



WEBSITE: <http://www.okayama-u.ac.jp/user/igu-csrs>

COMMISSION REPORT (C12-35)

COMMISSION ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF RURAL SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL UNION

2012 – 2016

1. MEMBERSHIP

a) Commission Chairs

Name	Mail Address	Telephone Fax	E-mail
Ana Maria Viegas Firmino (Portugal, 2012-2016)	Dept. of Geography & Regional Planning Universidade Nova de Lisboa Av. de Berna, 26 – C, Lisbon 1069-061 Portugal	+351-217908300 +351-217908308	am.firmino@fcsb.unl.pt
Doo-Chul Kim (Japan, 2012-2016)	Graduate School of Environmental and Life Science, Okayama University 3-1-1 Tsushima-naka Okayama 700-8530 Japan	+81-86)251-8886 +81-86)251-8886	kim@okayama-u.ac.jp

b) Steering Committee Members (2009-2015)

During 2012-2016, three new members were added to the Steering Committee in 2013: Prof. Catalina Ancuta Armanca, West University of Timisoara, Romania, Prof. Holly Barcus, Macalester College, USA; and Prof. Serge Schmitz, University of Liege, Belgium.

Name	Mail Address	E-mail
Amit-Cohen, Irit (Israel, 2009 -)	Dept. of Geography Bar Ilan University Ramat-Gan Israel	amitirit@gmail.com ; amitcoi@bin.ac.il
Armanca, Catalina (Romania, 2013 -)	Department of Geography West University of Timisoara 4, b-dul V. Parvan 300223 Timisoara, Romania	cancutafr@yahoo.com
Barcus, Holly (USA, 2013 -)	Geography Department Macalester College 1600 Grand Ave, Saint Paul Minnesota 55105 USA	barcus@macalester.edu
Cawley, Mary (Ireland, 2009 -)	School of Geography and Archaeology National University of Ireland Galway Ireland	mary.cawley@nuigalway.ie
Jones, Roy (Australia, 2012-)	Department of Urban and Regional Planning Curtin University GPO Box U1987 Perth, WA 6845 Australia	R.Jones@curtin.edu.au
Lober, Lučka (Slovenia, 2009-)	Dept. of Geography Faculty of Arts University of Maribor Koroška cesta 160 2000 Maribor Slovenia	lucka.lorber@um.si
Serge, Schmitz (Belgium, 2013-)	Institut de geographie, University of Liege Clos Mercator 3-B 4000, Liege Belgium	S.Schmitz@ulg.ac.be
Thissen, Frans (Netherlands, 2012-)	Department of Geography, Planning and International Development Studies University of Amsterdam Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, 1018 WV Amsterdam (visiting address); Postbus 15629, 1001 NC Amsterdam (postal address)	J.F.C.M.Thissen@uva.nl

c) Corresponding Commission Members

In 2013 the commission set up an internet-based communication platform, a mailing list for the IGU Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems. It is a closed system to non-members, but open to all of the corresponding members of the IGU Commission on

the Sustainability of Rural Systems. Once an email address of a certain member has been registered to this system, he/she can post easily at any time to all of the corresponding members. The address of this system is <igu-csrs@cc.okayama-u.ac.jp> based on Okayama University, Japan, and managed by Prof. Doo-Chul KIM, the co-chair of the commission.

The number of corresponding members of CSRS is 535 in total from 56 countries as of 31 December, 2015.

Country	Number	Country	Number
Australia	26	Morocco	1
Austria	4	Netherlands	9
Bangladesh	1	New Zealand	5
Belgium	7	Nigeria	2
Brazil	20	Poland	4
Burundi	1	Portugal	8
Cameroon	1	Romania	8
Canada	54	Russia	3
Chile	2	Saudi Arabia	1
China	15	Serbia	2
Columbia	1	Singapore	1
Czech Republic	7	Slovakia	1
Egypt	2	Slovenia	2
Finland	1	South Africa	7
France	16	South Korea	24
Germany	27	Spain	39
Greece	1	Sri Lanka	1
Guinea	1	Sudan	1
Haiti	1	Sweden	5
Hawaii	1	Syria	1
Hong Kong	1	Taiwan	2
India	13	Thailand	4
Iran	6	Turkey	2
Ireland	16	UK	17
Israel	4	USA	21
Italy	9	Vietnam	5
Japan	114	Others	5
Malaysia	1		
Mexico	1		
		Total	535

2. MEETINGS

20th Annual Colloquium Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems

Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3, France, 20-24 July 2012

This colloquium was organized by Prof. Lucette Laurens, Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3, France. Originally, the 20th Annual Colloquium of the Commission was supposed to be held at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, during 20 -26 August, 2013 organized by Prof. Radim Perlín and Prof. Ivan Bičík. But it was unfortunately cancelled without any notice to the Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems, though the former co-chairs and the members of the steering committee had repeatedly requested information on the preparations for the colloquium. In these circumstances, and at very short notice, the commission had to change the venue to Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3, France, where the former co-chair Prof. Lucette Laurens undertook the colloquium organisation. Moreover, the pre-registration list was not transferred to the commission. Given these difficulties in advertising notice of the new venue within a short period of time, only 14 members could participate, from Australia (3), Brazil (2), France (1), Ireland (1), Israel (1), Japan (2), Portugal (3), and Slovenia (1). The activities were divided into one and half day paper presentation and another one and half day field excursion in South France.

Presentation themes

1. Discussing the countryside and rural sustainability
2. Land use, agricultural and non-agricultural activities and new functions of the countryside
3. Agro-complexes for food, fibre and bio-fuel production in global markets
4. Quality production, environmental services and fair trade for conservation and social justice
5. Governance and social networks in rural restructuring
6. Identity and cultural heritage in local development



Dinner at an UNESCO World Heritage site, Saint Guilhem le desert, France

21st Annual Colloquium Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems *Nagoya University, Japan, 29 July-4 August 2013*

The 2013 colloquium of the Commission was a pre-IGU 2013 Kyoto Regional Conference meeting organized by Professor Doo-Chul KIM, Okayama University, Japan, from 29 July to 4 August with the general theme of *Globalization and New Challenges of Agricultural and Rural Systems*. It was the second meeting for the Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems in Japan, following the 1995 Tsukuba Colloquium.

There were 39 participants from 16 countries and 36 presentations including two keynote speeches and 8 poster presentations. Another 16 scholars contributed to this Colloquium as co-authors. The 39 participants were from Australia (2), Belgium(2), Brazil(1), Canada(1), France(1), Israel(3), Japan(16), Nederland(2), Portugal(1), Romania(1), South Korea(5), Spain(1), Turkey(1), USA(1), and Vietnam(1).

The activities were divided into two days of paper presentations (36) and four days of field excursions.

Presentation themes

1. The social construction and analysis of 'rural sustainability'
2. Governance and rural development: progress and prospects

3. Rural society, population and settlement under conditions of economic and social change
4. Sustainability and the rural business enterprise
5. Heritage, tourism and environment: challenges and opportunities
6. Sustainability in the interaction between rural and urban systems
7. Land use, agriculture and food: issues of local sustainability in a global context

Field excursion themes in Central Japan

- Atsumi Peninsula: Sustainable or Neo-productivist Agricultural Development?
- *Shirakawa-go* & Tonami dispersed settlement (*sankyo-son*): Rural tourism renews remote mountain villages?
- Noto Peninsula designated as a site of GIAHS: Japanese cultural landscape and new challenges in remote rural areas
- Lake Biwa and its Watershed: Rich history and environmental friendly agriculture

Salient insights and conclusions from the 21st Annual Colloquium

- Concepts of rural space and landscape have been developed with reference to sustainability and new forms and functions of the countryside in different regions of the world with regard to global and local processes
- The rise of new productive and service relationships for quality and differentiated markets which increase farm income and quality of life.
- The development of agro-ecological farm systems related to consumer concerns over food and environmental quality
- Spreading multi-functionality involving farm and non-farm activities alongside and in the same rural establishment to overcome problems with overspecialization and falling farm incomes
- The increasing importance of production and the use of rural space for renewable energy sources
- Local political empowerment and community development based on building social capital and multi-scalar networks
- The predominance of conflict over land and resources in contexts of extreme poverty in less developed countries distant from the realities of post-industrial regions

- Difficulties with governance involving participatory rural development in poor nations



The former chair, Prof. Chris Bryant



At the Hikone Castle, Shiga Prefecture

IGU 2013 Kyoto Regional Conference

Kyoto International Conference Center, Japan, 4-9 August 2013

The Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems had 9 sessions with 35 presentations at 2013 Kyoto Regional Conference. Among them, 3 sessions with 11 papers were the joint session with the Commission on Marginalization, Globalization and Regional and Local Responses. The titles of each session are as follows:

- Rural areas, Development Dynamics, Policy Options and Marginalization (3 joint sessions)
- Environmental challenges, agricultural production and food security (2 sessions)
- Competing land use systems and rural demographic trends in the restructuring countryside (2 sessions)
- The impact of globalization, agribusiness and international trade on local agricultural systems and people (1 session)
- Policy, governance and local resistance in sustainability of rural systems in localities and regions (1 session)

IGU 2014 Krakow Regional Conference

Krakow, Poland, 18-22 August 2014

The Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems participated in 6 sessions at 2014 Krakow Regional Conference. Among them, one was a joint session with the Commission on Gender and Geography. In total there were 23 oral presentations and 5 posters. The titles of each session were as follows:

- Heritage and Tourism for a Sustainable Territorial Development (2 sessions)
- Farming in Peri-Urban Areas and Rural-Urban Interactions (1 session)
- Societies in Transition – evidence of changes in values and expectations (1 session)
- Food Chains and the 3 S (Sovereignty, Safety and Sustainability) (1 session)
- Women in Agriculture - strategies to reach equity and fight back hunger (1 joint session)

Due to different reasons (time spent abroad and costs, mainly) most of our Commission members participate in only one IGU event per year (usually the CSRS Colloquium). Although only a few of us participated in the Conference in Krakow this was an excellent opportunity to deepen the ties with East European geographers who seized the geographical proximity to participate (from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Slovenia or Serbia, for instance). Other nationalities represented were: Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Finland, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden. The sessions had in general between 15 and 20 attendants, often quite young researchers, and created conditions to know more about their research fields, enhancing contacts that may be fruitful in the near future, if the joint projects that are being prepared will be financed.



Joint Session C12.10 Gender and Geography/C 12.35 Sustainability of Rural Systems
Marcella Schmidt di Friedberg (Universita di Milano-Bicoca) during her presentation

22nd Annual Colloquium Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems *Bucharest and Sibiu, Romania 24 August - 3 September 2014*

The 2014 colloquium of the Commission took place in Romania from the 24th August to the 3rd September 2014, after the IGU Regional Conference in Krakow, and was organized by Professor Ioan Ianos, University of Bucharest, together with the Professional Association of Romanian Geographers (APGR) in Bucharest and Sibiu, under the theme of *Rural Life and Rural Systems between traditional and integrated urban-rural development*. The colloquium was an opportunity to meet Romanian researchers, who usually do not participate so often in conferences abroad. Besides it provided the opportunity to know better less studied problems affecting some rural areas, such as the dismantling of ore and coal mines, specific problems of ethnic minorities (in this case the Roma) and the devastation caused by the floods, which were illustrated by the case-studies that the participants had the opportunity to visit guided by the local authorities and researchers. During the scientific meeting 34 papers were presented and the assembly was constituted by 32 participants from 14 countries, as follows:

Country	No. of Participants	Country	No.of Participants
Romania	13	France	1
Australia	4	Ireland	1
Portugal	3	Israel	1
Japan	2	Netherlands	1
Belgium	1	South Korea	1
China	1	Spain	1
Egypt	1	Turkey	1



Official Opening of the Colloquium at the Univ. of Bucharest with the presence of the Rector, Prof. Mircea Dumitru, Prof. Dan Balteanu (Romanian Academy) the local organiser, Prof. Ioan Ianos, and the two co-chairs of the Commission

The Colloquium themes were as follows: 1. New Theories on the Contemporary Rural Development 2. Sustainability of the Rural Life in Relation to the Economic Performance 3. Returning to Rural Traditions as Perennial Values for the Modernization of the Rural Communities 4. Applied Polycentrism in the Rural Systems Development 5. Urban Sprawl and Planned Suburbanization 6. Present Day Changes in the Urban-Rural / Rural-Urban Migration Flows 7. Diversity of Urban-Rural Interactions and Regional Development 8. Other Themes Connected with the Main Topic.



Close to the sky (Aproape de Cer) along the touristic transalpine route, Jina, Romania

23rd Annual Colloquium of the Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems

Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal, 27th - 30 July

Universidade de Coimbra, 31st July

Universidade do Porto, Universidade do Minho, 31st July - 2nd August 2015

The 23rd Colloquium of the Commission was organized by Prof. Ana Firmino, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Prof. Helena Pina, Universidade do Porto and Prof. Paula Remoaldo, Universidade do Minho, from the 27th July to the 2nd August 2015, with the title of “*Sustainability of Rural Systems: smart answers for a smiling future*”. The thematic sessions tackled the following themes:

1. Landscape Heritage and Sustainable Tourism; 2. Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change; 3. Innovative and Smart Answers to Horizon 2020; 4. Rural-Urban Interactions in a Changing Society; 5. Social Challenges for a Smiling Future.

The thematic sessions were an excellent opportunity to listen to the interesting and diversified presentations that explored new visions and dimensions of the rural sustainability, expressed in several examples from all over the world.

The rural response to globalization, topic presented by the key-speaker Prof. Michael Woods, launched a reflexion on the resilience demonstrated in so many situations in the rural areas, which was several times questioned in examples of rural transition in a changing society. There was an emphasis in domains such as the food systems and energy production, two main areas for the development of a regenerative sustainable model, but other areas such as tourism, heritage and landscape were also present and were profusely illustrated along the visits organised for the fieldworks.



The participants in Lisbon (UniversidadeNova/FCSH) with the representative of FAO in Portugal, Dr. Helder Muteia

The first fieldwork took place in Loures Municipality on the 28th July, and had as goal to show the diversity of landscapes, activities and potentialities in a peri-urban area of Lisbon. The participants had the opportunity to visit a hydroponic production of lettuce, get acquainted with photovoltaic production at Malhapao Central, taste the wine of Bucelas (VQPRD, wine of quality) at Murta farm while listening to folk music by the ethnographic group Ceifeiros da Bemposta and have dinner at a typical restaurant in A-do-Baco.



Visit to Murta Farm, Bucelas.

Important producer in the Demarcated Region of Bucelas Wine

The second fieldwork started with a visit to the University of Coimbra (UNESCO Heritage) on the 30th of July. Later the participants were elucidated about the irregular regime of Mondego river and occurrence of floods and visited a traditional salt pans unit. At lunch there was still time to taste some of the local specialities such as Pastéis de Tentúgal.

The third fieldwork started on the 1st of August with a visit to Guimaraes, “the place where Portugal was born” and permitted to hear about the former local leather factories and visit the palace. During the second and last day the participants travelled along the Douro Valley (UNESCO Heritage) having had the opportunity to visit old burgs, and taste the Porto wine in the farms while listening to the techniques to get a good wine. Finally, there was a visit to the Gardens Festival at Ponte de Lima.

This was one of the most participated conferences organised by the Commission, with 55 participants from the 5 continents, representing 18 countries.

Country	No. of Participants	Country	No. of Participants
Australia	3	Italy	1
Belgium	4	Japan	3
Brazil	2	Netherlands	2
Croatia	1	Portugal	16
France	5	Romania	1
Germany	3	Spain	7
India	1	Togo	1
Ireland	1	Tunisia	1
Israel	2	USA	1

This year the Commission took the initiative to grant two scholarships to promote the participation of young researchers from Africa, since there are several years that we do not have any representative from this continent. The advertisement of the two scholarships was done by mail sent to the African embassies accredited in Portugal.

Unfortunately, from the two candidates selected only the representative of Togo, Manuel Tabiou, could participate. In spite of our efforts, Sarah Makhoulouf, from Algeria, due to visa problems, could not travel. Since the final decision was taken in the last minute, it was not possible to invite the third classified. However, we register with satisfaction, that one of the candidates, who had not been selected for the grant, could even so participate and was an added value to the colloquium.



Prof. Khan, from India (on the right) and Manuel Tabiou, from Togo, who got one of the scholarships granted this year to two young geographers from Africa, in order to stimulate their participation in the Commissions events.

IGU 2015 Moscow Regional Conference

Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia, 17-21 August 2015

The Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems had 2 sessions with 9 presentations at 2015 Moscow Regional Conference. Among them, 1 session with 3 papers were the joint session with the Commission on Mediterranean Basin. The titles of each session are as follows:

- Globalization and rural sustainability
- Strategies to create Health, Wealth and Happiness in the Rural Areas



The joint session with the Commission on Mediterranean Basin on Strategies to create Health, Wealth and Happiness in the Rural Areas

FUTURE EVENTS

24th Annual Colloquium Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems *University of Liege, Belgium, 17th July-22nd July 2016*

The 24th Colloquium of the Commission will be organized by Prof. Serge Schmitz and Dr. Charline Dubois, University of Liege, Prof. Nicolas Dendoncker, University of Namur and Prof. Veerle Vaneetvelde, University of Ghent (with the help of Prof Mary Cawley, National University of Ireland Galway and Prof Margherita Ciervo, University of Foggia), from the 17th July to the 22nd July 2016, with the title "*Sustainability of Rural Systems: Balancing heritage and Innovation*". The thematic sessions will tackle the following themes:

1. New technologies and the new rural way of live;
2. Agronomic innovations and their social and environmental impacts;
3. From ecosystem services to agroservices;
4. Energy issue in rural areas;
5. Multifunctional forest and countryside;
6. Tourism and recreation

The fieldwork will deal with these themes and includes one-day discussions at the Libramont agricultural, forestry and agri-food fair that welcome each year more than 200,000 visitors.

33rd International Geographical Congress in Beijing,

21 – 25 August 2016

Three sessions of the Commission were accepted for the 2016 Beijing IGC:

1. Globalization and Rural Sustainability, 2. Environment Change and Migration in the Rural-Urban Interactions, 3. Land Use and Rural Sustainability

The first session was proposed by the commission and the other two sessions were proposed by the Chinese colleagues, then merged as the commission's sessions, which was a result of re-organizing the sessions by the local organizer of 2016 Beijing IGC.

1) Globalization and Rural Sustainability

Globalization entered in our lives and even if the local economy is trying to catch up, it will keep influencing our societies and our personal decisions for the better and for the worst. There is a Global Change going on, which influences agricultural and food systems as well as a way of life in rural areas and in coming years, under a wave of new technologies, volumes of production may increase with far less labor input, which may well force people to migrate internally and abroad.

What agricultural futures and rural spaces are to be expected and how will the coming spatial organization of production and consumption find solutions that may contribute for the sustainability of rural areas are the challenges that we launch to the participants in the panel on globalization and rural sustainability.

2) Environment Change and Migration in the Rural-Urban Interactions

3) Land Use and Rural Sustainability

3. NETWORKING

a) Collaboration with Other IGU Commissions

- Organizing three joint sessions with the Commission on Marginalization, Globalization and Regional and Local Responses at 2013 Kyoto Regional Conference
- Organizing one joint session with the Commission on Gender at Krakow Regional Conference, in 2014
- Organizing one joint session with the Commission on the Mediterranean Basins at Moscow Regional Conference, in 2015.
- Organizing two joint sessions with the Chinese colleagues at Beijing IGC in 2016.

b) Collaboration with IGU-CSRS Members of the Steering Commission

- Irit Amit Cohen (February – May, 2012) Stage at Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Faculty of Human and Social Sciences. Collaboration in the Ph. D. Course: Geography and Territorial Planning (March, 2012) with a Seminar on “Values and sites, attitudes for development – the status of cultural built heritage in the Kibbutz”, Bar Ilan University, Tel-Aviv, Israel.
- Roy Jones (September 2013-August 2014) Visiting Professorship (0.2) at the Department of History, University of Gloucestershire; collaborative research on rural change. Roy Jones and Chris Bryant are coediting a collection of papers on action research for rural and regional development for "Geographical Research: Journal of the Institute of Australian Geographers". This will include work by IGU-SRS members Holly Barcus, Valeria Paul Carril and Serge Schmitz as well as Christopher Bryant.
- Lucka Lorber; Erasmus+ contract between the University Nova de Lisboa and the University of Maribor, Slovenia.
- Mary Cawley; Collaboration with Chairs of the Commission to make published Proceedings of 2011 Annual Colloquium at NUI Galway available on-line, on CSRS web site. Member of PhD Jury for student of Professor Serge Schmitz, University of Liège, Belgium, 2 July 2014. Conférencière Ordinaire, Faculty of Science, University of Liège, Belgium, April 2013

c) Collaboration with Other International, Intergovernmental and Multidisciplinary Groups

Commission members as individuals or groups have participated in collaboration with the following research, planning and extension institutions:

Mary **Cawley**:

- Consulted on preparation of rural tourism section for the Report of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (Ireland), 2013-2014;
- Cooperation with French Commission de Géographie Rurale, as member of Scientific Committee of International Rural Geography Conference, Nantes, 2-6 June 2014;
- Cooperation with University of Aveiro, Portugal, as member of Scientific Committee of International Rural Tourism Conference, Aveiro, 3-5 September 2013.
- Invited paper, 'Government and governance in rural development in Ireland', German Rural Geographers Working Group, Annual Conference, Oldenburg (13-15 November 2014).
- Organisation and leading of fieldtrip for students, Department of Geography, University of Nantes, France (Galway, 1 June 2015)
- Lecture on 'Rural governance and development in Ireland' to colleagues and students, Department of Geography, University of Hildesheim, Germany (National University of Ireland Galway, 25 June 2015)
- Speaker at International Comparative Rural Policy Studies Summer Institute School (National University of Ireland Galway, 29 June 2015)
Joint coordinator, Population and Migration Research Cluster, Whitaker Institute for Innovation and Societal Change, National University of Ireland Galway (ongoing)

Ana **Firmino**:

- Representing the CSRS in different international meetings:
- Member of Petrarca Academy (Europäische Akademie für Landschaftskultur)

- Participation in the International Colloquium „Villes-Campagnes en relations: regards croisés Nords-Suds (9-11 June, 2015) Paris, with the paper: “L’Essor des AMAP’s au Portugal: le cas des paniers dans la municipalité de Loures”
- Participation in the International Project Conference “Enraiz’arte”, with the paper: “LOURES: Territorial Dynamics into Transition? », 12th June, Loures, Portugal
- Participation in the International project “Peri-Urban: Peri-urban areas facing sustainability challenges: scenario development in the Metropolitan Area of Lisbon” as stakeholder
- Participation in the 7th International Sustainable Food Planning Conference “Localizing urban food strategies, farming cities and performing rurality”, Torino, 7 – 8 October 2015, with the paper: Learning and Tips for more Sustainable Urban Allotments in Portugal
- “Conference at University of Bamberg, November 2015:” Regionale Entwicklung und Biolandbau in Portugal “
- Oldenburg, Germany, at the Meeting of the German Association of Rural Areas (ArbeitsKreis Ländlicher Raum) during the International Workshop: “Europäische Peripherien zwischen Stagnation und Aufbruch”, Jahrestagung des Arbeitskreises Ländlicher Raum in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Geographie (DGfG), November 2014
- Nantes, France, introductory speech at the International Conference of Rural Geography “The Countryside: spaces of innovation in an urban world” and member of the scientific committee, June, 2014
- Establishing students and staff members Exchange in the frame of the Erasmus + Program (Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal; University of Maribor, Slovenia; University of Istanbul, Turkey). After 2016 the Erasmus+ exchange will be extended to the five continents, what offers the possibility to establish new contracts with Universities in Australia, Japan, Israel and the United States, only to mention a few countries where we have potential candidates. This will make it possible to give more visibility to the CSRS research at the University level, multiplying the exchanges among its members and respective students.
- Organisation of the Erasmus Intensive Program in Portugal, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, with the participation of 5 foreign universities: Bamberg, Germany; Paris-Ouest, France; Angers, France; Timisoara, Romania; Castellón de la Plana, Spain (30.6. – 14.07.2014);

- Organisation of the European Week of Landscape, April 2014, together with ASTA (Socio-Therapeutic Association of Almeida, Portugal) and Petrarca (European Academy for the Culture of Landscape);
- Participation in bilateral, multidisciplinary projects of the research in OECD “Rural-Urban Partnerships: an integrated approach to economic development”, financed by OCDE and the European Union (coordinator of the Portuguese case-study in Castelo Branco). Presentation of the Portuguese case-study in Bologna, Italy, in October 2013;
- Participation at Eugeo Conference, Università de la Sapienza, Rome, Italy, as co-chair of the IGU-CSRS, in the coordination of Pannel “Agriculture Policy role and value in a changing world. Food-Agriculture-Environment as key factors in order to get through the current global economic crisis, together with Prof. Gemma Grillotti, in September 2013;

Doo-Chul **KIM**:

- Participation and organizing “Korea-China-Japan Joint Conference on Geography” since 2008.
- Coordinator of bilateral project between Okayama University, Japan and Hue University, Vietnam concerning sustainability of rural and environmental system.
- Participation and organizing Korean Rural Geography Association.
- Cooperation with SEAGA (Southeast Asian Geography Association).

Lučka **Lorber**:

- Coordinator of bilateral project between Slovenia and United States of Amerika: “ The Impact of New Development Paradigm of Agricultural Policy on Rural Development; Case Studies from Slovenia (EU) and Kansas (USA)”, University of Maribor (Lučka Lorber) and State University of Kansas (Lisa Mathis Butler Harrington).
- Functional, social and environmental changes in rural area of Slovenia: 2 hours of guest lectures within bilateral project US - SLO 2015-16, Kansas State University, College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Geography, Manhattan, Kansas, 7-20 September 2015.
- University, innovative ecosystem, regional development: 3 hours of lectures at the 6th International Georegnet Summer School, University of Novi Sad, Faculty of

Science, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Novi Sad, 16. 8.-28. 8. 2015.

University research and development strategy as a mechanism for regional development in Slovenia. V: EUGEO Budapest 2015. *Congress, Programme and abstracts*. Budapest: Hungarian Geographical Society, cop. 2015, str. 129. [http://eugeo2015.com/images/downloads/programme and abstracts eugeo2015 .pdf](http://eugeo2015.com/images/downloads/programme_and_abstracts_eugeo2015.pdf)

Holly **Barcus**:

- Mapping the Western Minnehaha Creek Watershed: A Partnership with The Freshwater Society. 2014. Collaborative research by students in GIS and Community Partnerships in cooperation with The Freshwater Society. <http://www.macalester.edu/academics/geography/civicengagement/>

Serge **Schmitz**:

- Participation and organizing of the conference “Contemporary development of European rural development”, Zadar (Croatia), in September 2014
- Organisation of the conference 2015 of the French commission of rural geography “Nature des villes, Nature des champs”
- Member of the Core group of the COST Action TU 1401 “Renewable Energy and Landscape Quality”, 2014-2018. Participation in conferences and international workshop
- Cooperation with the Department of geography of the University of the Philippines (Diliman), 2014-2018.

Tony **Sorenson**:

- Organisation of the Institute of Australian Geographers Conference, Perth, July 2013
- Research on World Heritage designations in remote Western Australia for the state Department of Environment and Conservation and Tourism Western Australia
- Non Member Director of the Wadjuk Boodja Gateway Aboriginal Corporation

Roy **Jones**:

- Organisation of the Institute of Australian Geographers Conference, Perth, July 2013
- Research on World Heritage designations in remote Western Australia for the state Department of Environment and Conservation and Tourism Western Australia
- Non Member Director of the Wadjuk Boodja Gateway Aboriginal Corporation
- Visiting Professorship, the Department of Planning and Geography, University of Gloucestershire; collaborative research on rural change.

Frans **Thissen**:

- Marija MARTINOVIĆ, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Geography, Studentski trg 3/3, Belgrade, Serbia, visited the University of Amsterdam on the 17th of September as a result of an invitation during the IGU Conference in Krakow. Prof. Thissen assists her with an article that she is preparing.

4. PUBLICATIONS

Most of the publications have been collections of papers presented at the annual colloquium. The edited books are organized around the themes of each colloquium and usually published six to twelve months after the event. Consequently, the publications are not mere proceedings. Individual authors are encouraged to take into account comments made at the time of their presentations as well as to mature their ideas according to general themes of the colloquium. All the publications use a process of peer review. The followings are just a part of articles published by the Commission members.

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Commission web site: <http://www.okayama-u.ac.jp/user/igu-csrs>

5. Archival Contributions

See the commission's WEBSITE archiving publications since 1992:

<http://www.okayama-u.ac.jp/user/igu-csrs>

and “Sustainability of Rural Systems - International Geographical Union” FACEBOOK Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/ruralgeography>

In preparation the availability at the IGU site of all the IGU-CSRS publications since 1992.

6. Continuation

a) The name of the Commission: **The Sustainability of Rural Systems**

b) A concise (100-200 words) statement of the mission of the Commission

The overall mission of the Commission is the development and application of an internationally comparable research program on the sustainability of rural systems in various regions of the world.

The Commission's specific objectives are to:

- further develop the concept of sustainability as applied to 'rural systems'
- communicate the concept of 'rural system' to include agriculture, communities, housing, industrial and service employment, recreation and tourism, as well as extractive activities and renewable energy production
- communicate the importance of understanding a wide range of 'driving' processes that affect the sustainability of rural systems, including natural environment, political, cultural, social and economic processes
- foster research that incorporates the notion of the inter-relatedness of structures and processes in rural systems, through a variety of linked spatial scales - international, national, regional, local and individual
- communicate the results of the research by members of the Commission to various professional and political arenas in order to influence policy in an effective and appropriate manner.

c) A list of the individuals who will comprise the steering committee from 2016-2020

- Commission Chairs (2016-2020)

Name	Mail Address	Telephone Fax	E-mail
Serge, Schmitz (Belgium)	Institut de geographie, University of Liege Allee du 6 aout, 2-B 4000, Liege Belgium	+3243665629 +3243665770	S.Schmitz@ulg.ac.be
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- Steering Committee Members (2016-2020)

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Jones, Roy (Australia)	Department of Urban and Regional Planning Curtin University GPO Box U1987 Perth, WA 6845 Australia	R.Jones@curtin.edu.au
Thissen, Frans (Netherlands)	Department of Geography, Planning and International Development Studies University of Amsterdam Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, 1018 WV Amsterdam (visiting address); Postbus 15629, 1001 NC Amsterdam (postal address)	J.F.C.M.Thissen@uva.nl

d) A summary of the work plan for the Commission for the 2016-2020 period

In the next five years, 2016-2020, it is the intention of the Commission to continue to develop its' objectives. Specifically, through annual meetings of the Commission we will work towards developing the concept of sustainability and its application to 'rural systems' taking care to include the multiple dimensions of sustainable environments to

include agriculture, communities, housing, industrial and service employment, recreation and tourism, as well as extractive activities, forestry, and renewable energy production.

Our work plan has two primary components:

1) To continue our collaborative work through our annual meetings, fieldwork, and sessions during the main IGU conference. We will continue to enhance communication of our work and objectives through these conferences, engagement with young scholars, our Facebook page and animation of our website.

2) Promotion of research which seeks to identify the 'driving' processes and policies that affect sustainability of rural systems at various scales of inquiry, from individual to national and global. During our final year we intend to publish a book, an edited volume, which addresses the concepts of "living in the countryside today". During each of our annual Commission meetings we will develop themes related to this concept.

a. Promotion of research through our online social media and annual conferences.

b. Publication of member research in special issues of peer review journals as well as highlights on our Facebook and webpages.

7. Grants

The grants corresponding to 2014 and 2015 (1 500 Euros) were intended to pay fee and accommodation to two young African researchers during the 23rd Colloquium of CSRS in Portugal. Manuel Tabiou, from Togo, and Sara Makhoul, from Algeria, were the candidates selected.

Only Manuel Tabiou benefited of the grant to young African researchers, since the representative from Algeria did not get the visa to enter in Portugal (unfortunately it was not possible to get back the cost of her accommodation in Lisbon). Thus it was given the opportunity to an unemployed Ph. D. student, Cláudia Brites, to participate one day in order to present her paper. Her inscription costed 50 Euros. The remaining 853 Euros will be used next year.