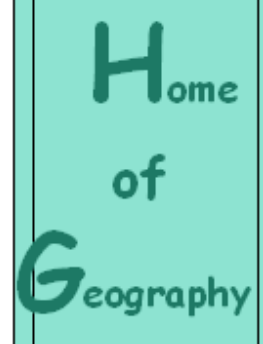




IGU E-Newsletter

Quarterly

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9

July

2007

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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.

Please send them to <g.bellezza@homeofgeography.org>

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Home of Geography Update



1) MESSAGE FROM IGU PRESIDENT, JOSE LUIS PALACIO PRIETO

As notified in previous Newsletters, Professor Woo-ik Yu was recently appointed Secretary General and Treasurer of the Union, succeeding Professor Ron Abler, who became Vice President until August 2008.

Thanks to the support of the Seoul National University (SNU), the Korean Geographical Society and other relevant Korean institutions, the General Secretariat office was officially opened on April 10. During the ceremony, Prof. Lee Jang-moo, President of the Seoul National University, addressed the audience remarking on the importance of hosting the IGU Secretariat Office at the SNU. He offered his support to ensure the success of the Secretariat and expressed his wish that the Secretariat will be a force within the country promoting geography at both academic and professional levels. Also attending the ceremony were Jung Eui-wha, Chairman of the Economy and Finance Committee of the Korean National Parliament; Lee Ki-joon, President of the Korean Federation of Science and Technology Societies; Kim Sang-chol, Editor of the weekly journal "Future Korea" and former Mayor of the City of Seoul; and Lee Min-boo, President of the Korean Geographical Society.

The Secretariat is located on the SNU campus and two assistants are helping run the office. Professors Ron Abler and José L. Palacio-Prieto represented the IGU Executive during the ceremony.

On behalf of the IGU Executive Committee, I wish to express our deepest gratitude and recognition to the individuals and their institutions listed above.

2) LETTER FROM IGU SECRETARY GENERAL, WOO-IK YU

A letter was sent in early July from Prof Woo-ik Yu to the IGU Executive Committee and Chairs of the National Committees. Extracts concerning items of interest to e-Newsletter readers are set out below:

1. Laureat d'honneur

The IGU Executive Committee will recognize a small number of international scholars with the IGU *Laureat d'honneur* at the 2008 Congress. Nominations from National Committees of individuals to be considered for the *Laureat d'honneur* are due at the IGU Secretariat by **31 October 2007**. Nominations should be restricted to individuals who have achieved particular

international distinction, or who have rendered outstanding service to the IGU or contributions to international geographical and environmental research.

Prior recipients of the *Laureat* are: I. P. Gerasimov of the USSR and C. D. Harris of the USA (1976); in 1980 J. Dresch (France) and S. Kiuchi (Japan); in 1984 T. Hägerstrand (Sweden) and M. J. Wise (UK); in 1988 J. Beaujeu-Garnier (France), S. Leszczycki (Poland), O. H. K. Spate (Australia), and G. White (USA); in 1992 P. Haggett (UK), J. Kostrowicki (Poland), A. Mabogunje (Nigeria) and W. Manshard (Germany); in 1996 Y. Verhasselt (Belgium), H. Brookfield (Australia), and Huang Bin-Wie (China); in 2000 L. Curry (Canada), Yi-Fu Tuan (USA), and M. Yoshino (Japan); and in 2004 P. Claval (France), M-T Gutierrez de MacGregor (Mexico), R.W. Kates (USA), M.Shafi (India), H.J Walker (USA), A. Wilson (UK).

2. Mattei Dogan Foundation Prize in Human Geography

The IGU will confer in 2008 the first Mattei Dogan Foundation Prize in Human Geography. The recipient will be an internationally accomplished and renowned geographer who will receive the Prize in recognition of exceptional scholarly achievements in international human geography over an extended period of time, or over his or her lifetime. The Prize will consist of a citation and a financial award of \$4,000. The recipient will be expected to present a major lecture at the Tunis Congress on the subject for which he or she is being recognized.

Nominations for the Prize are due at the IGU Secretariat no later than **30 September 2007**.

Nominations must include: a) the nominee's complete curriculum vitae; b) a written statement of no more than 1,000 words documenting the nominee's qualifications for the Prize; and c) a minimum of *three*, and no more than *five* letters of recommendation solicited by the nominators from experts in the nominee's specialties who are capable of judging the nominee's qualifications for the Prize.

Those eligible to nominate candidates for the Prize are: a) chairpersons of IGU Commissions, Task Forces, and Special Committees; b) chairpersons of National Committees for the IGU from IGU member countries in good standing; or c) any three IGU Corresponding Members in good standing. Self-nominations will not be considered.

Officers of the IGU are not eligible for nomination during, and for four years following the expiration of their terms of office.

The qualifications of nominees will be evaluated by an independent Prize Committee appointed by the IGU Executive Committee. Nominees will be evaluated solely on the basis of the nominees' sustained contributions to the advancement of theory, methods, and applications of human geography over an extended period of time.

The Mattei Dogan Foundation Prize in Human Geography was established in 2005 with the generous support of the Mattei Dogan Foundation. It will be awarded for the first time at the 2008 Tunis Congress, and thereafter at four-year intervals in conjunction with IGU International Geographical Congresses.

3. Nominations for election to the IGU Executive committee for the period 2008- 2012

Nominations of individuals for election to the IGU Executive Committee for the period 2008 to 2012 are due at the IGU Secretariat no later than **31 December 2007**. All current members of the IGU Executive Committee, except for Professor Anne Buttimer, are eligible for nomination for president. The eligibility of the current members of the IGU Executive Committee is as follows:

- Past President Anne Buttimer will complete her service to IGU in 2008;
- First Vice President and Acting President José Palacio-Prieto has served two terms as Vice President and is not eligible for re-election to a third term as Vice President;
- Secretary General and Treasurer Woo-ik Yu has served one term as Vice President/Secretary General and Treasurer and is eligible for nomination as a candidate for Secretary General and Treasurer;
- Vice President Vladimir Kolosov has served a partial term as Vice President and is eligible for nomination for one additional term as Vice President;
- Vice President Ronald Abler will complete his service to IGU in 2008;
- Vice President Changming Liu has served two terms as Vice President and is not eligible for nomination for a third term as Vice President;
- Vice President Markku Löytönen has served two terms as Vice President and is not eligible for nomination for a third term as Vice President;
- Vice President Lindisizwe Magi has served two terms as Vice President and is not eligible for nomination for a third term as Vice President;
- Vice President Hiroshi Tanabe has served two terms as Vice President and is not eligible for nomination for a third term as Vice President;

Please note that nominations of individuals as candidates for positions on the IGU Executive Committee should be put forward by National Committees, accompanied by a photograph of the nominee, a curriculum vitae, and a statement of intent of no more than 500 words, written by the nominee, describing his or her priorities for the IGU if elected. The photograph should be suitable for reproduction in the *IGU Newsletter*.

4. Application for the 2014 Regional Conference/2016 IGU Congress

National Committees wishing to host either the 2014 IGC Regional Conference or the 2016 IGU Congress are requested to send their applications to the Seoul IGU Secretariat by **December 31 2007**. The applications must include: a) an official letter of invitation; b) a brief proposal containing information on the invitation background, meeting location, tentative conference theme, available conference facilities, and other matters deemed relevant to the proposal and invitation. The Executive Committee will conduct a preliminary review of applications, and representatives of proposals deemed competitive will be invited to meet with the IGU Executive Committee in March 2008. The final decision on the sites of the two meetings will be made by the IGU General Assembly at the Tunis Congress.

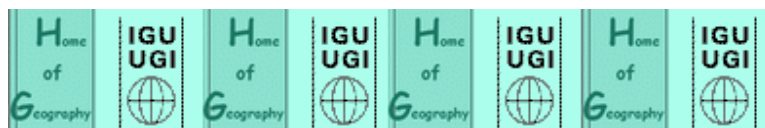
5. Official voting delegates

No later than **31 May 2008**, I will need to know the identity of each country's official voting delegate at the 2008 IGU General Assembly. You may, if you wish, designate an alternate to cast your country's vote if the delegate must be absent from a meeting of the assembly.

6. Agenda for the Tunis General Assembly

You will receive the agenda for the Tunis General Assembly on or about 1 April 2008. The Executive Committee will invite your suggestions for items of business to be placed on the agenda in early 2008, but I would be pleased to receive any suggestions for agenda items that may occur to you before then.

Plans for the Tunis congress are well in hand. The congress website is operational, and the local organizers have done an excellent job of attracting Commission and Task Force meetings to be held in the Tunis area in conjunction with the Congress. The second Congress Circular is scheduled for distribution this year.



3) INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL CONGRESS 2008

News from Annick Douguédroit

A number of Sessions have been included in the Tunis Congress Program thanks to the efforts of Annick Douguédroit, Chair of the IGU Commission on Climatology. We would like to extend our thanks to her, as she contacted scholars of other Commissions in order to organize joint Sessions, always mindful to suggest proposals which would interest people involved in the Mediterranean Renaissance Project and in the International Year of Planet Earth.

This is the letter which she sent to José Luis Palacio Prieto on 25th June:

I have great pleasure to inform you that the two general sessions to be held during the IGU 2008 International Congress in Tunis on Climate Change are being finalized:

1) the session on "*Climate change from the geological eras to the 21st century in the Mediterranean regions: characteristics, impacts and governance*" will be coordinated with the Commission on "Arid Lands, Humankind, and Environment" (Prof. M. Ashour). It is listed as an MRP session and a IYPE session. I am in contact with Prof. P. Leonello, coordinator of the MedCLIVAR Programme, regarding probable participation in the session.

2) the session on "*Climate change from the geological eras to the 21st century: characteristics, impacts and governance*" (thus not limited to the Mediterranean Region) will be divided into several sessions on specific topics and coordinated with the chairs of other IGU Commissions. Only a few of them have been finalized so far. They will be listed as IYPE sessions.

- a session on "Environment Evolution and Human Activity in Holocene: Geographical Pattern" will be co-sponsored and organized with the "Environment Evolution Commission" (Prof. A. Velichko).
- a session on "The Last Millennium". No collaboration organized yet.

- a session on " Climate change and Population" will be co-sponsored and organized with the "Population and Vulnerability Commission" (Prof. A. Findlay and Dr A. Geddes).
- a session on " Climate Change and Coastal Systems" will be co-sponsored and organized with the "Coastal Systems Commission " (Prof. D. Sherman).
- a session on " Climate Change and Geomorphic Challenges for the 21st Century" will be co-sponsored and organized with the" Geomorphic Challenges for the 21st Century Commission" (Prof. A. Parsons).
- a session on " Climate Change and Health and the Environment " will be co-sponsored and organized with the" Health and the Environment Commission" (Prof. M. Rosenberg).
- a session on "Urbanisation and Climate Change" will be co-sponsored and organized with the IAUC (International Association on Urban Climate; Dr M. Roth) and the CCRG (Climate Change Research Group) of the Association of British Geographers (Prof. M. Pelling and Dr S. Lindley).
- a session on "Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples" will be co-sponsored and organized with the "Indigenous Peoples' Knowledges and Rights Commission" (Prof. J. Johnson).
- a session on "Tourism, Leisure and Climate Change in the 21st century" will be co-sponsored and organized with the "Commission on Geography of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change" (Prof. J. Saarinen).

Other sessions will probably be organized but they have not been determined yet.

The Commission on Climatology sessions will be held in Tunis, during the main Congress, but separate to the general sessions on climate change.

With my best wishes
Annick Douguédroit

4) CULTURES & CIVILIZATIONS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

New General Coordinator of the IGU Initiative for a UN Year



Prof Benno Werlen (Jena University, Germany).

The untimely demise of Professor Adalberto Vallega left a tremendous gap in terms of the further elaboration and revision of the IGU Initiative ‘Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development’ (CCHD). At the last meeting of the IGU Executive Committee at Tokyo Komaba University in early March this year, I was appointed to take over Adalberto Vallega’s position as General Coordinator of the IGU Initiative for a UN Year. My first step in revising CCHD laid in familiarising myself with the material and contacts that had been established by Adalberto Vallega over the last two years. I still need several more weeks, if not months, to go through the results of his amazing efforts, including thousands of e-mail contacts with important international research bodies such as ICSU and ICSS, many other scientific international unions, chairs of IGU National Committees, national and regional geographical societies, political supporters like UNESCO, the Pontifical Council for Culture, and educational organisations like the ‘Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation’ (ALECSO), EUROGEO/HERODOT, the UN University, etc.

The primary step, my initial study of the materials, has already revealed some important points. Firstly, nearly all members of the CCHD partners within IGU declared their strong interest in continuing their efforts to make the project a successful enterprise. Secondly, not all of the major partners and sponsors outside IGU supported the CCHD programme as enthusiastically as they could. Adalberto Vallega’s legacy contains many documents with certain reservations about the title of the initiative. Some of these reflected on the possibility of placing a stronger emphasis on cultural diversity, rather than on ‘civilisations’. There are also suggestions to take greater account of different cultures of nature and the natural dimension in general than is presently the case in the current CCHD Action Plan.

As a second step I have tried to obtain a clearer picture of the opinions of various people involved in the CCHD process and persons representing institutions which could prove to be of considerable importance. Discussions with the former IGU Presidents, Prof. Bruno Messerli and Prof. Anne Buttimer, the General Secretary of the IGU, Prof. Woo-Ik Yu, the Executive Committee member and IGU Vice-President, Prof. Vladimir Kolossov, the Director of the Home of Geography and Secretary of the CCHD initiative, Prof. Giuliano Bellezza, and the Chair of the IGU National Committee of Germany, Prof. Herbert Popp, have all impressed me with their ongoing interest in the IGU initiative. It

soon became clear that the most important question for the future is: what precise direction should this initiative take?

Over recent years, the IGU has supported UN initiatives such as ‘Sustained Development’ and ‘Global Change’, as well as UN initiatives for a UN Year such as ‘International Year of Mountains’, ‘International Year of Planet Earth’ and others. All the supported initiatives fell into the integrative ecological perspective field, placing the emphasis on natural living conditions and geo-scientific perspectives. Undoubtedly, the field of integrated research is one of geography’s core competences, and has been recognized as such by the wider public over recent decades. But the abovementioned UN Years and subsequent research initiatives neglected – as the Pitte-Vallega paper (the starting point for the CCHD initiative) argues convincingly – the cultural dimension in the (problematic) transformation process of nature and in general. We need, in addition, a programme that focuses on the cultural dimension and therefore on cultural and social sciences. This could also be of crucial importance for human geography and its interdisciplinary contextualisation among cultural and social sciences. In this way, the cooperation between natural and cultural/social sciences could be strengthened on an extremely important level, both within geography and in the transdisciplinary field. This objective fits one of the crucial goals of the UN’s science policies since the early eighties, when Javier Perez de Cuellar was Secretary-General. Regarding the organisation of such a research initiative, we can benefit from the experiences of the past UN Years which were launched successfully.

An initial comparison of the existing CCHD Programme (including the Action Plan, the composition of the Management Team etc.), with the ‘International Year of Mountains’ and ‘Planet Earth’ initiatives, for example, shows first of all that a much stronger bottom-up strategy and a less top-down logic is needed. I think that such a change in perspective is needed in order to enhance capabilities and stimulate further discussion. This entails strengthening the positions of the National Committees and the various IGU Commissions, as well as national research funding institutions, the mass media and the potentially interested NGO’s on a local scale as well as on a global scale.

A second point of comparison shows, of course, that the re-organisation of the IGU initiative requires institutional and considerable financial support. The ‘International Year of Mountains’, for example, held a starting budget of approximately US\$ 200,000 and was sponsored by a Swiss governmental organisation (DEZA). For the implementation of this ‘International Year’, approximately the same amount was needed per annum. The ‘Planet Earth’ initiative was supported by a professional secretariat with subdivisions in different continents and countries. These two very successful projects demonstrate that fundraising for the establishment of a professional secretariat – in addition to the current possibilities at the Home of Geography – will be one of the most crucial activities in the upcoming months.

Taking into account the bottom-up organisational structure of the initiative, two major implications have to be mentioned. First of all regional and national initiatives within the abovementioned topical field will be of crucial importance. Therefore, IGU National Committees will be the functional link between global action and regional research activities. Secondly a series of workshops and conferences must be organised next year. The next important meeting in this respect will be the 31st IGC at Tunis, on August 12-15 next year. A certain number of scholars will be invited to this International Geographical Congress to present their thoughts and opinions on the initiative. Keywords for such a debate could include: ‘cultural diversity’, ‘natural diversity’ and ‘human development’. Possibilities of

linkages to UNESCO, and the incorporation of the cultural and social sciences and humanities could thus be shown.

At the same time, this Congress will provide major input for the most important discussion: what topics should the initiative focus on? What kind of research programmes should be carried out on the national level? What kind of action should the IGU National Committees and geographical associations take in order to re-establish the initiative as a bottom-up movement? Preparation of the political action on a national level by widely supported research projects should be one of the first steps in building up the initiative from the bottom. To do this, cooperation of the Management Team with the IGU National Committees and the scientists within the national research institutions is certainly a necessary precondition. Hence, it follows that the close involvement of the National Committees is of the highest importance.

Taking into account the transdisciplinary orientation of the initiative, we also need the meaningful engagement of all IGU Commissions: the ones with a strong cultural orientation as well as the ones with natural scientific orientations. Geography should demonstrate its integrative potential on the basis of the most advanced theoretical background.

In order to negotiate the definitive design of a UN Resolution, the best intellectual forces of the cultural and social sciences are needed. We must succeed in gaining the interest and support of the most prominent figures in these disciplines, but, naturally, also of the best-known and most distinguished international and interdisciplinary geographers, who are familiar with the latest theoretical developments in cultural and social sciences as well as in ecological research. It seems improbable, though, that we could gather these personalities in a single symposium. But we should cite their position in the Resolution and gain their commitment to the project in order to transform the broader political project (UN Declaration) into substantial research within the cultural and social sciences and humanities.

*Prof. Benno Werlen
Friedrich-Schiller-University
Jena, Germany*



5) INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANET EARTH

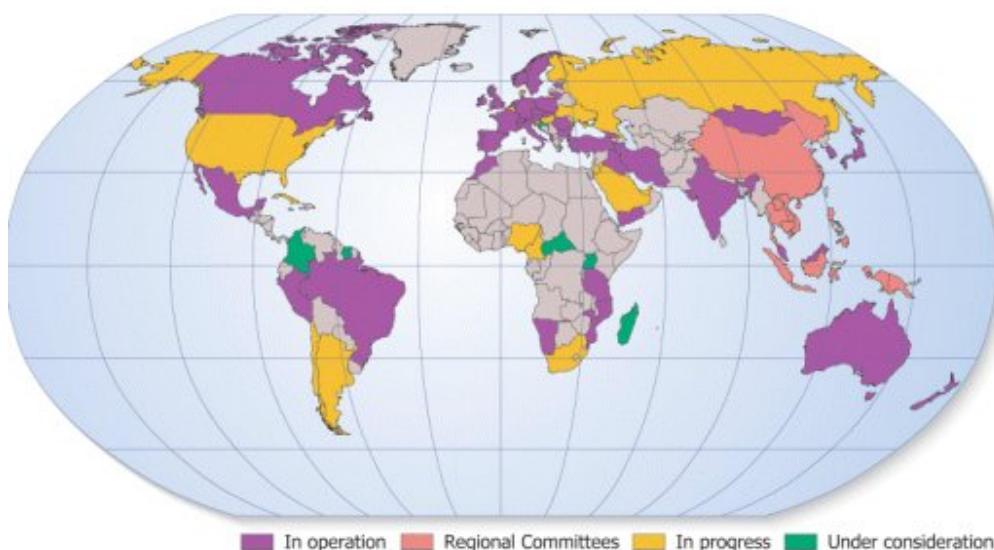


The International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE) is an ambitious programme designed to foster outreach and research activities with the single purpose of raising worldwide public and political awareness of the vast (but often under-used) potential of Earth sciences for improving the quality of life and safeguarding the planet. The aim is encapsulated in the Year's subtitle 'Earth Sciences for Society'. It will run for the three successive years 2007, 2008 and 2009, and aims to contribute to making this planet a better, safer, healthier and wealthier place for our children and grandchildren. This ambition was endorsed by the United Nations when it proclaimed the IYPE for 2008, the pivotal year of the 2007-2009 triennium.

Natural disasters, like the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, testify to the Earth's incredible power. More effective use of geoscientific knowledge can save lives and protect property. Such knowledge also enables us to satisfy, in a sustainable manner, the growing need for Earth's resources by an expanding human population. Such knowledge is readily available in the practical experience and publications of some half a million Earth scientists around the world, a professional community that is ready and willing to contribute to a safer, healthier and more prosperous society if called upon by politicians and decision makers.

The International Year of Planet Earth was initiated in 2000 by the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), a non-governmental organization. The initiative was promptly joined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), an intergovernmental agency. Both organizations have enjoyed several decades of productive cooperation. The initiative has attracted 12 Founding Partners that actively support the initiative, 26 Associated Partners, and a growing group of International Partners.

Governments were approached through the United Nations in order to attract political support. In late 2005, the UN General Assembly, with reference to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, adopted by consensus Resolution 60/192 proclaiming 2008 as the International Year of Planet Earth. This Resolution requests governments of all 192 UN Member States to report on progress and results with respect to promoting the use of geoscientific knowledge in their decision making.



The International Year of Planet Earth is a not-for-profit and non-religious 501 (c) (3) Corporation, registered in the USA. It is composed of a Board, a Secretariat, based in Trondheim, Norway, and three Advisory bodies. The IYPE is also represented by national and regional committees. Forty-three such committees had been established by April 2007. The national committees are linked to the international corporation through Memoranda of Understanding, signed by both parties. Some 20 other nations are well on the way to establishing such committees, while others are seriously considering doing so.

The IYPE has two major lines of activities. The Science Programme consists of 10 science themes, all based on the interaction between Earth sciences and society. Experts are invited to submit research proposals for each of the following themes:

- Groundwater - towards sustainable use
- Hazards - minimizing risk, maximizing awareness
- Earth & Health - building a safer environment
- Climate - the 'stone tape'
- Resource issues - towards sustainable use
- Megacities - going deeper, building safer
- Deep Earth - from crust to core
- Ocean - abyss of time
- Soil - Earth's living skin
- Earth & Life - the origins of diversity

The other line of activities deals with outreach, to present the benefits of the Earth sciences for a better world to the public through a wide range of activities, including exhibitions, excursions, education, festivities, stamps, coins, music performances, images, events launches, publications, TV and radio broadcasts, trucks, trains, and ships bearing the IYPE logo, ringtones, gadgets, etc. Also for the Outreach Programme, individuals, groups, companies etc. are invited to submit proposals. For details, please check www.yearofplanetearth.org. For further information, please contact the IYPE Secretariat: iype.secretariat@ngu.no .

6) ICSU YOUNG SCIENTISTS CONFERENCE LINDAU, GERMANY - 4-6 APRIL 2007

As part of the commemoration of its 75th anniversary, the (ICSU) International Council for Science organized a multidisciplinary conference of young scholars nominated by its member scientific unions. The International Geographical Union nominated three young scholars as participants in the conference. Their reports on the event follow. Geographer Igor Sirodoev was nominated by the International Human Dimensions Program on Global Environmental Change. He kindly volunteered the fourth report, which I am pleased to include.

Ronald F. Abler, Vice President

Report by IRASEMA ALCANTARA AYALA
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I. The Forum

Attending a conference is always a great opportunity to meet with colleagues and discuss our research, however, I must gladly admit that participating at the conference organised to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of ICSU “Global Scientific Challenges: Perspectives from Young Scientists”, was the most challenging and rewarding experience I have had so far...

In the opening lecture, by Prof. Guverdhan Mehta, President of ICSU, motivating views were addressed within the framework of Science and Technology for a Better Future: the emerging paradigms. The “cohabitation” of Science and Society in the blue Planet leads the XXI Century to the dawn of the knowledge era. It involves a rejuvenating science pursuing realistic societal engagement, and a satisfactory policy linkage in order to produce a balanced synergy between scientific and societal progress.

Indeed, as stated by Prof. Khotso Mokhele, ICSU Vice-President for Scientific Planning and Review, building bridges within the scientific community requires international and trans-disciplinary scientific collaboration so that the complex global challenges can be addressed.

Four workshops were organised as parallel sessions to cover two focal points: building the bridges within the scientific community and building bridges between science and the world.

First of all, attention was given to international cooperation aiming at exploring the opportunities, challenges and best practices in building international scientific partnerships and programmes. Secondly, in the trans-disciplinary collaboration session, discussions took place to foresee the necessity and the likely future outcome of scientific contributions undertaken by trans-disciplinary teams among physical, social, medical and engineering sciences.

The third workshop was devoted to public engagement given the fact that scientific contributions need to be effectively communicated to the society. Science for policy was the topic of the fourth session. It concerned the effective interaction between scientists and policy-makers, in addition to the role of scientists in the decision and policy-making processes.

Besides the plenary lectures and the four workshops mentioned above, two further round-table discussion sessions were organised. They contemplated the themes working with the private sector and scientific freedom and responsibilities. The former mainly addressed the role of private interests as possible detrimental influence on scientific goals and methods, and the way human and financial sources of the private sector can be coupled to academia in order to address global challenges. The later stimulated the question about personal responsibilities in science and how these influence the conduct of our own scientific activities.

The closing stages of the conference were given in a plenary lecture concentrated on strengthening international science for the benefit of society.

II. Trans-disciplinary collaboration

Within the frame of the Trans-disciplinary collaboration workshop, luckily, I had the opportunity to share with my colleagues a talk on disaster prevention. The main argument I presented was as follows:

Disaster Prevention

Undoubtedly the numbers of disasters and people affected by them have increased considerably in the last decades worldwide. Examples such as the aftermath derived from the Tsunami of Southeast Asia in 2004, and hurricane Katrina a year later in New Orleans, illustrate precisely the complexity of the interactions among all elements that determine risk. Risk results from coupling the potential impact of a natural hazard with the vulnerability of the exposed community. Although, geographers have contributed to a major extent to the understanding of the spatial-temporal dimensions of such complexity, specifically the impact of disasters calls the attention of scientists -from both social and “pure” sciences- towards undertaking a closer look at the disaster construction process, and a better comprehension of the duties and rights of all concerned actors. Given the lack of simplicity of disasters, development and implementation of prevention strategies would only be achieved by getting involved into a trans-disciplinary and holistic approach reinforced above all, with solid and down-to-earth actions to reduce vulnerability; the latter being indeed the challenge of the present, derived from the lessons of the past, in light of the wisdom for the future.

Geography: the enchantment of our endless scientific adventure

The participation I had in the conference, and particularly, on the discussions concerning trans-disciplinary collaboration, jogged my memory to feel –once again- proud of being geographer. It seems to be that it took quite a long time for the other sciences and scientists to discover and to gaze the real dimension of scientific knowledge: the well-being of society. Notwithstanding disciplines, approaches, methods, population groups, religions, politics, economy, and so forth, must not be forgotten that science has no boundaries, that on daily basis, knowledge is revitalized, as long as it is used to construct a better society. In time and space our understanding of the Globe, has got indeed the leading capacity to face and solve the scientific challenges derived from the “progress” of humanity and its relation with nature. It also must be said, that merging the knowledge created by social and physical sciences can be regarded as the unique strategy to reliably address the byzantine constraints and challenges of the our territories. What was concluded in the conference “Global Scientific Challenges: Perspectives from Young Scientists” has never been a mystery in the enchantment of our endless scientific adventure.

My sincere gratitude to the International Geographical Union for having given to me the opportunity to attend such an interesting scientific event.

Report by COREY JOHNSON

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I am honored to have been nominated by the IGU to attend the Young Scientists Conference sponsored by ICSU, which took place in Lindau, Germany, in April. Many readers will know that the IGU, itself made up of national and institutional members, is in turn one of the original

members of an umbrella organization for science associations, interdisciplinary bodies, and countries called the International Council for Science (ICSU). ICSU was the principle scientific advisory body to the U.N. conferences on the environment (Rio 1992) and sustainability (Johannesburg 2002), as well as being a co-sponsor of the International Polar Year 2007-2008. The occasion for this conference in Germany was a celebration of ICSU's 75th anniversary, yet I had the sense that most of us were completely in the dark as to the body's mission and activities prior to our arrival. I came away from Lindau not only with a better appreciation of the organization, but also energized by the myriad possibilities for international collaboration across disciplinary boundaries discussed at the meeting. I believe all of us, regardless of the disciplinary and national flags we represented, were in agreement that such collaboration is absolutely essential as we seek to understand and address the problems impacting the planet.

142 young scientists from seventy-one countries attended the conference, a remarkably diverse group by any measure. The format ensured that the entire group was in plenary for most of the conference; during the two days, only one of the sessions had concurrent panels. More intimate "break out" sessions might have helped a bit the sense of being overwhelmed, but on the other hand it would have been a shame to have to choose among many interesting presentations. For the one set of concurrent sessions, I attended a panel devoted to international cooperation, which included presentations on the International Polar Year, as well as a fascinating talk by an Iranian civil engineer on a cooperative project in the Middle East on a tsunami warning system for the northwestern Indian Ocean. Speaking to non-specialists (and often not in their native tongue), I thought most presenters did an admirable job conveying their research and making connections to the overall themes of the conference. In the plenary sessions, the organizers took care to arrange a diversity of presentations, including heads of national science funding agencies (Brazil and South Africa), an expert on climate change impacts in Africa from Jeffrey Sachs' Earth Institute, and a Kenyan physicist talking about communication strategies for scientists seeking to harness science for social good.

I was not among the speakers (with the large number of participants and limited time, I suppose the organizers attempted to ensure a diverse mix of presenters and topics). Although only one geographer spoke (Igor Sirodoev from Moldova), I was pleased to see that our discipline was well-represented and that we were actively engaged at the gathering. The recurrent theme of "building bridges" (between, for example, science and policy and between disciplines) resonated with me, because I believe our being trained to think across scales complemented narrower conceptions of scientific research. Without wishing to sound parochial, I believe the four of us did do our part to raise awareness of some of the artificial boundaries between society and nature and social science and physical science that geography largely transcends.

A couple of aspects of the Young Scientists Conference are worthy of note for future events of this sort. For one, the geographic diversity of the participants impressed me. In particular, sub-Saharan Africa was well-represented, a refreshing change from other international conferences I have attended. African participants and those from other non-Western countries added value not only through their intellectual weight, but also by offering their unique cultural perspectives on research, teaching and policy. Clearly, our colleagues in places such as Zambia and Cameroon face a set of issues with which scientists in Europe and North America simply cannot relate. But as became clear in listening to presentations and in conversation with colleagues, scientists from the developing world have nothing to be ashamed of in terms of the work they are doing in spite

of more limited resources. Another impressive feature was the wide range of disciplines and interests represented at the conference. Though we came from fields as varied as materials science, genetics, medical anthropology and geography, our diversity did not seem to serve as an impediment to fruitful conversations about the ways in which scientists, of all kinds, *must* work together across borders in order to communicate effectively to policy-makers.

My only real criticism of the conference involves the lack of any planning for some sort of operational outcome. With the good international chemistry and seemingly broad agreement on the hot button issue of climate change, I felt the organizers could have steered us towards using our time together to develop a communiqué that in turn could be transmitted to the U.N. or its member states. We had ample time for socializing, and we used those occasions for ad hoc bull sessions, either in the conference hotel or at Coco Loco, the unofficial after hours conference headquarters in Lindau's medieval *Altstadt*. At the end of the two days, however, we were left with warm memories, plenty of business cards, and ideas about collaboration, but it struck me as curious that we did not have a piece of paper stating concisely (even in muted language) what we had accomplished by traveling all that way. The video collages from the conference available on ICSU's website http://www.icsu.org/10_icsu75/75ANNIV_Young.html offers impressions along these lines; I think producing a communiqué (“*We the gathered young scientists of the world believe x and y...*”) would have made me leave Lindau with more a sense of putting our collective pen to paper and expressing our concern about issues affecting all of us *and* our idealism about the prospects for us making a difference in addressing them.

Report by JUNGYUL SOHN, Ph.D.

Department of Geography, Seoul National University, Seoul, South Korea

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I was one of the three young geographers nominated by IGU to attend to the International Conference celebrating 75 years of International Council for Science Union (ICSU) titled “Global Scientific Challenges: Perspectives from Young Scientists.” The conference was held in Lindau, Germany, between Apr. 4 and 6, dealing with a variety of topics spanning, for example, from studies on polar region to issues in communicating science with local community. There were only 142 participants in the conference, which sounds relatively small considering the typical size of academic conferences in geography. It was not because this ICSU conference is unpopular or less advertised, but because it was invitation only. In other words, all the attendees in the conference represented either their respective international science unions or their national members of the organization. Because of this organization of the conference, those 142 scientists represented as many as 71 different countries from all the different disciplines.

The first day of the conference started with the registration, followed by the opening ceremony at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Professor Goverdhan Mehta, the president of ICSU, made a keynote speech on “science and technology for a better future: emerging paradigms” in the opening session. After the session, there was a conference reception in which conference participants had a first formal chance to socialize themselves with each other. The second day started with the plenary session on “building bridges within the scientific community,” followed by four parallel sessions. Two of them were devoted to “international cooperation” and the other two to “trans-disciplinary collaboration.” I was one of the “international cooperation” sessions, in which such

topics are included as “building international network,” “the permafrost young researchers network: successes, challenges, and perspectives,” “the benefits of international co-operation,” and “global science family.” The sessions in the afternoon are on “building bridges between science and the world”: public engagement and science for policy. On the third day, issues in “working with the private sector” and carbon emission were discussed in the morning and “scientific freedom and responsibilities” were dealt with in the afternoon. After a short video feedback from parallel sessions in the second day morning, the conference is officially concluded with the “closing session” focusing on strengthening international science for the benefit of society.

This conference was quite a new and unique experience to me in the sense that I have never met so many people from so many different countries in such a short period of time. We were diverse in ideas and thoughts because we were representing so many different organizations and countries. However, we shared a lot of common issues and challenges as young scholars who have faced similar type of difficulty in our academic career paths. For example, I was very surprised to hear, but at the same time sympathized with the fact that, the problems and challenges a young engineering scientist from Croatia faces are not so different from those a young geographer from Korea feels. From the perspective of geography, the two key issues discussed in the conference (international cooperation and trans-disciplinary collaboration) are in fact closely associated with the intrinsic elements of geography. In other words, geographical study, by nature, is trans-disciplinary by linking physical and human elements in one big picture. Also, geography has a long tradition of regional studies that not just focus on regions at a relatively small geographical scale, but on regions at a global scale. Environmental problems in recent years often cross the boundary of the state, leaving them as an issue that needs to be addressed through international collaboration. In this respect, an experience such as this conference provides a valuable opportunity for a young geographer like me to explore and discuss those issues with people in the global and interdisciplinary network of scholars.

I think that one issue that needs to be addressed in the future plan of this type of conference is how to increase international collaboration. I believe an increase in the level of interaction is a key to a success in increasing international collaboration. In order to increase interaction, it seems to me that two challenges need to be addressed and properly tackled. The first one is language barrier. There are many excellent scholars in non-English speaking countries such as Korea who do not get a fair opportunity to collaborate with international scholars just because of the language problem. Exposing them to such international experience as often as possible may be one way to approach this issue, for example. The second challenge is distance barrier. Holding a conference like this is a great idea. However, the location of conference, or more generally the location of potential international collaboration seems to be a critical factor in determining the level of participation of scholars who are willing to be a part of the international collaboration. Maybe one solution is that we not only provide this type of global collaboration opportunity, but regional opportunities to scholars of countries with geographic proximity.

Report by IGOR SIRODOEV
Institute of Ecology and Geography, Moldavian Academy of Sciences, Moldova
E-Mail: ingvarr_i@yahoo.com

I was nominated by IHDP (International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change), an International Council for Science (ICSU) interdisciplinary body, for participation at the conference, entitled “Global Scientific Challenges: Perspectives from Young Scientists”, organized by ICSU on the occasion of its 75th anniversary, celebrated in 2006; being a geographer by training and current occupation, I was asked by IGU nominees to contribute to their report for IGU Bulletin.

I was invited to make a short presentation in the Science for policy session. In the presentation I attempted to summarize my modest experience in the area of my work: ecological planning in the Eastern European countries, particularly, in Moldova. I identified challenges and opportunities faced by the science in Eastern Europe on its path to be incorporated in the policy documents. It seems like the main problem of these countries consists in the strong influence of governmental officials, which can prevail over the any other challenges or opportunities (international financial assistance, public opinion etc.) and which can take account of scientific results at their own choosing. This situation was illustrated on the two recent examples from Moldova’s ecological policy. The example of successful one is represented by National Ecological Network (supported by the corresponding Ministry); at present there are no important obstacles in implementing it. Creation of National Parks could be considered as the example of unsuccessfulness of science implementation into policy: several attempts have been made during the last twenty years in order to create at least one national park in Moldova, but all of them have failed due to opposition of governmental agencies. In such a way it seems that human conservatism and personal interests constitute the main challenge to be faced by the science in the future. These examples illustrate that the role of individual scientists, and science in general, in the policy-making process is quite uncertain and, sadly to say, does not depend on the value of scientific results and individual people’s effort. However, in their effort to turn scientific outcomes into practice individual scientists’ role should not be the passive one. It will be even more valuable if the research will be organized in small groups, every group member having its own specific tasks: starting from fund raising and ending by theoretical research.

142 young scientists from 71 different countries, representing national members, scientific unions and interdisciplinary bodies of ICSU, attended the conference’s sessions. The advantage of the choosing format for the conference consists in the fact that almost all the time the entire group was in the plenary; just one session had the concurrent panels, which of them included very interesting presentations. But this disadvantage was overcome by the video feed-back provided by the organizers at the end of the conference. The conference was opened by Professor Goverdhan Mehta, ICSU President, who talked about emerging paradigms in the science and technology relationship. The conference started from the session dedicated to the relationships within the scientific community, which, after the plenary introduction, was divided in four parallel panels: two on international cooperation and the other two on trans-disciplinary collaboration. From one of the trans-disciplinary panels I assisted I would like to point out geographically oriented presentations of Irasema Alcantara Ayala (from Mexico) about disaster prevention and Oliver Musshoff (from Germany) about mitigation of climate change effect in agriculture (the last one using more economic approach).

The two afternoon sessions (on public engagement and science for policy) were dedicated to inter-relations between science and the world. From the first one I would to remark Jesus Olivero-Verbal’s (from Colombia) presentation on the importance of the internet for scientists –

non-specialists dialogue and Andrea Mantesso's (from Brazil) presentation focused on the problems with communicating scientific results for the laymen. In fact, the last problem was largely present even at the conference, due to extremely high inter-disciplinarity of its attendance. Science for policy issue was approached by a variety of methods from physical modeling (Juan Pablo Guerra) to scientific management (Alice Abreu).

The first session of the second day of the conference was focused on working with private sector: speakers in this session attempted to compare research conditions and results obtained in the academia and industry and to evaluate advantages of working with private sector. Another session was dedicated to the scientific freedom and responsibilities; here I would like to point out the talk of Bengt Gustaffson (from Sweden) on freedom and responsibilities in the conduct of Science, presentations of Dilfuza Egamberdiyeva (from Uzbekistan) on the role of science in environmental protection and Jiunn-Wei Chen (from Taiwan) about the information sharing in physics using arXiv model.

The totally new (at least for me) approach was represented by offsetting the carbon emissions from the conference. It cost additional fee paid by the participants in order that the entire sum to be invested in one of the three preliminary chosen projects in underdeveloped countries.

Also, I was impressed by the great variety of participants from various fields attending same panels and plenaries, from material science to geography, from theoretical physics to genetics and from chemistry to journalism. Finding common language with so different specialists was my main concern. However, if speakers needed to revise some accents and stresses in their presentations in order to accomplish the expectation of such a various public, informal discussions were very interesting and fruitful with no barriers due to very friendly atmosphere. Contrary to my expectations and to apparent incompatibility of disciplinary affiliation of the participants some more or less stable relationships seemed to be established. That is the main achievement of the conference: starting the communication between different scientific fields and geographical regions.

The organization of the conference was thought through very carefully and it gave good outcomes. However, it was organized in more or less traditionalistic way with plenaries, panels and discussions. Discussions were stimulated even beyond the conference's sessions and are supposed to be continued on the conference's site. But, in my opinion, taking in consideration the average age of the participants (conference was focused specifically on the young scientists), less formal and more interactive approach would lead to even more efficient results, at least in the minds of the attendees.

Information about the conference, as well as semiformal report about the parallel sessions, can be found on the conference's site:

http://www.icsu.org/10_icsu75/75ANNIV_Young.html. In addition, there are PowerPoint versions of the presentations on the site that can be downloaded easily.

7) BAMBERG CONFERENCE ON NATURE, SPACE AND THE SACRED

1st International Conference of the European Forum for the Study of Religion and the Environment held in Bamberg, Germany, 24-26 May 2007.

Report by Anne Buttimer

Fifty scholars, including graduate students and post-doctoral fellows, from fourteen different countries, assembled in the beautiful medieval city of Bamberg for a two-day conference on "Nature, Space and the Sacred", May 24-26, 2007. This was the first international conference of the European Forum for the Study of Religion and Environment, which is coordinated by Sigurd Bergmann, theologian, from Trondheim in Norway. All local arrangements were made by Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, University of Bamberg. A wide range of "transdisciplinary perspectives" were shared on themes of space and place, culturally diverse perceptions of nature and environment, landscape, identity and taken-for-granted attitudes on the sacred and the secular. Any geographer would have felt quite "at home". For me it was a special delight to deliver a keynote address in the magnificent university Aula, once a Dominican church, in the heart of Bamberg.

The programme involved both plenary lectures and parallel paper sessions, a guided walk in the city of Bamberg, a public panel discussion involving the mayors of Heidelberg and Bamberg on sustainable urban planning, and a closing *plenum* business meeting of the Forum. The entire atmosphere was cordial, allowing time for much informal interaction among individuals from widely different fields of expertise. Subjects addressed at the meeting involved a fascinating intermingling of theological, anthropological and historical approaches to particular case studies on the one hand, and critical reflections on practical and ethical implications for everyday life and behaviour on the other. The opening lecture by Dr Anne Primavesi on "Transforming religious perspectives on nature in response to climate change" set the tone in questioning conventional attitudes toward nature within the Christian world, thus pointing toward ethical aspects of humanity's interactions with nature. My paper attempted a global overview on spatio-temporal distributions of religious groups, illustrating ways in which religious symbols resonated to the biophysical milieu and lifeways of adherents. Tim Ingold's plenary paper also addressed issues of symbol and metaphor in his discourse on "The Wedge and the Knot: Hammering and Stitching the Faces of Nature". The other two plenary lectures dealt with more specific case studies: the Sun-dance ritual of North American Crow Indians by John Grim, and the practices of Ch'i in East Asia by Professor Mary E. Tucker.

Both descriptive and normative elements were evident in papers delivered in the subsequent parallel sessions. The mystical poetry of Rumi revealed fresh perspectives on Arab perceptions of nature, while field-based studies in the Talas region of Kyrgyzstan showed connections between health and worship at sacred sites. Issues of climate change and biodiversity recurred in several papers, and there were thought-provoking essays on aesthetics and ethics of religious practice, gender equality in church structures, green politics and connections between religion and sustainable development. The local geographies of shrines and sacred sites were elaborated in several papers, including intriguing accounts on the revival of local religious practices in Estonia, Lithuania and other places in the former Soviet Union where earlier restrictions were lifted; but now tensions arise between local interests in maintaining the sacredness and secrets of these places and commercial interests in promoting tourism. Mapping of sacred places becomes a political issue! Indigenous geographical knowledges of rocks and stones, plants and animals, earth and water – in short of *oikos* and

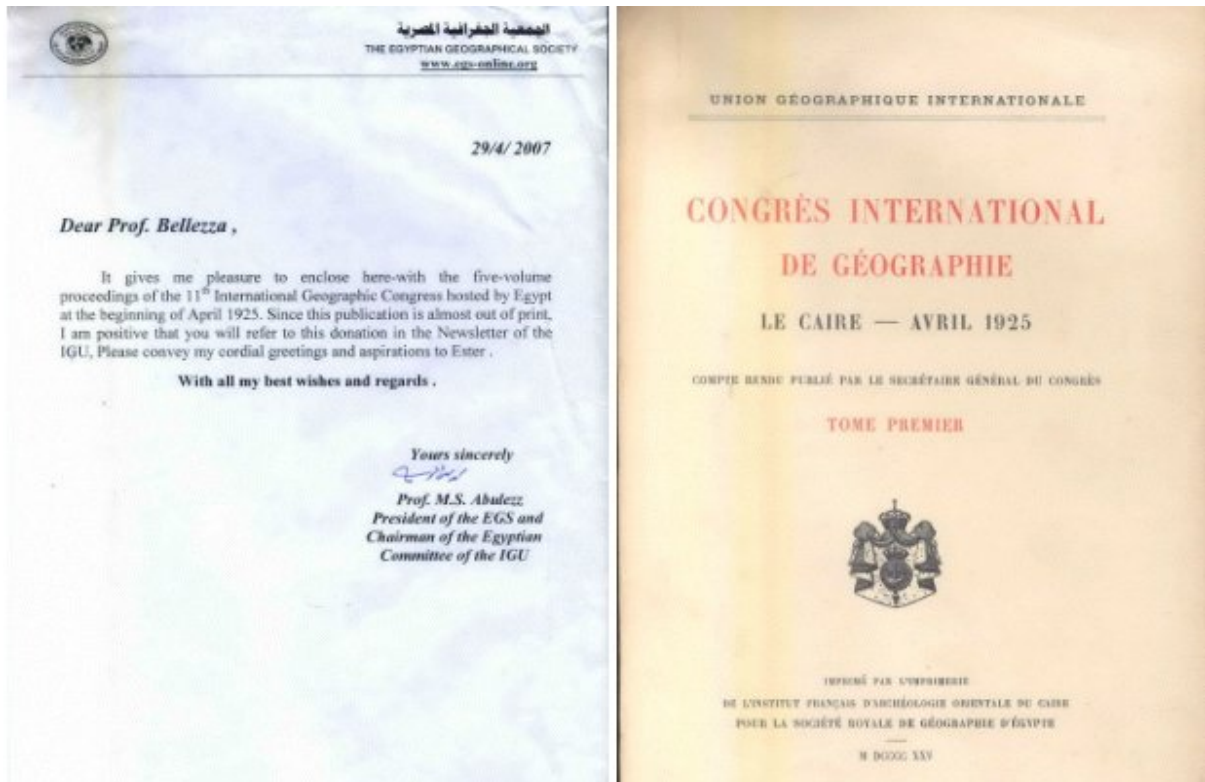
oecumene – were also described, with detailed accounts of landscapes and sacred space in China and Japan, Cambodia and Norway.

As a whole, the papers included both empirically rich and conceptually evocative studies on religion and environment. The subject has evoked increasing interest in recent times with many new journals and new associations in formation. An edited volume of papers from the conference is planned. At the final plenary discussion of the Forum a decision was taken to organise the 2nd international conference in Turku, Finland in 2009. Further information is available at the Forum website (<http://www.hf.ntnu.no/relnateur/>).



8) DONATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 11th INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL CONGRESS (EGYPT, 1925)

Prof. Safey Abulezz, President of the IGU National Committee of Egypt and of the Egyptian Geographical Society, is a good friend of Anne Buttmer and Giuliano Bellezza. He has therefore donated to us a very rare item: the 5-volume Proceedings of the 11th IGU Congress, held in Egypt in April 1925. The IGU President at that time was the Italian Nicola Vacchelli.



Prof. Safey Abulezz's kind letter and the front cover of the Proceedings



A photo taken during the first Plenary Session of the 11th IGU Congress at the seat of the Egyptian Geographical Society



9) SUMMARY OF FORTHCOMING 2007 EVENTS

The following are events scheduled for 2007. Clearly the list is far from complete, but we can only publish the ones which were notified to us. To see more details, please follow the links or visit the Home of Geography's website: <http://www.homeofgeography.org/> (then choose *Events 2007*).

August

- IGU Commission on Political Geography Cities and Borders: Border Cities, Divided Cities, Borders in Cities. Macau, China, 3-5 August. Pearlriverdelta@gmail.com
- IGU Commission on Monitoring Cities of Tomorrow: 2007 Conference - "Cities under Globalisation". Guangzhou, China, August 6 – 14. www.cities-of-tomorrow.com
- IGU Commission for Water Sustainability conference – “Sustaining Water Availability: Different Societies, Similar Problems”. Asheville, N.C., USA, 12 – 17 August 2007 <http://water-sustainability.ph.unito.it>
- EUGEO2007: Europe's Geographical Challenges: Science Meets Policy. First International Conference on the Geography of Europe. Amsterdam, 20-23 August 2007. <http://www.eugeo2007.org>
- XXIIInd Congress of the European Society for Rural Sociology - Mobilities, Vulnerabilities and Sustainabilities: New questions and challenges for rural Europe. Wageningen, the Netherlands, 20-24 August 2007. <http://www.esrs2007.nl/>
- Borders3-2007 Summer School "Global Trends", Tarvisio (Italy), 27 August-8 September. <http://www.units.it/~borders3/>
- IGU Commission on Land Use and Cover Change Central Europe Conference 2007: “Man in the landscape across frontiers: Landscape and land use change in Central European border regions”. Slovenia – Austria – Slovak Republic – Czech Republic. 28 August - 4 September <http://www.luccprague.cz/>
- International Seminar on Urban Form: Urban Morphology in a Global Era. Ouro Preto, Brazil, 28 - 31 August 2007. <http://www.isuf2007.com/>

September

- Geocomputation Conference 2007. Maynooth, Ireland, 3rd to 5th September 2007. <http://ncg.nuim.ie/geocomputation>
- IGU Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND): International Workshop on Environmental Change and Sustainable Development in Arid and Semi-arid Regions, Inner Mongolia, China. Preconference field trip: 7 - 9 September, 2007. Conference: 10 - 17 September, 2007 (<http://www.iggcas.ac.cn/iw07/index.htm>).
- IGU Commission on Political Geography - 1st International Conference on Political Geography: European multiculturalism as a challenge – policies, successes and failures. Lublin, Poland, 10-13 September. <http://www.politicalgeography.pl/>
- Geoitalia 2007 – Sixth Italian Forum of Earth Sciences: Geoscience and Society in Italy in the International Year of Planet Earth, 2008. Rimini, Italy, 12-14 Sept. <http://www.geoitalia.org/>

October

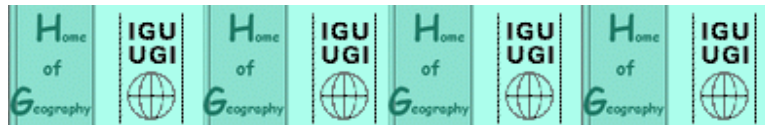
- Festival International de Géographie (FIG): La Planète en mal d'énergies. Saint-Dié-des-Vosges, France, 4-7 October. <http://fig-st-die.education.fr/>
- CoastGIS 07: 8th International Symposium on GIS and Computer Mapping for Coastal Zone Management. Santander, Spain, 8-10 October. www.coastgis07.com
- IGU Commission on the Cultural Approach in Geography Conference: Cultural Aspects in Economic, Social and Political Geographies. Buenos Aires, October 9-11 <http://www.uff.br/ugiregional/?q=en/node/12>
- International Forum on Geoparks: Interpretation and Sustainable Development. Yuntaishan World Geopark, China, 11-14 October. <http://www.interpchina.com/yuntai07.htm>
- European Tourism and the Environment Conference: Promotion and Protection, Achieving the Balance, 11-12 October, Dublin, Ireland <http://www.dit.ie/DIT/industry/centres/trc/conference/>
- Partly joint meeting of:
The IGU Indigenous Peoples' Knowledge and Rights Commission: Indigenous Geographies (http://igu-islands.giee.ntnu.edu.tw/ipkr_index.htm)
and Inaugural Meeting of the IGU Commission on Islands (http://igu-islands.giee.ntnu.edu.tw/conf_index.htm)
Taipei, Taiwan, October 29 - Nov. 3

November 2007

- IGU Commission on Tourism, Leisure and Global Change: Tourism and Global Change in Polar Regions - An International Conference, Oulu, Finland, 29 November - 1 December; <http://www.geog.nau.edu/igust/meetings.html>
- Spatial Restructuring of Slovenia and Neighboring States: Advantages for Border Regions. Koper-Capodistria, Slovenia, November 30 - December 2. Contact: Prof. Dr. Anton Gosar, email to simon.kerma@fhs.upr.si
- IGU Commission on Gender and Geography, Symposium: Transnational Lives: Feminist Perspectives on Citizenship, Home and Belonging. Taipei, Taiwan, November 23-26, <http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/igugender/activities.html>

December 2007

- 5th International Conference of Critical Geography: "Imperialism and resultant disorder: imperatives for social justice" Mumbai, 3-7 December 2007. <http://www.5thiccg.org>



UPDATE: NEWS FROM THE HOME OF GEOGRAPHY

Over the last few months, in the run-up to summer, activity at the Home of Geography has abated somewhat, with the expectation, however, of various tasks and commitments awaiting us after the summer break.

Recent activities include support for the new Cultures and Civilizations for Human Development Coordinator, Prof Benno Werlen of Jena University. We have helped bring him up to speed on various aspects of the initiative, which the previous Coordinator, Adalberto Vallega, worked on so tirelessly right up to his sad death last November. We look forward to providing Benno with all the support we can in his new position, in order to put CCHD firmly back on the agenda of the international geographical community and wider audiences.

As reported in the last issue of the Newsletter, a set of sterling silver medals issued by the IGU in the 1970s in honour of the "Great Explorers" was found earlier this year, leading the gentleman concerned to contact the IGU for further information. As a follow-up to our research in the Home of Geography archives on these medals, a section on the Home's website displaying the medals, together with a brief description of each explorer's life and achievements, is in the process of being created. The section will be fully up and running in the near future.

Following the publication in March of Volume VII of the Home of Geography Publications Series: *Managing Water Resources in a Changing Physical and Social Environment*, Eds: Peter Robinson, Tony Jones, Ming-ko Woo, we have now received the text of the next volume in the series. The book, which deals with migration issues in an enlarged Europe, is entitled “Migration in a New Europe: People, Borders and Trajectories” and is edited by Ton van Naerssen and Martin van der Velde. The volume is currently being prepared for printing, and we will endeavour to bring it to publication as soon as possible.

Speaking of publications, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that for a few years now, the Italian Geographical Society has been publishing Reports on specific themes of national interest: this year the studies focused on “Tourism and Territories”. The Reports are always presented in one of the meeting rooms of the Italian Senate, and are discussed by two eminent figures: one representing the government, and one representing the opposition. This year they both said something that I could have written myself. In brief, the main gist was that politicians are snowed under with reports and publications from various entities, often produced on very thick and expensive paper, replete with wonderful images, but lacking on substance. They were both in total agreement (a rare occurrence in Italy), saying that the geographers’ report does not merely set out problems which everyone already knows about, but is a series of studies on particular topics, each one suggesting solutions which are not utopian but feasible: an important tool for the Left as well as the Right. The representative of the Left was Mr. Walter Veltroni, Mayor of Rome; representing the Right was Mr. Gianni Letta, known as the foremost advisor to the former Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi. Following these politicians’ words, I long for the day when politicians (from all over the world) will come to realise that positive results in territorial planning can be achieved by inviting teams of geographers to work together with economists, architects, ecologists, geologists and others.



From left: Ernesto Mazzetti, Vice President of SGI, Walter Veltroni, Mayor of Rome, Orazio Carabini, journalist, Gianni Letta, Member of Parliament, Piergiorgio Landini, Editor of the volume.

Sadly, the Executive Secretary of the Home of Geography, Dawn Bissell, is leaving her position, and indeed Rome, at the end of July. She has been of incredible help for almost two years. I wish her all the best for the future, together with the Villa Celimontana Committee and all the members of the IGU Executive Committee who asked her for help with various matters, always receiving her full and efficient collaboration.

On a final note, the Home will be closed from Friday 3rd to Monday 27th August. Moreover, I will be engaged in teamwork in Cappadocia (Eastern Turkey) until 8th September, so activities at the Home will, in fact, only start up again from 9th September. We at the Home of Geography would therefore like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very pleasant summer.

Giuliano Bellezza
Director, Home of Geography

Recent Events Organized by the Società Geografica Italiana in Conjunction with the Home of Geography:

25 May

Launch of the historical map exhibition: "The World in Scale".

5 June

"New Europe, New Geographies"

Meeting of Bulgarian, Italian and Romanian university students to discuss the European Union, on the occasion of European Youth Week.

22 June

European Meeting of University Professors: "Migration and Citizenship - The Role of the Metropolis in the European Union Process of Enlargement".

27 July

Book launch: "Roma e la sua Campagna" (*Rome and its Countryside*) edited by Franco Salvatori and Ernesto di Renzo.

Visitors to the Home of Geography

The Home of Geography is always happy to receive visitors (with advance notice).

In May, we welcomed Prof. Eric Clark, Head of the Department of Social and Economic Geography at Lund University, Sweden, who dropped by with his daughters.

Following a visit from our Japanese friends, Prof. Himiyama and his students, in February this year, we were delighted to further strengthen our ties with East Asia by welcoming three geography professors from the National Taiwan University in early July: Prof. Jiun-Chuan Lin, Chair of the IGU National Committee of China-Taipei, Prof. Chang-Yi David Chang, Chair of the IGU Commission on Islands and Prof. Sue-Ching Jou, Chair of the Department of Geography

at the National Taiwan University. They were accompanying a group of approximately 20 university students (and some of their children) on a trip to Germany and Italy.



On the terrace of Villa Celimontana: standing in the back row, the third person is Prof. Sue-Ching Jou, followed by Dawn Bissell, Giuliano Bellezza, Prof. Chang-Yi David Chang and Prof. Jiun-Chuan Lin.

Special Rates for Friends of the Home of Geography at AMT Hotels (Sicily)



We are pleased to announce that special rates for some top-of-the-range Italian hotels have been secured from an Italian company for friends of the Home of Geography. The quality hotels in this first agreement are all located in Sicily and offer the highest standards of comfort and quality. Please note that the discounted rates are valid until *31 December 2007*.

Villa Igia Hilton Palermo

Salita Belmonte 43,

90142 **Palermo**

Tel. 091.6312468 Fax .091.6312464

E-mail : villa-igia@amthotels.it Res.VillaIgiaPalermo@hilton.com

- ❖ **Guest Room (double room for single use) €168,00 (RACK €287,00)**
- ❖ **Guest Room Double €187,00 (RACK €287,00)**

- ❖ **Junior Suite** €307,00 (RACK €427,00)
- ❖ **Senior Suite** €337,00 (RACK €457,00)

Hotel des Etrangers et Miramare

Passeggio Adorno, 10/12,

96100 **Siracusa**

Tel . 0931.319100 Fax .0931.319000

E-mail : receptiondesetrangers@amthotels.it desetrangers@amthotels.it

- ❖ **Guest Room (single)** €115,00 (RACK €200,00)
- ❖ **Guest Room (double room for single use)** €160,00 (RACK €230,00)
- ❖ **Guest Room (double)** €185,00 (RACK €245,00)

Grand Hotel et Des Palmes

Via Roma, 398

90139 **Palermo**

Tel. +39 091 6028111 Fax. +39 091 331545

E-mail : booking-despalmes@amthotels.it

- ❖ **Guest Room (large single bed)** €105,00 (RACK €165,00)
- ❖ **Guest Room (double room for single use)** €135,00 (RACK €195,00)
- ❖ **Guest Room (double)** €150,00 (RACK €210,00)
- ❖ **Junior Suite** €275,00 (RACK €320,00)

Excelsior Palace Hotel

Via Marchese Ugo, 3

90141 **Palermo**

Tel. +39 091 7909 Fax. +39 091 342139

E-mail : booking-excelsior@amthotels.it

- ❖ **Guest Room (large single bed)** €110,00 (RACK €220,00)
- ❖ **Guest Room (double room for single use)** €125,00 (RACK €235,00)
- ❖ **Guest Room (double)** €160,00 (RACK €250,00)

Favourable rates for meetings, seminars and conferences can also be offered according to the season and the availability of individual hotels.

During 2007 the Group will be opening a new Hotel in Venice, in the former Stucky Flour Mill, and it is envisaged that special rates will also be available there.

The agreement is likely to be renewed in 2008, when the Group will be opening new hotels in
Taormina: San Domenico Palace Hotel
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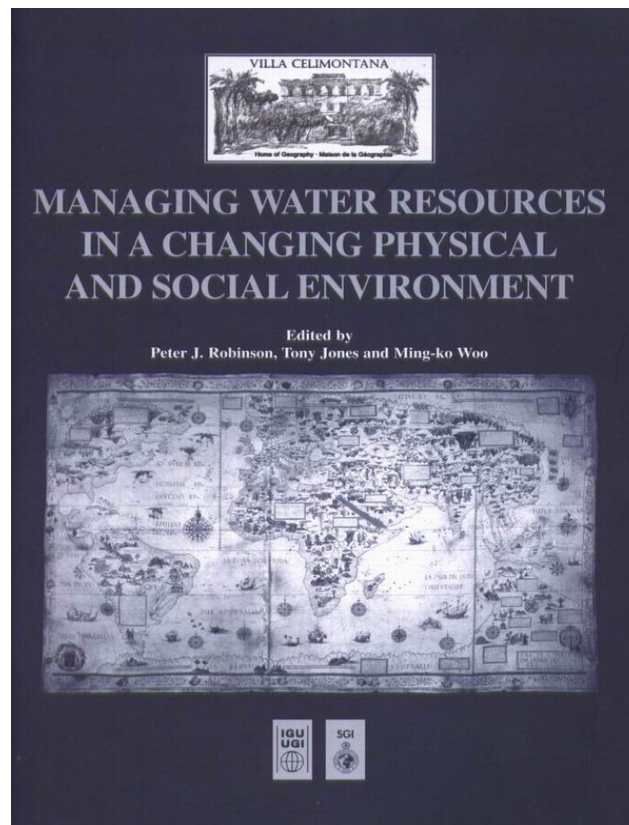
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This volume costs €18,00 for orders from EU countries and €24,00 for non-EU countries, including postage (standard mail) and packaging. To obtain a copy, please contact Giuliano Bellezza at the Home of Geography, Rome, on: g.bellezza@homeofgeography.org .

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