Welcome, Apologies and Meeting Logistics
The hybrid meeting was chaired by Interim Secretary-General Barbaros Gönençgil, who welcomed EC members, Vice-Presidents Elena Dell’Agnese, Nathalie Lemarchand, Ruben Lois-González and Assistant Secretary-General Pankaj Kumar to join the meeting in person. Barbaros Gönençgil also welcomed President Mike Meadows, Past-President Yukio Himiyama, Vice President Holly Barcus, Céline Rozenblat and Bojie Fu to join EC meeting in online mode. Apologies were received from First Vice-President Iain Hay. Barbaros Gönençgil wholeheartedly thanked Vice President Elena Dell’Agnese for facilitating the EC meeting in hybrid mode and for logistics arrangements in Rome, Italy. The Executive Committee meeting commenced at 10h00 GMT on Tuesday, 7th December, 2021.

Adoption of the Schedule and Agenda
The agenda was duly adopted.

Minutes
Minutes of the IGU Executive Committee Meeting, held online on Thursday, 19th August, 2021, IGC Istanbul, Turkey, previously circulated and corrected via email, were approved.

Organization

4.01 IGU EC Members and SG Elections
Gönençgil opened discussion mentioning that EC members’ elections are due at the IGC Paris general assembly. Elections for Secretary General and four Vice President positions must be conducted at the IGC Paris General Assembly. It was suggested that the election be conducted through an e-ballot considering the pandemic situation and that is difficult at this stage to predict how many voting member countries may be able to send representatives to attend the in-person General Assembly. It was decided to call for nominations by 15th December with a closing date of 15th March 2022. A reminder email is to be sent in February 2022. Meadows agreed to approach two former Vice-Presidents with a view to acting as tellers for this election.

4.02 Financial Report
Barcus reported briefly on the status of the IGU funds held at Macalester College and noted that, in total, 42 countries paid their national dues for 2021 although several that regularly pay are still pending. A further reminder will be emailed. Due to the pending Executive Committee elections, an accurate record of IGU dues paid is especially important now. There was discussion as to what constitutes ‘good standing’ in relation to the IGU Statutes and Meadows suggested that a degree of flexibility is necessary in this regard. Gönençgil and Kumar agreed to compile the list of national members in good standing ahead of the call for nominations. Meadows noted that the IGU Cape Town account remains active and, because it has a debit card and online banking facilities, it is especially convenient for processing ad hoc payments and should be maintained for this purpose. The IGU account at Macalester deals primarily with National Membership dues and annual operating grant
payments for IGU Commissions and Task Forces, along with membership dues for ISC and CIPS. Meadows noted that the contribution to IYBSSD (International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development) has been paid from the IGU Cape Town account.

4.03 EC meeting schedule 2021-22
Gönençgil noted that two EC meetings are scheduled for Paris in 2022, with a face-to-face meeting from 11th to 13th April 2022 and a second ahead of the Extraordinary Geographical Congress in July. The possibility of scheduling a further EC meeting in Spain in November was discussed but no final decision taken.

Operations

5.01 IGU National Membership update
Gönençgil tabled the full membership application for the United Arab Emirates, UAE, proposed by the Emirates Geographical Society of UAE. The application meets all the guidelines but must be formally approved by the General Assembly. Gönençgil agreed to administer an e-ballot before the end of the year with a closing date for voting of mid-January. Meadows noted the need for the EC to scrutinize and review national membership details regularly and further suggested that Kumar take over the liaison with countries and Commission and Task Force for which the late Prof. Singh was responsible.

5.02 IGU Commission and Task Force update
Gönençgil notes that IGU Commission and Task Force information is regularly updated on the website. The EC agreed to send season's greeting emails to their respective liaison Chairs and that the communication should include information related to nominations for IGU Honors and Awards, plus submission deadlines for registration, abstracts and travel grant applications in relation to the Paris Congress.

5.03 New Commission Submission
Gönençgil tabled a proposal for new IGU Commission, “Urban Transformation and the New Urban Agenda in Southeast Asia” from Prof. Frauke Krass, University of Cologne, for EC consideration. It was noted, however, that the proposal is incomplete and that further information needs to be provided. Concern was expressed about overlap with the existing Urban Commission and the regional focus on Southeast Asia. Gönençgil, with assistance from Meadows, agreed to respond to the proposer noting these concerns and suggestions.

5.04 Honors and Awards Committee
Himiyama reported that the upcoming deadline for nominating candidates for IGU Honors and Awards 2022 (31 December 2021). Further increasing the number of nominees is desirable and reminder emails would need to be sent (Gönençgil). Meadows showcased the printed and framed commendations which are being forwarded to recipients of the 2021 awards via courier.

5.05 IGU Bulletin
It was noted that the most recently produced issue of the IGU Bulletin was not yet available in print form, although the pdf file is posted on the website. Following discussion, it was agreed to print a limited number of copies (25) for the archives and selected libraries. Gönençgil reminded the meeting that an ISBN code is mandatory for printing and this must be established for the Bulletin. It is hoped that the next issue would be ready in time for the Paris Congress.

5.06 IGU e-Newsletter
As editor of the e-newsletter, Rozenblat will produce the next issue at the end of January, 2022.
5.07 IGU Publications/Springer AGES
Meadows reported that Prof. Subhash Anand, Vice-Chair of the IGU Commission on Geoheritage, and Professor in the Department of Geography, University of Delhi, has made a formal offer to take over as co-editor of the Springer Series 'Advances in Geographical and Environmental Sciences' with Himiyama. The EC approves of this appointment and Springer is aware of the change.

IGU Conferences and Congresses

6.01 IGC Istanbul 2021
Gönençgil presented a detailed report on the Istanbul Congress, the 34th IGC, which was held in online format for the first time ever. In total, 628 presentations were received from registered participants, of which 555 were oral and 83 were poster presentations. Presenters from 77 countries participated, notably from Japan, China, India, Spain and Russia. Seven keynote speakers delivered addresses that covered the range of geographical topics. The Geographical Olympiad was organized immediately prior to the Congress, also in virtual mode for the first time, with 190 registrants from 46 different countries. In general, the programme proceeded smoothly, with the exception of occasional technical glitches. The organizers received a number of highly supportive messages from participants. Gönençgil thanked the Spanish IGU community for preparing and sharing a book published to commemorate the IGC Istanbul. Several commissions have subsequently submitted formal reports on the Congress. The Istanbul local organizing committee has prepared abstract volumes with ISBN numbers and published these on the Congress website. Digital recordings of all presentations are also available on the website which will remain available. Some 75 young and early career geographers were awarded IGU travel grants in the form of free registration. Meadows thanked Gönençgil for hosting a highly successful congress amid adverse conditions and suggested that the report be made available for wider circulation. Lemarchand noted that there was much to learn from the experience of hosting the Istanbul Congress and suggested that a framework of guidelines be made available for future virtual congresses, including regional and thematic conferences via the website and IGU Bulletin.

6.02 Extraordinary Geographical Congress, Paris, France, 2022
Lemarchand presented a situation report on the Centennial Congress, Paris 2022. The new Covid variant (Omicron) has precipitated revision of public health rules in France regarding vaccination, required documents, more frequent re-testing, and the health pass requirements which will apply until 31st July 2022. The main congress will take place at La Sorbonne, Société de Géographie, Institut de Géographie and in the French National Library. The local organizing team comprises 20 people in divisions such as scientific, logistical, sponsorship, communication, events etc. The budget remains a challenge because sponsorship is proving difficult to obtain and commercial activities are restricted due to regulations imposed by the Sorbonne. Various modes of communication such as IGU website, IGU e-newsletters, Congress’s newsletters, Geotamtam and social networks like LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook are all in use to distribute information regarding deadlines etc. Details of Congress sites for the opening and closing ceremonies were presented, along with information about the 30 parallel rooms for the scientific sessions, business meetings and the General Assembly. There are 280 sessions approved with accepted presented in English, French or Spanish, or a combination. IGU Commission sessions total 196 and thematic sessions total 84.

Meadows thanked Lemarchand for the ongoing dedication and hard work that is surely going to ensure the success of the IGU centennial congress. It was noted that an extension to the deadline for abstract submission may be necessary. There was considerable discussion about the possible impact
of travel requirements and restrictions as a result of the pandemic and the associated importance of providing information and links to appropriate websites on the Congress home page. Meadows suggested that the organizers consider the Société de Géographie building as a suitable venue for the closing ceremony. A final decision regarding the format of iGeo 2022 was expected soon in consultation with the IGU Olympiad Task Force. The availability of travel grants has been announced and Barcus has agreed to convene a sub-committee to select the awardees. Meadows noted that communication and invitations should be circulated to all IGU sister organizations, including the GeoUnions, CIPSH, etc. Messages of support for the centennial congress can be requested from IGU sister unions and printed in the congress brochure.

6.03 International Geographical Congress, Dublin, Ireland, 2024
The IGC Dublin local organizing committee reports that it is carefully monitoring the pandemic situation and progress in regard to the Centennial Congress at Paris 2022 and remains committed to hosting a face-to-face Congress in 2024.

6.04 IGU Regional Conference 2026
The original call for proposals for the Regional Conference 2026 closed in July 2021. Two bids have been submitted, viz from Kazakhstan and one from Lima, Peru. Both have limitations and appear to be incomplete in terms of the required guidelines and it was agreed to reopen the call which will allow resubmission of the original two, as well additional bids. The proposals should be submitted by mid-March and, following approval by the EC, will be voted on by the General Assembly at the Paris Congress.

6.05 2022 Thematic Conferences
Thematic conference proposals have been received for Mahendragarh, India, (November 2022), for consideration along with previously submitted submissions for Milan, Italy (June-July 2023) and Osaka, Japan (March 2023). Lois-González noted that a further proposal is anticipated from Mexico for 2023. Following discussion in reference to the thematic conference guidelines, EC approved all three for 2022, as some flexibility in terms of frequency is justified given the ongoing pandemic situation that is constraining IGU activities.

Cooperation and Outreach

7.01 International Science Council (ISC) Election results
The IGU nominee for a position on the ISC Board, Professor Maria Paradiso, was successfully elected at the recent ISC General Assembly to 2024. Paradiso has pledged to work especially on sustainability and education initiatives within the ISC and is keen to establish better communication between ISC and IGU. Meadows reported that he has been invited and agreed to act as IGU liaison delegate to the ISC GeoUnions Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Himiyama noted that there are increasing opportunities for engagement with ISC in the form of online meetings etc. and agreed to identify key ISC announcements and ensure these are circulated and/or posted on the IGU website. Himiyama further noted the rapid evolution of Future Earth which hosted a successful Sustainability Research & Innovation Congress in 2021 (SRI2021) and appears to be paying more attention to education nowadays. Meadows agreed to ensure that important Future Earth news updates are appropriately distributed.

7.02 International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (CIPSH)
CIPSH is scheduled to hold its next General Assembly from 13th-14th December 2021 at Odense, Denmark, in hybrid mode. Former IGU Vice-President Droogleever-Fortuijn is attending online on behalf of the IGU and her report will be tabled at the next EC meeting.

7.03 ISC Commission on Data (CODATA)
Kumar attended the CODATA virtual General Assembly on 15th and 16th November, 2021. Main decisions included a revision of the national dues structure, approval of task groups and election of officers. Full details are available at: https://codata.org/events/general-assembly/general-assembly-2021/ Kumar will continue to communicate important news updates from CODATA to the IGU EC and broader IGU communities as appropriate.

7.04 UGAL/EGAL
Lois-Gonzáles reported on the successful outcome of the 18th Encuentro de Geografías de América Latina conference (XVIII EGAL), held online from 30th November to 4th December 2021 with 2500 participants and some 800 papers presented. An IGU session was co-organized by colleagues from Ecuador and Brazil. The IGU relationship with Latin American countries continues to improve and Brazilian geographers are preparing a volume in the IGU Springer series to be released in time for the Centennial Congress. The next EGAL will be held in the Dominican Republic in 2023 and represents an excellent opportunity for the IGU to further consolidate its footprint in the region. Meadows thanked Lois-Gonzáles for his outstanding efforts to establish good relations between the IGU and Latin American geographical communities.

7.05 RGS-IBG/RSGS
Meadows reported that the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers, in collaboration with the Open University in the UK has approached the IGU to support the development of a novel open access course entitled: 'Thinking geographically about global debates: learning from the ‘Global South’. The IGU community may be able to contribute to and benefit from this project.

7.06 Other organizations
The next EUGEO (Association of European Geographical Societies) conference will be held in Barcelona in 2023 and a EUGEO session is planned during the Centennial Congress in Paris.

The next Festival International de Géographie (FIG) is planned for 30th September to 2nd October 2022 with the theme ‘deserts’ and focus country Portugal.

The next issue of GeoNight will be celebrated on 1st April 2022; the IGU will promote the event as usual.

IGU is co-supporting the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development in 2022 (IYBSSD), an initiative of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics (IUPAP) and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). IYBSSD was proclaimed at the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly on 2nd December 2021. Himiyama remarked that the Science Council of Japan will soon prepare a press release for the establishment of a Task Force Committee for IYBSSD. Himiyama suggested establishing an IGU task force for IYBSSD.

UNESCO has formally approved 6th October each year as International Geodiversity Day. The IGU community, especially the Commission on Geoheritage, should remain engaged with this opportunity to highlight the importance of the diversity of earth's minerals, rocks, fossils, soils, sediments, landforms, topography, geological and morphogenetic processes, and hydrological features such as rivers and lakes. Further information is available at: https://www.geodiversityday.org/
Other Business
No other business was tabled.

Adjourn
Meadows thanked Gonençgil for chairing the EC meeting so efficiently and dell'Agnese for logistic support and hospitality for those present in person in Rome. The meeting adjourned at 12.30 pm Rome local time on Wednesday, 8th December, 2021.