



## **Welcome Note: Reinvigorating the IGU Commission in the first half of 2025**

In October 2024, the second four-year term of the then-Chair of the IGU Islands Commission, Prof. Huei Min Tsai, came to an end.

Accordingly, at the Commission's meeting held in October of the same year, a new Steering Committee was appointed, with new leadership: Prof. Anica Čuka as Chair and Dr. Annette Breckwoldt (Senior Scientist) as Vice-Chair; Prof. Mucahid M. Bayrak will kindly continue as the Commission's Executive Secretary.

As in previous years, the committee includes researchers from various branches of geography as well as experts from other disciplines, reflecting the importance of an interdisciplinary approach in the study of islands.

Members of the committee come from diverse geographic regions and countries, ensuring broad representation and perspective. The list of the new Steering Committee members as well as Advisory Board members is here:

<https://geogsoc.org.tw/IGU-Islands/committee/>

We take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to all past Chairs, Steering Committee members, and Advisory Board members for their contributions to the work of the Commission.

In the first six months of the new Steering Committee's mandate, we have strived to follow the good practices established by our predecessors, while also adhering to detailed guidelines provided by the IGU.

These guidelines relate to a wide range of activities, from fostering scientific collaboration to promoting the public understanding of geography.

We submitted the 2024 annual activity report and the plan for the upcoming four-year period to the IGU Presidency. Both the report and the plans were adopted at the IGU Assembly.

For the first time, the Commission has joined the international event Geonight. We are also participating in upcoming geographical conferences with specially proposed sessions dedicated to island research. In addition, we have updated our member list and website, and produced this first issue of the Commission's Newsletter.

Going forward, we will continue to keep our members informed about the Commission's ongoing and planned activities. In this Newsletter, you can learn more about what we have accomplished so far, as well as our plans for the coming years. We invite all members to actively participate in our work, and we welcome your suggestions and ideas for activities we may have overlooked. We look forward to a fruitful and engaging collaboration with each of you.



Photo: Prof. Huei-Min Tsai (Chair of the IGU Islands Commission until 2024), Dr. Annette Breckwoldt (Co-Chair of the IGU Islands Commission), during the ISISA conference 2022 at the University of Zadar, Croatia



### **Presentation of our Commission for ISC International Science Council Oman Conference, by Maria Paradiso**

One of the activities our Commission participated in, related to the work of the IGU, was a contribution we prepared at the request of Prof. Maria Paradiso, who serves on the Governing Board of the International Science Council (ISC) and as a Vice President of the IGU. Prof. Paradiso was invited to speak as a panelist at the Ocean Sustainability session during the upcoming ISC General Assembly and Conference in Oman, beginning on January 24. She asked our Commission to provide examples of our work, achievements, and key messages to be shared with the global scientific community represented by the ISC.

This community includes National Academies, Scientific Unions, affiliated bodies, and major international programs such as SCOR, Future Earth, and CODATA. In response, members of our Steering Committee prepared brief reports

highlighting the main issues relevant to our field that should be presented at the event.

This was a valuable opportunity for us to demonstrate how our discipline can meaningfully contribute to shaping the future of ocean science.

In addition, we shared our perspectives on ocean science and sustainability. As Dr. Annette Breckwoldt, Vice Chair of the IGU Commission on Islands, aptly stated:

“Scientists involved in the work of the IGU Islands Commission come from diverse fields of geography, with some having a stronger focus on Ocean Science. What unites the members of the Islands Commission is their shared interest in studying islands surrounded by the sea, whose development is directly influenced by their marine environment. Furthermore, activities on islands have both direct and indirect impacts on marine ecosystems.

An interdisciplinary approach combining marine biology, coastal social-ecological systems analysis and Island Studies can contribute significantly to Ocean Science and sustainability,





putting an emphasis on integrating marine ecological and social sciences to shape a sustainable future for the Oceans we need

For example, the work of Dr. Annette Breckwoldt (in research, capacity development and teaching) combines natural and social science approaches to support participatory, inter- and transdisciplinary integration of academic and ecosystem user knowledge on coastal marine resources and their multi-faceted values.

The majority of human-non-human dynamic relationships are located within a relatively confined area, encompassing terrestrial and marine environments. The field of Island Studies, through its examination of fundamental concepts such as ecotones, intertidal geographies, and the over-utilization of shorelines, has the potential to provide a substantial contribution to the understanding of marine human-non-human dynamics. Moreover, this field stresses the importance of considering human dimensions of marine biologies (fisheries, users' conflicts, policies, arts etc.)."



### Submission of research proposal to Biodiversa+ / BiodivTransform call 2025

Co-Chair Dr. Annette Breckwoldt, Prof. Mucahid M. Bayrak and Prof. Po-Yi Hung – together with colleagues from Brazil, Madagascar, Indonesia, Taiwan, the Cook Islands, France, Germany, and Norway - submitted a proposal in April 2025 for a three-year research project on *Social-Ecological Keystone Places for Transformative Change in Safeguarding Coastal Biodiversity* (SKETCH).

The SKETCH project focuses on empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) to protect coastal ecosystems through equitable, interdisciplinary conservation strategies.



The project introduces and evaluates the concept of Social-Ecological Keystone Places (SEKPs)—critical areas where nature and society are deeply interconnected—as transformative hubs for biodiversity safeguarding and sustainable governance.

Using a participatory action research framework, SKETCH unites IPLCs, scientists, and policymakers to co-produce knowledge. By bridging Indigenous knowledge with scientific innovation, SKETCH ultimately aims to promote equity, sustainability, and community empowerment in marine stewardship.



## The European Biodiversity Partnership

supporting excellent biodiversity research with an impact on policy and society.





### GEONIGHT

In 2017, the French National Geographical Committee (CNFG) launched the first "Nuit de la Géographie" (GeoNight) in Paris and several other French cities. By 2018, with the support of EUGEO, the event expanded across Europe. In 2019, thanks to IGU, GeoNight became a truly global initiative, with events organized in many countries worldwide.

This year, the IGU Islands Commission joined this initiative to promote islands and island geography. The main topic of our activity was GeoNight Archipelago. GeoNight activities primarily target young audiences, aiming to spark interest in geography through engaging and interactive events. As part of this global initiative, members of the IGU Islands Commission, along with other researchers involved in Island Studies, were invited to organize a variety of activities such as lectures, workshops, games, exhibitions, geo-quizzes, and more.

These events took place in public spaces, schools, universities, kindergartens, and similar venues, offering children and young people a chance to explore islands around the world—their cultures, natural environments, traditions, and the specific challenges of island life.

Recognizing that participation in GeoNight is a key activity supported by the IGU, this year we registered several events under the name of the IGU Islands Commission.

These took place at various Departments of Geography in Croatia, Italy, and Spain. We hope that more of our members will join this initiative next year. In the meantime, we are pleased to share a few photos from the April events.

new edition  
**GEONIGHT**  
**APRIL 04<sup>TH</sup>**





The Geography Department, University of the Balearic Islands, organized the Geonight 2025 on "Geography of Vineyards and Wine in the World" with a conference by Dr. Juan Piqueras (from the University of Valencia) and a geographical wine tasting <https://geonight.net/25371-2/> at the Celler Jaume de Puntiró in Santa Maria del Camí, Balearic Islands <https://vinsjaumedepuntiro.com>. Tourism and real estate business are strongly related to financialized land grabbing in the Balearic Islands. This is the case of vineyards plantations and cellars' construction in terms of what is known as the post-productivist shift.

Photo: Dr. Joan Piqueras and Dr. Jaume Binimelis



The Department of Geography at the University of Zadar welcomed school-aged children who took part in interactive quizzes about the islands of the world. Through learning by play, we encouraged their curiosity and interest in further exploring islands. At the same time, we introduced them to various phenomena and processes that take place in island environments, helping them better understand the unique dynamics of island life.

Photos: Geonight at the Department of Geography, University of Zadar, Croatia



new edition

**GEONIGHT**  
**APRIL 04<sup>TH</sup>**





### Meeting at Jaeun Island in May 2025

Professor Anica Cuka, Chair of the Commission, was invited to a working meeting held on Jaeun Island in the Republic of Korea, at the end of May. The meeting included representatives from ISISA, an organization with which our commission has enjoyed a long and successful collaboration.

The main topic of the meeting was the organization of the upcoming ISISA World Islands Conference 2026. Discussions also focused on strengthening cooperation between our two organizations, and it was agreed that the IGU Commission will host its own panel at the conference.

The meeting was co-organized by Professor Sun-Kee Hong, a member of the Steering Committee and one of the main organizers of the conference.

This gathering provided a valuable opportunity for networking and reinforcing connections among commission members.



Prof. Cuka also delivered a talk on how island communities can serve as key drivers in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This conference will take place on Jaeun Island from July 7 to 11, 2026 (Upcoming Events, see below).





### Working meeting at National Taiwan University

In June, a working meeting of the IGU Commission on Islands was held in Taiwan, attended by numerous commission members. The meeting took place at National Taiwan University and was graciously hosted by Prof. Huei-Min Tsai (former Chair of the IGU Islands Commission) and Prof. Po-Yi Hung, a current member of the Steering Committee.

We were especially honored to meet Prof. Emeritus Chang-Yi Chang, one of the founders and the first Chair of the Commission. He provided the current Chair with valuable insights into the Commission's founding history, and they exchanged experiences from many years of dedicated work.

Discussions also focused on upcoming activities and strategies to encourage greater involvement from new members in the Commission's work.







## UPCOMING EVENTS



### **2025 International Island Forum, Yeosu, South Korea (4+5 September 2025)**

In preparation of the **2026 World Island Exhibition Yeosu**, its Organizing Committee kindly invites Dr. Annette Breckwoldt as a speaker at the 2025 International Island Forum, which will be held in Yeosu, Jeollanam-do, Republic of Korea, on September 4–5, 2025.

Sponsored by the Ministry of the Interior and Safety of the Republic of Korea, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Fisheries, Jeollanam-do Province, and the City of Yeosu, this forum is expected to bring together about 300 experts from Korea and overseas. Under the theme *“The Present and Future of Island Cultural Diversity,”* the forum aims to explore sustainable strategies for the preservation and revitalization of island cultures, also further building domestic and overseas public engagement and interest in the 2026 World Island Exhibition in Yeosu.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 20<sup>th</sup> ISISA Islands of the World Conference, 7 – 11 July 2026, Jaeundo, South Korea

The theme of the 20<sup>th</sup> Islands of the World Conference of ISISA will be 'Island Space and Time', and the IGU Islands Commission is planning to organize a specific session to be included in this conference.

Detailed information on abstract submission, registration, and accommodation will be announced soon via the official conference website. We encourage all interested participants to stay tuned for the opening of the Call for Papers soon.

The Organizing Committee of the conference, as well as the Islands Commission warmly invite you to join this conference in Shinan County to exchange ideas, build new collaborations, and contribute to the global dialogue on island sustainability.

We encourage our members to submit papers into separate **IGU Islands session** which will be offered during the submitting process!

For information about the conference, please visit or contact:

- <https://www.2026isisa.kr> (Website now open and regularly updated)

- e-mail: [info@2026isisa.kr](mailto:info@2026isisa.kr)



# ISLANDS OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### IRC 2026 REGIONAL CONFERENCE (IGU), İstanbul, Türkiye, 17-21 August, 2026

The **IGU Islands Commission** is planning to organize several sessions focused on islands at the upcoming International Regional Conference (IRC) of the International Geographical Union (IGU). The IGU Islands Commission and ISISA have a long-standing history of collaboration, and we hope that our sessions will attract not only geographers but also other scholars engaged in island studies. More details about our sessions will be shared to our members via our social networks and more details about the conference can be accessed here: <https://www.irc2026.org/en/>

#### Important Dates

<b>31 July 2025</b>	Deadline for the submission of the session proposals
<b>1 August 2025</b>	Early registration starts
<b>9 January 2026</b>	Deadline for submitting abstracts for papers and posters
<b>27 February 2026</b>	Notification of results of abstract reviews
<b>13 March 2026</b>	Deadline for early registration fee payment
<b>17 April 2026</b>	Deadline for regular fee payment
<b>17-21 August 2026</b>	IRC Regional Conference in İstanbul, Türkiye



**IRC 2026**

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

İSTANBUL - TÜRKİYE 17-21 AUGUST 2026

Exploring the Earth, Connecting Worlds





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Webinar series "Island Economies: Monoculture or Diversification"

**14 July 2025 - 13 October 2025**

The webinar series "Island economies: monoculture or diversification" was created with the aim of analyzing the economic models of various island territories, with a special focus on the dichotomy between economies based on a single sector (monoculture) and those that have opted for economic diversification. This academic and debate space seeks to reflect on the advantages, risks and challenges of both approaches.

#### Objectives of the cycle

To analyze the economic models of several European and overseas islands.

To generate debate on the need to diversify island economies.

To facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices.

To promote knowledge on the economic specificities of island territories.

Detailed programme of the webinar is at the next page....







## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Webinar series "Island Economies: Monoculture or Diversification"

#### Webinar Series Program

**July 14 at 5:30 p.m. - "Do agricultural subsidies really work on islands? Abandonment and intensification of farming on Greek islands"**

Lecture by Dr. Thanasis Kizos (University of the Aegean). This session will examine the role of Greek state aid on the islands and explore economic diversification.

**July 21 at 5:30 p.m. – "Sardinia: Monoculture vs. Diversification: Energy, Sustainability, and Economic Resilience"**

Lecture by Dr. Stefano Matta (Università degli Studi di Cagliari). This session will explore economic diversification initiatives in Sardinia and the challenges faced by this island territory.

**September 8 at 5:30 p.m. – "Insularity, housing access, and restrictions on real estate acquisition by non-residents"**

Lecture by Dr. Joan David Janer (University of the Balearic Islands). This session will offer an alternative perspective on the housing issue in the Balearic Islands and its economic context.

**September 15 at 5:30 p.m. – "From Diaspora to Mass Tourism. The Evolution of Corsica's Economy (20th–21st Centuries)"**

Lecture by Dr. Marcel Farinelli (CIEE Barcelona). This session will analyze the economic planning implemented by France since 1957 to address Corsica's challenges and its consequences.

**September 29 at 5:30 p.m. – "The Canary Islands. Socioeconomic Wellbeing and the Incentives of the Specific Economic and Fiscal Regime"**

Lecture by Dr. Carmelo Javier León (University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria). This session will provide an overview of the Canary Islands' Economic and Fiscal Regime and its impact on social wellbeing and the archipelago's population.

**October 13 at 5:30 p.m. – "Broken Promises: Eco Tourism and Rampant Construction"**

Lecture by Dr. Rose Marie Azzopardi (University of Malta). This session will explore how an island has faced the challenge of diversification or avoiding tourism monoculture.

All details can be found at the web page: <https://fueib.org/en/insularitat/725/eventos/226/cicle-de-seminaris-web-economies-insulars-monocultiu-o-diversificacio>



## NEW BOOK: Relational Geographies of Islands in the Indo-Pacific

### Environment, Society, and Politics

Editors: Takashi Yamazaki, Godfrey Baldacchino

<https://link.springer.com/book/9789819671540>

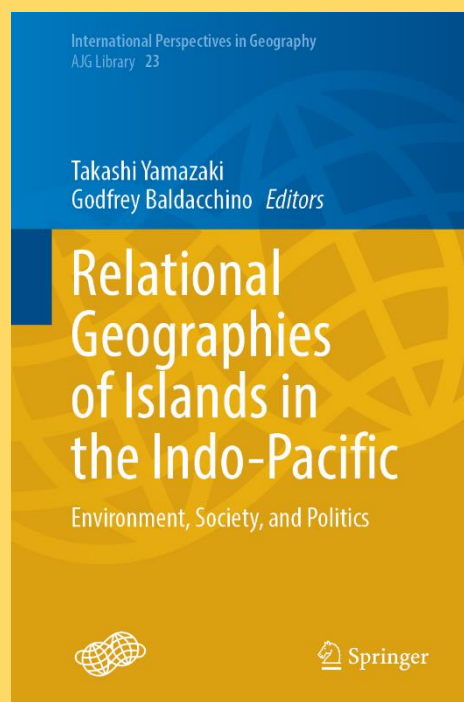
### About this book

This book provides a powerful picture of the significance and centrality of islands in the Indo-Pacific region in the 21st century, far from an easily assumed benign peripherality and invisibility. It consists of nine chapters and examines four major challenges facing island societies, namely 'aggressive environmental adaptation,' 'outmigration,' 'island borders,' and 'military fortification.' The book relationally details how island geographies in the Indo-Pacific region become an assemblage of environmental, social, and political dynamics. Throughout these chapters, the book aims to renew the mainland/continental perspective that tends to marginalize islands in the larger society, to expand awareness of the significance of islands in the world. The book also contributes to the construction of world peace extended from peace on islands.

This book is the outcome of the International Geographical Union (IGU) Thematic Conference 'Islands in Relations: Conflicts, Sustainability, and Peace' at Osaka Metropolitan University in 2023, with support from the Association of Japanese Geographers and other academic organizations. The conference aimed, and this book attempts, to reconsider the environmental, social, economic, and political relationships among the islands of the world,

especially in the Indo-Pacific region, by focusing on their relations with the mainland, neighboring continents, and other islands at the bigger scale, and to identify factors that cause (and avoid) conflicts over islands, conditions for islands' environmental and economic sustainability, and ways to build 'peace' in the maritime and coastal areas surrounding the islands.

The book is a valuable resource for geographers, island scholars, other scientists, university students, teachers, policymakers, NGOs, other practitioners, and the public worldwide who find the book topics informative, insightful, and valuable.







## NEW BOOK: Formentera, de les utopies a la privatopia

Autor: Vives-Miró, Sònia ; Rullan, Onofre ; Artigues, Antoni

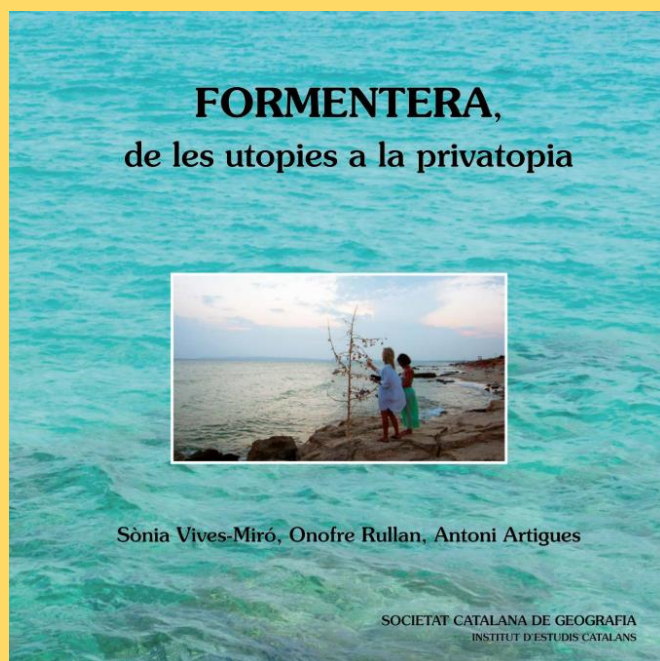
<https://publicacions.iec.cat/PopulaFitxa.do?moduleName=botiga&subModuleName=&idCatalogacio=43688>

### About this book

Sònia Vives, Onofre Rullan and Antoni Artigues are geographers at the University of the Balearic Islands, authoring this book on a geohistorical analysis of the social production of smallest island of the Balearic archipelago. The publisher is Societat Catalana de Geografia [the Catalan Society of Geography], which is corresponding member of the International Geographical Union.

The book's five sections cover:

- 1) the pre-modern natural and human background;
- 2) the time and way of life on the island, once self-contained;
- 3) from which there was a gradual but irreversible transition to external connection, leading to tourist modernity;
- 4) the various problems of today's postmodern Formentera;
- 5) reflections on possible trajectories to be considered. It concludes with a guide offered so that future visitors can have an alternative approach to the island than what conventional tourist guides typically offer.





## THEMATIC ISSUE: Geopolitics

### **Geopolitics, Volume 29, Issue 2, (2024), Contextualizing Borders in East Asia**

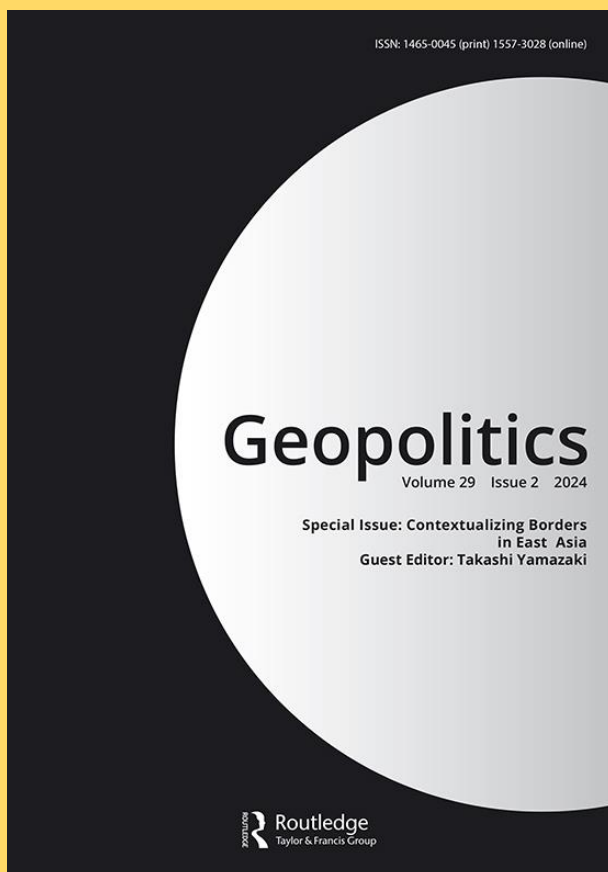
Guest Editor: Takashi Yamazaki

<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/fgeo20/29/2?nav=tocList>

#### **ABSTRACT**

There have been discussions on the validity of theorising border studies since the beginning of this century. The nature of borderlands encompassing borders may be understood from a generalised perspective, but this special section argues the importance of contextualising borders from an appropriate theoretical framework built on preceding works. From such a viewpoint, this special section investigates various aspects of East Asia's borders and borderlands and contextualises them in the region's dynamic geopolitical and geoeconomic contexts. The selected four articles focus mainly on border issues in China, North Korea, Okinawa, Taiwan and Hong Kong, showing that East Asia, particularly the East China Sea region, consists of non-conventional borders and that deviations from the Westphalian sovereign territory characterise East Asian borderlands.

These articles persuasively illustrate how the 'contextual theorisation' of borders in East Asia becomes possible by identifying the common aspects shared by their cases. I conclude that bringing in a regional or trans-border/local framework for border studies can deepen our understanding of borders and borderlands and guide us in a better direction of research and practice.







### HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER?

Are you interested in **Island Research** or **Island Geography**?  
We warmly invite you to join our Commission!

To express your interest or request more information, feel free to contact any of the Commission representatives:

**Chair:** Prof. Anica Čuka — [acuka@unizd.hr](mailto:acuka@unizd.hr)

**Vice-Chair:** Dr. Annette Breckwoldt — [annette.breckwoldt@leibniz-zmt.de](mailto:annette.breckwoldt@leibniz-zmt.de)

**Secretary:** Prof. Mucahid Mustafa Bayrak — [mmbayrak@ntnu.edu.tw](mailto:mmbayrak@ntnu.edu.tw)

We look forward to hearing from you!

### HOW TO REACH US?

You can reach us through our official website:

<https://geogsoc.org.tw/IGU-Islands/>

Connect with us on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/15pnB5infc/>

