



**UNION GEODESIQUE ET GEOPHYSIQUE INTERNATIONALE  
INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GEODESY AND GEOPHYSICS**

## **The IUGG Electronic Journal**

**Volume 9 No. 9 (1 September 2009)**

This informal newsletter is intended to keep IUGG Member National Committees informed about the activities of the IUGG Associations, and actions of the IUGG Secretariat. Past issues are posted on the IUGG Web site (<http://www.iugg.org/publications/ejournals/>). Please forward this message to those who will benefit from the information. Your comments are welcome.

### **Contents**

1. International Cooperation in Geophysics: Celebrating the 90th anniversary of IUGG
2. News from the International Council for Science (ICSU)
3. News from the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE)
4. Report on the International Symposium on Earthquake Seismology and Earthquake Predictability (ISESEP 09)
5. IAHS Scientific Assembly, Hyderabad, India, September 2009
6. Travel support to young scientists and students to attend AGU meetings
7. Honours and awards
8. IUGG-related meetings occurring during September - November 2009

---

### **1. International Cooperation in Geophysics: Celebrating the 90th Anniversary of IUGG**

Research cooperation in geophysics is, by its very nature, international and brings together scientists from and to various parts of the world to investigate and hence to understand our Earth and its environment. Well-organized international geophysical cooperation was established 90 years ago, on 28 July 1919. In honour of the IUGG anniversary, President Tom Beer held a reception during MOCA-09, a joint Scientific Assembly of IACS, IAMAS, and IAPSO.

The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics, several national (e.g. American Geophysical Union), and most recently regional (e.g. European Geosciences Union, Asia Oceania Geosciences Society) geophysical unions and societies have grown since the time of their birth. Today these organizations play a significant role in fostering worldwide scientific cooperation in geophysics. Earth sciences are becoming exceedingly complex with a lot of interaction between the disciplines. What mechanism can be used to encourage relationships between the international, national and regional geoscience bodies? A brief history of international cooperation in geophysics and some possible modes of strengthening cooperation between geo-societies are discussed by IUGG President Tom Beer and IUGG Secretary General Alik Ismail-Zadeh in a paper that can be found on the IUGG web-page at: <http://www.iugg.org/special/icg90iugg.pdf>.

---

## **2. News from the International Council for Science (ICSU)**

### ***Natural Hazards and Disasters***

The Scientific Committee of the new Interdisciplinary Body of ICSU, Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) held its first meeting in May during the first World Social Science Forum. The committee, chaired by Gordon McBean (former IUGG Bureau member), discussed joint projects with other organisations and programmes, and began setting up working groups that will shape IRDR in its initial phase. Kunioshi Takeuchi, a distinguished expert in water-related risk and management and Chair of the IUGG Union Commission on Geophysical Risk and Sustainability, is a member of the Scientific Committee of IRDR.

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR) has joined ICSU and the International Social Science Council (ISSC) as co-sponsor of IRDR. The ISDR Scientific and Technical Committee has recommended to the United Nations Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction that governments support systematic programmes of scientific research, observations and capacity building at national, regional and international levels underlining the importance of the new ICSU-ISSC-ISDR programme in providing a new and important framework for global collaboration. The location of the IRDR International Programme Office will be decided following site visits in August to the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) located in Beijing and the Academy of Sciences located in Taipei.

### ***Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change***

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is working on its fifth assessment report. ICSU, an observer to the IPCC, has asked that Interdisciplinary Bodies interested in taking part in the assessment be considered for observer status. The IPCC will prepare a report on “Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation”. The report will review disaster risk reduction and management policy and practice, its effectiveness and costs. Scientists and stakeholders involved in the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) programme will be active in the preparation and assessment of the report.

### ***World Conference on Science***

Ten years after the World Conference on Science, which was jointly organised by ICSU and UNESCO, the two organisations are again joining forces together with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to sponsor the World Science Forum 2009 in Budapest on 5-7 November 2009 (<http://www.sciforum.hu>). Several hundred scientists and policy makers are expected to attend the conference, which has the theme “Knowledge and Future”. The ICSU President and Vice-President will give plenary presentations on the past and future perspectives for science and the ICSU Regional Offices will be also represented.

### ***Visa problems and the United States***

In February, a letter was sent to all ICSU Members regarding delays in the processing of visa applications for scientists entering the USA. This problem related particularly to some nationalities and was not only limited to the USA (see the letter at the ICSU web-site: [http://www.icsu.org/5\\_abouticsu/PDF/Letter\\_Members\\_US\\_Visas\\_26Feb09.pdf](http://www.icsu.org/5_abouticsu/PDF/Letter_Members_US_Visas_26Feb09.pdf)).

In June, Deliang Chen, the ICSU Executive Director, paid a visit to the U.S. State Department, with the assistance of the National Academy of Sciences (ICSU’s National Member in the USA).

The issue of visa difficulties was raised with David Donahue, Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Bureau of Consular Affairs. Many international scientists have experienced problems when applying for visas, particularly for attending conferences in the US. During the open discussion, Donahue outlined recent progress on this issue and encouraged ICSU to help identify specific cases so the problems can be redressed.

Source: ICSU Newsletter, July 2009, volume 7

---

### **3. News from the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE)**

#### ***African Forum on Sustainable Development***

This is an IYPE initiative that developed from the meeting with members of the Government of Angola in February 2009. Apart from national activities, the Angolan Government would like to contribute to IYPE on an international level. It was agreed to conduct a feasibility study of a proposal for an African Forum on Sustainable Development (AFSD) where Earth-related challenges will be discussed at a high level by (Earth) scientists, politicians and representatives of industry; African ways and means of addressing these challenges will be also presented. The idea of the AFSD was presented by the Angolan Minister of the Environment at the Committee for Sustainable Development meeting in New York in May and brought to the attention of the UN Secretary General ([www.yearofplanetearth.org](http://www.yearofplanetearth.org)). The feasibility study will be completed soon to be officially launched at the Luanda IYPE launch event on 17 September 2009.

#### ***UNESCO Initiative for Earth Science Education in Africa***

While addressing the audience at the African Launch Event for IYPE in Arusha, Tanzania, May 2008, the UNESCO Director General launched the initiative to explore the potential of the Earth science 'hotspots' in Africa through a project entitled 'UNESCO Initiative for Earth Science Education in Africa'. Initially, three workshops were foreseen this year but the Angolan government invited UNESCO to hold a fourth for Portuguese speaking countries in Luanda, on 18 and 19 September 2009 following the Angolan Launch, financed by the Angolan government and a national bank. IYPE will be a Partner in the UNESCO initiative.

#### ***IYPE Events in 2009***

Apart from a series of national and international events dedicated to the IYPE in the remainder of 2009, four major international events celebrating the closure of the IYPE triennium are planned for the last quarter of 2009: the GSA Annual meeting in Portland, USA, and the first Congress of Young Earth Scientists (YES) in Beijing, China (both in October); the Lisbon Event in Portugal (in November) and the AGU Fall Meeting with special focus on IYPE, in San Francisco, USA (December).

*The Young Earth Scientists (YES) initiative is close to the heart of IYPE and made considerable progress in organizing its first international Congress, 25-28 October 2009 in Beijing, China. Abstracts for oral and poster presentations are now in peer review and the number of registered participants is growing. To assist young professionals (<36 years old) in attending the Congress, IYPE will support the travel costs of participants from developing countries up to a maximum of 25,000 USD. IYPE has also encouraged National Committees, private companies and other relevant groups to provide such grants to young professionals in the Earth sciences. An*

innovative feature of the first YES Congress will be the Round Table concept where Earth scientists will discuss relevant issues with young politicians.

*The Lisbon Event* (20 and 21 November) will highlight the results of the International Year of Planet Earth during the 2007-2009 triennium and will look ahead concerning new initiatives built on the IYPE legacy. Hosted by the Portuguese Government, three themes will be discussed by leading politicians, scientists, captains of industry and the audience on Renewable Energy, Sustainable Land and Water Management, and Oceans. Leaders of all 80 National and Regional IYPE Committees and 2 students *per* IYPE nation will be provided with free travel and accommodation to highlight the important contribution made by the National Committees to the performance of IYPE worldwide, as well as facilitating participation in the last meeting of the IYPE National Committees. The main reason for inviting the 160 students is to involve the younger generation in the aims and ambitions of the IYPE and its potential follow-on initiatives, and to build networks of young Earth scientists aimed at securing their (future) active participation in international geoscientific organizations, such as YES. This was inspired by the positive outcome of the Paris Launch Event in February 2008. Fundraising is well on its way to cover fully the Lisbon Event. The Organizing Committee has outsourced the preparatory work and the Portuguese Minister of Economy and Innovation has set up an office dedicated to the work of the Event Secretariat.

Received from the IYPE Secretariat

---

#### **4. Report on the International Symposium on Earthquake Seismology and Earthquake Predictability (ISESEP 09)**

The International Symposium on Earthquake Seismology and Earthquake Predictability was held in Beijing, China, from 5 to 9 July 2009. Participants at the symposium came from 13 countries/regions including Australia, Canada, China, India, Japan, Mongolia, Russia, Switzerland, Thailand, UK, USA, and Vietnam. 66 papers were presented at the symposium (<http://www.cea-igp.ac.cn/English/Symposium/index.htm>). The symposium was supported by IUGG and co-sponsored by the Asian Seismological Commission of IASPEI, the Seismological Society of Japan, and the Southern California Earthquake Center. Several keynote-lectures were delivered at the symposium: (1) “Retrospection on seismicity pattern and its forecast result before Wenchuan earthquake” by Y. Zhang, China Earthquake Networks Center; (2) “An introduction to the special project ‘research on mid- and long-term forecast for potential M7 and greater earthquakes in mainland China’” by X. Wen, Earthquake Administration of Sichuan Province; (3) “Earthquake prediction: 20 years of global experiment” by V. Kossobokov, Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow (Vice-President, IUGG Commission on Geophysical Risk and Sustainability); (4) “How far are we from numerical earthquake prediction?” by Y. Shi, Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing; (5) “Earthquake forecasting: data, physics, methods, validation, and applications” by J. Rundle, University of California at Davis; (6) “GEMS: a global earthquake monitoring system that could stress-forecast all damaging earthquakes worldwide” by S. Crampin, University of Edinburgh; (7) “Map of expected earthquakes for north-east China: 10 years after” by A. Zavyalov, Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow (Chairman, IASPEI Commission on Earthquake Source – Modeling and Monitoring for Prediction), and (8) “Estimates of losses due to earthquakes” by M. Wyss (World Agency of Planetary Monitoring and Earthquake Risk Reduction). An Open Forum was organized, accommodating the debate on the future of the study on earthquake predictability and its application.

## **5. IAHS Scientific Assembly, Hyderabad, India, September 2009**

The International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) and the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH) along with the Indian hydrological community extend a warm invitation to the global scientific and professional community, policy makers, executives and NGOs associated with water resources to participate in a Joint International Convention of IAHS Scientific Assembly and IAH Congress being organized in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India during 6-12 September 2009. The joint Convention, in its true spirit, will be held under one roof providing ample opportunity for the members of both Associations from all over the world to interact, share and discuss their experiences, issues of mutual interest and also initiate joint research programs to address varied hydrological problems of local and global importance. The Convention includes keynote lectures, technical sessions, poster sessions, meetings of commissions, mid congress scientific tours, social events, and post congress excursions. The Scientific Program includes more than 20 symposia and workshops covering almost all topics of hydrological and hydrogeological sciences. The Convention will be a historic event in the Annals of Global Hydrological Sciences. Do not miss this important international hydrological and hydrogeological meeting!

Received from Pierre Hubert, IAHS Secretary General

---

## **6. Travel support to young scientists and students to attend AGU meetings**

Participation of students and young researchers from different countries in scientific meetings of the American Geophysical Union (AGU) and of partner societies is one of the AGU major objectives. The Berkner Travel Fellowships provide support to young scientists (under 36 years old) and students to take part in AGU meetings. The support includes registration fee, travel, accommodation, and daily expenses during the meetings. The Berkner Fellowship program is funded by the Berkner Fund, a memorial to Lloyd Viel Berkner (AGU Past President), and aims to provide support to young researchers and students from developing countries. Lloyd Berkner had a distinguished career, with special interests in supporting and working with students and international colleagues. The Berkner Fund also supports other programs, including the Berkner Membership Program, which offers free three-year membership to researchers and students from underdeveloped countries.

The AGU Committee on International Participation (CIP) administrates the Berkner Fellowship program. CIP is especially interested in increasing the number of applications submitted to the Berkner Fellowship program and having more students and young researchers attending and participating in international meetings. CIP also welcomes applications for the Berkner Membership Program and contributions to the AGU's programs for young researchers and students (Building Tomorrow's Talent Today). Information on the Berkner Travel Fellowship program and on the related travel programs, like Joint Assembly/Fall Meeting Student Travel Grants, Ocean Sciences Meeting Student Travel Grants, Student Travel Grants, Ricker Travel Grants, and Bruno Martinelli Travel Grants, can be found at the web-page <http://www.agu.org>.

Received from Jaime Urrutia Fucugauchi, AGU International Secretary and CIP Chair

---

## 7. Honours and Awards

**Harsh Gupta** (IUGG Vice-President) was elected President (2010-2012) of the Asia Oceania Geosciences Society (AOGS) at the 6th Annual Meeting of the Society in Singapore, 11-15 August 2009. In his mission statement Gupta mentioned that he would foster the cooperation between AOGS and ICSU, IUGG, IUGS, AGU and EGU in the areas of natural hazards and development of joint programs to address global issues.

The 2009 Eugene LaFond Medal has been awarded to **Bamol Ali Sow** (University of Ziguinchor, Senegal). This Medal is awarded to an early career ocean scientist from a developing world country, who presents an excellent paper on oceanography at one of IAPSO-sponsored symposium. The Medal was presented at the MOCA-2009, joint IAMAS-IAPSO-IACS Assembly in Montreal.

The Council of Engineering and Scientific Society Executives (CESSE) honoured **Fred Spilhaus** (former Chair of the IUGG Finance Committee) by renaming its Council of Scientific Society Executives Leadership Award *the A. Fred Spilhaus Leadership Award*. Awardees are distinguished “for excellence in management of the scientific and/or engineering societies, and for outstanding contributions to CESSE.”

---

## 8. IUGG-related meetings occurring during September – November 2009

A calendar of meetings of interest to IUGG disciplines (especially those organized by IUGG Associations) is posted on the IUGG web site [[www.IUGG.org/calendar](http://www.IUGG.org/calendar)]. Specific information about these meetings can be found there. Individual Associations also list more meetings on their web sites according to their disciplines.

- August 31 - September 4, IAG, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Scientific Assembly.
- August 31 - September 4, WMO, Geneva, Switzerland, World Climate Conference.
- September 1-5, IAHS, Ohrid, Macedonia, WMHE2009, 11th International Symposium on Water Management and Hydraulic Engineering.
- September 6-12, IAHS, Hyderabad, India, 8th IAHS Scientific Assembly & 37th IAH Congress. Web: <http://www.appliedhydrology.org/iahs/>
- September 7-11, IAG, Laq Plata, Argentina, 9th International School on the Determination and Use of the Geoid.
- September 13-18, SAGA/SEG/EAGE, Swaziland, South Africa, 2009 South African Geophysical Association (SAGA) Biennial Technical Meeting and Exhibition.
- September 13-19, WMO, Jena, Germany, 8th International Carbon Dioxide Conference.
- September 14-19, IAG, Metsovo, Greece, SLR Tracking of GNSS Constellations - 50 Years of Satellite Geodesy and Geodynamics.
- September 21-24, IAHS, Bratislava, Slovakia, 2nd Intl Conf BIOHYDROLOGY 2009: A changing climate for biology and soil hydrology interactions

- September 21-25, IAG, Venice, Italy, OceanObs'09 – Ocean information for society: sustaining the benefits, realizing the potential.
- September 23-26, IAHS, Plitvice Lakes, Croatia, Sustainability of the Karst Environment - Dinaric Karst and other Karst Regions
- September 27 - October 4, IAVCEI, Morelia, Michoacán, México, Monogenetic volcanism in the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt and elsewhere.
- September 28 – October 10, IASPEI, IUGG GeoRisk Commission, ICTP, Trieste, Italy, Advanced School on Non-linear Dynamics and Earthquake Prediction.
- October 8-13, IUGG events in Melbourne, Australia (Bureau, EC, and Science Program Committee business meetings and a Scientific Day in CSIRO to celebrate 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of IUGG)
- October 14-16, IAG, Padua, Italy, 2nd International Colloquium “Scientific and Fundamental Aspects of the Galileo Programme” (*COSPAR Colloquium*).
- October 15-19, Euroscience, Athens, Greece, Euroscience Mediterranean Event 2009 (ESME 2009)
- October 19-21, IAG, Warsaw, Poland, IERS Workshop on EOP Combination and Prediction.
- October 21-25, IAHS, Wuhan, China, ModelCARE 2009
- November 30 – December 11, IUGG, IAGA, Brazzaville, Congo, Scientific School on GPS and GIS
- November 10-13. IACS, Vienna, Austria, International Workshop on Glacier Hazards, Permafrost Hazards and GLOFs in Mountain Areas: Processes, Assessment, Prevention, Mitigation
- November 11-12 IUGG, Tanta, Egypt, 6th International Symposium on Geophysics

End of IUGG Electronic Journal Volume 9 Number 9 (1 September 2009)

A.T. Ismail-Zadeh, Secretary General [<http://www.IUGG.org>]  
 E-mail: Alik.Ismail-Zadeh@gpi.uka.de Fax: +49 721 71173.

**Note: Contributions to IUGG E-Journal are welcome from members of the IUGG family. Please send your contributions to Alik Ismail-Zadeh by e-mail (insert in Subject line: *contribution to E-Journal*). The contributions will be reviewed and may be shortened by the Editor.**