

***International Geographical Union***  
**Minutes of the IGU Executive Committee Meeting**  
Zoom EC Meeting  
Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2021, IGC Istanbul, Turkey

## **Welcome, Apologies and Meeting Logistics**

The online meeting was chaired by President Michael Meadows, who welcomed EC members, Past-President Yukio Himiyama, First Vice-President Iain Hay, Vice-Presidents Elena Dell' Agnese, Nathalie Lemarchand, Barbaros Gönençgil, Ruben Lois-González, and Holly Barcus, along with Assistant Secretary-General Pankaj Kumar. Apologies were received from Vice-Presidents Céline Rozenblat and Bojie Fu. The Executive Committee meeting commenced at 10h00 GMT on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2021.

## ***In memoriam: Professor RB Singh***

The EC members stood for a minute silence in remembrance of the late Prof RB Singh, Secretary General and Treasurer, IGU, who passed away on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021, followed by the screening of a tribute video.

## **Adoption of the Schedule and Agenda**

The agenda was duly adopted.

## **Minutes**

Minutes of the IGU Executive Committee Meeting, held online on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2021, previously circulated and corrected via email, were approved.

## **Organization**

### **4.01 IGU Secretary-General and Treasurer**

Meadows solicited the views of EC members regarding the filling of the now vacant IGU Secretary General and Treasurer position. It was suggested that an interim appointment can be made pending a call for nominations and elections in 2022. Meadows briefly highlighted day to day engagement and commitments related to the responsibilities of the Secretary-General responsibility and emphasized the importance of regular communication with the IGU community. After further discussion, it was agreed that Gönençgil would take over the position in an interim capacity until the Extraordinary Geographical Congress in Paris in 2022. A formal appointment of Secretary-General for the period 2022-2026 will be made following an e-ballot prior to the Congress. The IGU EC retains the services of Assistant Secretary-General, Dr Pankaj Kumar until the Paris Congress. Upon Himiyama's suggestion, it was decided to make an announcement of these decisions at the closing ceremony of 34<sup>th</sup> IGC Istanbul, 202, as well as by email after the congress.

### **4.02 General Assembly report-back (including IGU finances)**

Meadows briefly reflected on the online General Assembly that had been held during the Istanbul virtual IGU Congress. In all, 40 countries participated in the meeting, 32 countries on the first day and

a further eight on the second day. The sessions in general proceeded well. The finance committee (Professors Amaël Cattarazza, France and Jun Yamasita, Japan), appointed before the Congress, had carefully scrutinized the various financial reports and supporting documentation provided by Meadows in his capacity as acting Treasurer and presented their report. Discussion ensued regarding the IGU financial situation, which remains robust, and how any surplus funding could be utilized productively without threatening sustainability. Gönençgil tabled a proposal to establish a new project support programme, the purpose of which would be to provide co-financing for projects aligned with IGU goals and objectives. While there is in principle support for such an idea, it was pointed out that there are substantial logistical challenges and further discussion is needed to explore the possibility in more detail. Others suggested a possible increase in the annual grant to IGU Commissions and Task Forces, specifically with the goal of promoting the participation of female and early career geographers from the global south in IGU events. The matter is to be tabled at the next EC meeting.

#### **4.03 EC meeting schedule 2021-22**

A face-to-face EC meeting for those able to attend is scheduled for the period 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 in Rome, Italy. The first EC meeting of 2022 is scheduled tentatively for late March-April, 2022 in Paris, France.

### **Operations**

#### **5.01 IGU National Membership update**

No new national member applications are pending for approval. Lois-González is hopeful of receiving proposals from Angola and Mozambique. Meadows has been in communication with representatives of the University of Queensland (Haiti) with a view to possible membership from Haiti.

#### **5.02 IGU Commission and Task Force update**

Gönençgil noted that Commission on Climatology has a new chair, as Professor Jun Matsumoto is stepping aside and his place is taken by Professor Agnieszka Wypych of the Jagellonian University, Poland. Professor Wypych has excellent experience as a long-standing Steering Committee member in the commission. A proposal to establish a new IGU commission on 'Informality, Social Change and Development', put forward by Professor Xue Desheng Xue, Sun-Yat Sen University, China was tabled. Following discussion, the EC approved the proposal. Meadows noted the need for previous winners of the IGU Commission Excellence Award, viz. Geography of Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change' and the Urban Commission: Re-Thinking Cities and the Urban: from the Global to the Local to deliver lectures at the Centennial Congress, Paris, France in 2022, along with the 2021 winner (Geography of Governance). The Commission on Biogeography and Biodiversity delivered their lecture at the virtual IGC Istanbul.

#### **5.03 Honors and Awards Committee**

Himiyama tabled revised draft guidelines for IGU awards, viz. Lauréat d'honneur, Planet and Humanity Medal, Early Career Award in Geography and Award for Distinguished Geographical Practice. The IGU Honors and Awards Committee remains responsible for receiving and evaluating nominations based on approved guidelines. The revisions were approved and the EC requested Himiyama to be its liaison with the IGU Honors and Award committee. Lemarchand agreed to translate the guidelines into French, following which they are to be circulated with the call for nominations for the 2022 awards to be presented in Paris.

#### **5.04 IGU website/social media**

Meadows noted that the IGU website is mostly operating satisfactorily although requires regular

assistance from website hosts in India and technical support from the technician in South Africa. News items are added, usually two or three times a month. Since transfer of the main IGU site to India, the IGU Facebook page has lost the auto-update facility; Meadows agreed to arrange for this to be reinstated. Hay manages the IGU LinkedIn social media platform which now attracts regular traffic. Meadows suggested an approach to Dr Dhritiraj Sengupta, steering committee member of the Commission on Coastal Systems, to take over managing the IGU Twitter and Facebook accounts to ensure that they are updated more regularly. Meadows agreed to take on the urgent task of updating the EC details page and the IGU Secretariat address to reflect the temporary arrangements.

#### **5.05 IGU Bulletin**

Meadows expressed the hope that IGU Bulletin volumes 67-68, 2017-2018 and volume 69-70, 2019-2020 would be printed in Istanbul and be available for distribution at the Paris General Assembly in July 2022. The e-version of volume 67-68, 2017-2018 is already available on the website. Work needs to commence on volume 69-70 (Meadows, Gönençgil, Kumar).

#### **5.06 IGU e-Newsletter**

The next IGU e-Newsletter will be collated by Rozenblat and published in October 2021.

#### **5.07 IGU Journals project**

Fu mentioned that his team has completed an update of the IGU journal list and added 18 new journals from 18 countries with a view to further additions in the coming months. Meadows expressed his thanks to those who have worked on this.

#### **5.08 IGU Publications**

Hay, as co-editor of Edward Elgar's IGU Series on Contemporary Geographies, noted that 'Geography of Cosmopolitanism' is now published and that the next in the series is entitled 'Geography of Misinformation' scheduled for publication early in 2022. Himiyama mentioned that he has been in communication with Springer about the series 'Advances in Geographical and Environmental Sciences' and has been invited to take over editorial responsibility for this in place of the late Professor RB Singh together with an Indian colleague. Jerzy Banski is co-editing with Meadows a Springer volume on the state of the discipline entitled 'Research Issues and Achievements of Modern Geography' which, on publication, will be dedicated to the late Professor RB Singh.

### **IGU Conferences and Congresses**

#### **6.01 IGC Istanbul 2021**

Gönençgil presented a brief report on the 34<sup>th</sup> International Geographical Congress, currently being held virtually and thanked Vice-Presidents Lemarchand and Lois-Gonzalez for making the time to travel to Istanbul to lend their assistance where appropriate. In total, approximately 600 presentations have been received from 75 countries, 50 from China, 43 from India and 41 from Japan, along with 92 poster presentations and seven keynote lectures. Both the opening and closing ceremonies of the Congress are public events with simultaneous broadcast on a dedicated *YouTube* channel. The local organising committee has received numerous positive messages from delegates, in particular relating to the efficiency with which any technical issues were dealt with. The Congress abstract volume is printed and has an ISBN number. Meadows and Hay thanked Gönençgil and his team, including the Dekon conference organizers, for successfully organising the virtual IGC Istanbul 2021.

### **6.02 Extraordinary Geographical Congress, Paris, France, 2022**

Lemarchand presented a brief report on the Centennial Congress, Paris 2022 and noted the decision to extend the session proposal deadline to 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2021. The announcement of accepted sessions is expected by October 15<sup>th</sup> 2021. To date, 43 sessions have been proposed, 32 from IGU Commissions and Task Forces and 10 thematic sessions, mostly in English with some in French and Spanish. Registration for the Congress will open in September and the closing date for abstract submission is set as January 7<sup>th</sup> 2022. Accepted papers can be presented in English, French or Spanish, or a combination. Aside from meeting rooms within the Sorbonne, rooms at both the French National Library and the French Geographical Society have been secured to facilitate parallel sessions. Keynote speakers will be identified and contacted in January. Meadows noted that willingness of the Royal Geographical Society to provide materials for the exhibition. A representative of the International Science Council (ISC) Governing Board will be present at the opening ceremony.

### **6.03 International Geographical Congress, Dublin, Ireland, 2024**

Dublin International Geographical Congress 2024 is presenting a progress report in the closing ceremony of IGC Istanbul scheduled on August 20<sup>th</sup> 2021.

### **6.04 IGU Regional Conference 2026**

There are currently two proposals to host this event; the matter is to be discussed at the next EC meeting.

### **6.05 Melbourne International Geographical Congress 2028**

No business to report at this stage

## **Cooperation and Outreach**

### **7.01 International Science Council**

Himiyama and Meadows had recently attended an online briefing meeting organised to solicit opinions on the proposed ISC draft action plan. The draft plan pays more attention to education compared to previous versions and places emphasis on major global issues such as the UN SDGs, although the Future Earth and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) initiatives are not prominent. Himiyama is of the view that the ISC must mobilise global academic communities to support Future Earth more. Meadows, Himiyama and Gönençgil will all represent IGU at the ISC General Assembly scheduled for October 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> 2021. ISC news and announcements are circulated regularly to the IGU community as appropriate. IGU has actively participated in nominating individuals and organizations for various ISC positions, including the Governing Board, as well as for the *BBC StoryWorks* initiative and for several of the ISC awards to be presented at the upcoming virtual General Assembly. On behalf of the IGU, Meadows reported that he had voted in approval of the latest ISC Financial Report. The ISC had not submitted a nomination for the UNESCO-JAPAN prize despite encouragement to do so. Nominations are currently being sought for membership of the advisory board of the UN Decade of the Oceans and for the ISC GeoUnions Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Kumar agreed to be IGU delegate to CODATA. Nomination for the Tyler Prize are also open and EC members were requested to consider possible nominees. It was noted with pleasure that the ISC was represented by Governing Board Member Professor Geoffrey Boulton at the virtual opening ceremony at IGC Istanbul 2021.

### **7.02 GeoUnions**

Himiyama attended the UN-GGIM Geospatial Societies General Assembly meeting held recently and noted that the next chair of this body should be from the IGU and that we should prepare to take

responsibility. Himiyama, Gönençgil and Meadows remain IGU liaison with both the Geospatial Societies and GeoUnions.

### **7.03 CIPSH**

CIPSH recently successfully organized the European Humanities Conference, in which Himiyama had participated and he noted that there is concern about the current state of humanities, particularly in Europe. CIPSH wishes to contribute more to SDGs and to sustainability more broadly. The in-person CIPSH General Assembly is scheduled for December 2021 at Odense, Denmark. It was agreed that IGU attendance is important and the Meadows will identify a suitable IGU delegate.

### **7.04 EGAL/UGAL**

Lois Gonzàlez reported that the next EGAL conference is being held in Córdoba, Argentina at the beginning of December in the form of a virtual congress. In collaboration with Marco Mitidiero and Joselí M<sup>a</sup>. Silva from Brazil, and Fernanda López from Ecuador, both representing their respective IGU National Committees, a session on new perspectives of geographic thinking from the South is proposed. In addition, in October 2021, Lois Gonzàlez reported that he will represent UGI in the virtual meeting of ANPEGE, the postgraduate geography organization in Brazil, with more than 4000 participants. The first meeting of the IGU Committee on Latin America and the Caribbean will be held in Colombia November 2022.

### **7.05 RGS/RSGS**

Meadows reported that, following an approach by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society and the Royal Geographical Society, IGU co-hosted a virtual gathering of international geographical societies and associations to propose actions relating to the upcoming COP26 meeting in Glasgow, UK, in November 2021. The outcome of the event, which had been attended by representatives of more than 30 national geographical organizations, was the drafting of a joint statement on the climate and biodiversity emergencies. Supported by signatories representing the global community of geographers, the declaration would be released ahead of the Glasgow event. It is hoped that this initiative will highlight the potential of the discipline of geography and its practitioners to contribute to efforts to address major global human-environment issues.

### **7.06 Festival International de Géographie (FIG)**

This year, the guest region is 'Europe'. Lemarchand reported that she is, as has been the case for the last five years, participating in a roundtable event co-hosted by CNFG, which this year is entitled "From secondary school to university: which European geography(s)?". Additionally, the Association of Secondary School History and Geography Teachers (APHG) and the National Federation of Geography Students (AFNEG) are participating in the event this year, with the aim of examining the place of Europe not only in geography teaching programmes but also in relation to research and will consider such questions as what collaborations do European geographers build? What encounters and common topics are there for European geography students? What is the situation for European geography (ies) post-Brexit?

### **7.08 Other organizations**

Himiyama reported briefly on the relationship between Trust for Sustainable Living (TSL) and Future Earth which appears to be a very constructive collaboration. IGU enjoys good contacts with both bodies.

### **Other Business**

No other business was tabled.

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 15h 00 GMT on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2021.