The increasing loads of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere began to worry him in the 1970s. Late in that decade, he issued a declaration with Mostafa Tolba, head of the United Nations Environment Programme, suggesting that human activity might cause a change in global climate. Dr. White was then the president of the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment, which published the first serious book on the subject and sponsored a 1985 conference mobilizing concern about greenhouse gases. One of the keys to averting disaster, he believed, was improving high school geography education. He wrote an article for a Chicago newspaper in the 1960s, noting that most high school students didn't know which countries bordered Vietnam; his sister interviewed his own children and discovered "that among those ignorant children were his own," his son William said.

Dr. White chaired the American Friends Service Committee from 1963 to 1969. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences and received the National Geographic Society's Hubbard Medal, the 1987 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement and the Association of American Geographers' Lifetime Achievement Award, among many others. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Cosmos Club. His first wife, Anne Elizabeth Underwood White, died in 1989. In addition to his son William of Ithaca, N.Y., survivors include his wife of three years, Claire Sheridan of Boulder; two other children, Mary White of Boulder and Frances Chapin of Edmonds, Wash.; two stepchildren, Monika Profitt of Seattle and Daniel Profitt of Boulder; and four grandchildren.

"While watching the German occupation of France, I became convinced that man can no more conquer or preserve a civilization by war than he can conquer nature solely by engineering force," Dr. White told broadcaster Edward R. Murrow for the radio program "This I Believe" in 1951. "I found that an occupying army or a concentration camp can repress men's basic beliefs but cannot change them. The good life, like the balance of all the complex elements of a river valley, is founded upon friendly adjustment. . . . It embraces confidence in fellowship, tolerance in outlook, humility in service and a constant search for the truth."



### Update: Activities at the Home of Geography

The Home will host, with the usual co-operation of the Società Geografica Italiana, a closed meeting of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR), an ICSU body, on 6-8 November. The principal aim of this meeting is to strengthen the ties between SCAR's various research programmes, which are closely related to the activities of the International Polar Year, one of the founding members of the IYPE (see 3c).

Unfortunately, many tasks to accomplish have been put on the back boiler, due to the preparation of the present Newsletter. We are trying to complete an updated list of all the National Committees, Commissions and Task Forces: apparently very simple, rather impossible in practice.

We would like to give you advance notice of the forthcoming events that several IGU bodies have informed us of, and which will appear in the News section of our website in the near future.

<b>IGU COMMISSIONS:</b>	<b>Events planned</b>
<b>C04.01 Applied Geography</b>	In the 2004-2008 period, the Applied Geography Commission is working on education and programmes in applied geography. Meetings were held in Vegas (2005) and Brisbane (2006) to present papers on the subject from authors from different parts of the world. The next meeting will be held in Vancouver on May 7-8, 2007.
<b>C04.02. Arid Lands, Humankind, and Environment</b>	1- The Arab Geographers Meeting, Morocco, Nov. 2006. 2- Arid Lands Commission Meeting, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Feb. 2007. 3- MRP Meeting, April 2007 (possible) 4- pre or post Tunis Congress, field trip in the Nile delta.
<b>C04.11. Gender and Geography</b>	1-3 June 2007: Constructing Gendered Public Spaces, Zurich, Switzerland  November 2007, Taiwan (not yet decided)  August 2008, Gendered Geographies: Connecting across Difference, Commission Pre-Meeting in Tunis (exact dates to be decided)  12-15 August 2008, Tunis, Commission Session in the main Conference
<b>C04.12. Geographical</b>	Supporting the SEAGA meeting in Singapore in November

<b>Education</b>	2006, as part of the IGU regional development initiative. The British sub-committee of the Commission has several local/regional meetings scheduled in 2007. We have two international meetings scheduled for 2007 (Beijing and Engadin in Switzerland). The Commission will meet in Tunis in 2008. The Commission has received a note from our Japanese delegate about a meeting in 2009. When we have firm dates and contact people we will advise.
<b>C04.14 Geography and Public Policy</b>	2007 Kathmandu (Nepal), IGU GAPP Conference, "Public policy and local development. New Challenges and Opportunities", second week of February. Organiser: Pushkar K Pradhan, Tribhuvan University. Contact: <a href="mailto:puba@mail.com.np">puba@mail.com.np</a> Bern (Switzerland), Joint Conference with the IGU Commission on Gender, Topic to be defined, June 3-6. Organiser: Elisabeth Buehler, University of Zurich and Doris Wastl-Walter, University of Bern. Contact: <a href="mailto:dwastl@giub.unibe.ch">dwastl@giub.unibe.ch</a> 2008 Tunis (Tunisia), IGC International Geographical Congress. "Collaboratively Building our Territories", August 25-29. Contact: Habib Dlala (Université de Tunis) / Ali Toumi (Université de Tunis)
<b>C04.15 Geography of the Information Society</b>	June/July 2007 Helsinki/Talin, Annual Meeting in cooperation with Digital Communities Project.
<b>C04.16 Geography of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change</b>	FORTHCOMING IN 2006 TOURISM AFTER OIL. A joint meeting with ATLAS Asia-Pacific, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, December 3-5, 2006. <i>Conference Organizer:</i> ATLAS/University of Otago. <i>IGU Coordinator:</i> C. Michael Hall. The theme of the conference stresses the need to take a long-term perspective on current and future issues with respect to tourism in the Asia-Pacific region. The conference focuses especially on the examination of the implications of rising oil prices and the overall implications of increases in the cost of energy but covers wider issues as well, see more: <a href="http://www.business.otago.ac.nz/tourism/Conference2006/index.htm">http://www.business.otago.ac.nz/tourism/Conference2006/index.htm</a> FORTHCOMING IN 2007 (1) -A joint meeting with AAG, Recreation, Tourism and Sport Specialty Group, San Francisco, California, 14-22 April 2007. Paper deadline is 26 October 2006 (see: <a href="http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings/SF2007/index.cfm">http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings/SF2007/index.cfm</a> ). More information available via IGUST-list in September. Local organizer: Prof. Alan Lew.

	<p>(2) <b>HERITAGE AND TOURISM: COMMUNITY, ENTERPRISE, GOVERNMENT &amp; TOURISTS.</b> This International Conference will be held in Sun Yat-Sen (Zhongshan) University, Guangzhou, China, 8–10 July, 2007. The major themes include Hosts and Guests: Whose Heritage and Nostalgia?, Sustainable Community-based Heritage Tourism, Living Heritage: Tourism in Minority Ethnic Communities, Conservation or Development: Case Studies in Community Heritage through Tourism, Ecotourism, Nature Tourism, and Environmental Tourism, People and/or the Environment: Managing Environmental Destination, Environmental Heritage and Climate Change Issues, Conservation or Development: Case Studies in Environmental Heritage through Tourism, Tourist Experience and Motivations for Heritage, Measuring and Managing the Heritage Tourism Segments, Defining the Heritage and Tourism Relationship, Image, Themes and Forms of Nostalgia and Heritage Tourism. More information: <a href="http://www.geog.nau.edu/igust/China2007/">http://www.geog.nau.edu/igust/China2007/</a>.</p> <p>(3) <b>PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT:</b> International Symposium on ‘TOURISM AND GLOBAL CHANGE IN POLAR REGIONS’, Nov/Dec. 2007, University of Oulu, Finland. The meeting will be organized by the Commission with Thule Institute and is related to the UN International Polar Year activities (2007-2008). More information available via IGUST–list in October. Local organizer: Prof. Jarkko Saarinen.</p>
<p><b>C04.20 Health and the Environment</b></p>	<p>11<sup>th</sup> International Medical Geography Symposium, Bonn, Germany. 9-13 July 2007. <a href="http://www.imgs2007.de">http://www.imgs2007.de</a></p>
<p><b>C04.27. Marginalization, Globalization, and Regional and Local Responses</b></p>	<p>Critical reflections on local and regional responses: perspectives from the North and the South (2007, meeting will be held in Japan) The Conference will be held from 20-25 August 2007 at Kitami Campus of Hokkai School of Commerce, Hokkai Gakuen University in Kitami City, Hokkaido.</p>
<p><b>C04.32 Population and Vulnerability</b></p>	<p>a) The Fourth International Conference on Population Geographies, 10-13 July 2007, Hong Kong. The conference welcomes papers across the breadth of population geography (contact J. Shen, Chinese University of Hong Kong), but special sessions sponsored by the IGU Commission will focus on 1. 'Marriage Migration' (contact B. Yeoh, NUS, Singapore) 2. From brain drain to talent attraction' (contact M Voigt-Graf, University of the South Pacific) and 3. 'Demographic Vulnerability' (contact D. Hogan, Campinas, Brazil)</p> <p>b) Social dimensions of migrant vulnerabilities, Melbourne</p>

	<p>November 2007. Contact person: R. Bedford, Waikato, New Zealand</p> <p>c) The second demographic transition and its consequences, Pre-congress symposium, August 2008. Contact person: P. Gans, Mannheim, Germany</p>
<b>C04.34 Water Sustainability</b>	<p>August 2007 Commission's annual conference, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and Asheville Crowne Plaza. Further information from Professor Peter Robinson on <a href="mailto:pjr@email.unc.edu">pjr@email.unc.edu</a></p>
<b>Commission on Indigenous Knowledge &amp; Peoples' Rights</b>	<p>We are planning a conference in Taiwan in late October, 2007. We'll forward more information once the plans have finalized.</p>

### **TASK FORCES**

<b>T04.03. Olympiad</b>	<p>East Asian Regional Geography Olympiad in 2007</p> <p>Geography Derby of the Low Countries in 2007</p> <p>International Geography Olympiad in Tunis in 2008</p>
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### **NATIONAL COMMITTEES**

<b>Iceland</b>	<p>The Association of Icelandic Geographers have an annual conference in March or April every year. We do not have dates yet.</p>
<b>Israel</b>	<p>No activities planned for 2006-2008, since professional activities in Israel are organized by the Israeli Geographical Association</p>
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	<p>1: A meeting for the IGU commission of Arid Lands, Humankind and Environment will be held on 20-22/2/2007. A Symposium will accompany the meeting for two days. The main topic of the symposium is "The Arid land and Obstacles to Development". The participants in the symposium are the members of the Commission and Saudi Geographers.</p> <p>2: The 22nd Saudi Geographical Society assembly will be held on 20-22/3/2007. A Symposium on "Tourism in Ha'il region: Future Perspectives" will accompany the symposium in Ha'il region (north of Saudi Arabia).</p>

**To all Newsletter Recipients,**

we are continuing to mobilise support for the proposal to the UN for the proclamation of an International Year on Cultures and Civilizations. We are gathering the names of geographers and friends in other disciplines who support this proposal to the UN. If you would like to be a part of this major initiative, please complete the form below and return it to the Home of Geography. By adding your name to the CCHD Supporters List you are not obliged to become actively involved with the initiative, although we of course welcome any further assistance you are able to give us. The probability of our success is directly related to the number of individual supporters (hence all geographers are requested to seek support even from non-geographers).



CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

CCHD CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS  
FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
CCDH CULTURES ET CIVILISATIONS  
POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT HUMAIN  
التنمية البشرية يفت والحضارات من أجل الشقافا  
VOICE & FAX + 39 06 77591183  
HTTP://WWW.HOME OF GEOGRAPHY.ORG  
CCHD@HOME OF GEOGRAPHY.ORG

I am pleased to share and support the spirit and objective of the Cultures and Civilisations for Human Development initiative.

I strongly hope that the United Nations will proclaim an International Year on this subject area.

*Name, first, middle and family [capital letters]:*

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*Signature*

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*Place and date*

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*Personal details*

Title (Prof. Dr. Mr Ms)

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Affiliation

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Position \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

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Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill this form in and e-mail or fax it to the Home of Geography, Rome, Italy:

fax: +39 - 06 - 7759 1183

e-mail: [cchd@homeofgeography.org](mailto:cchd@homeofgeography.org) or [d.bissell@homeofgeography.org](mailto:d.bissell@homeofgeography.org)