

***International Geographical  
Union Union Géographique  
International***



**2016 Annual Report of the International Geographical Union**

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**Report on the International Geographical Congress, Beijing**

The 33<sup>rd</sup> International Geographical Congress was held in Beijing China, on August 21-25, 2016. It was by far the biggest event of IGU in 2016. The IGC 2016 was jointly organized by the Geographical Society of China, together with the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The main theme of the Congress was “Shaping Our Harmonious Worlds”. Through academic exchanges and communications on geography, the Congress aimed at promoting the harmony between humankind and nature, respecting the nature and cultural difference, and leading geographers from all over the world to conduct the researches on global understanding, future earth and sustainable development in a profound way.



Opening Ceremony, Plenary Hall, CNCC

The Congress began with the opening ceremony held at the China National Convention Center (CNCC), on August 22. Yanhua Liu, Co-chair of the 33rd IGC Organizing Committee, Counselor of the State Council, China, Vladimir Kolosov, President of the International Geographical Union (IGU), Dahe Qin, Co-chair of the 33rd IGC Scientific Committee, Academician of Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Wei Shu, Executive Secretary of the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) and Jinghai Li, Vice President of the International Council for Science (ICSU), Vice President and Academician of Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) successively delivered speeches in the opening ceremony. Many well-known and influential scientists were also present at the Congress, including Chinese academicians Bojie Fu, Changming Liu, Du Zheng, Ying Wang, Dadao Lu, Anthony Yeh, Tandong Yao, Peng Cui, Fahu Chen, Jun Xia, and Vladimir Kotlyakov, Honorary President of the Russian Geographical Society, Nikolay Kasimov, First Vice President of the Russian Geographical Society, Jean-Robert Pitte, President of Société de Géographie France, Alexander Murphy, Former President of AAG, Douglas Richardson, Executive Director of AAG, Michael Meadows, Secretary General of IGU, Ronald Abler, Past President of IGU and IGU Vice Presidents, Dietrich Soye, Joos Droogleever Fortuijn, Elena dell'Agnese, Yukio Himiyama, Iain Hay, Jarkko Saarinen, Ram Babu Singh, etc. The opening ceremony was chaired by Chenghu Zhou, Secretary-General of the 33rd IGC Organizing Committee, Vice President of the IGU, Academician of CAS. During the last part of the ceremony, the outstanding individuals of the 13<sup>th</sup> International Geography Olympiad were awarded the gold medals. The highest score was achieved by the team from Singapore.



Left, Chinese Instrumental Performance at the beginning of the opening ceremony  
Right, 13<sup>th</sup> iGeo Gold Medal Awarding Ceremony

262 sessions were organized during the Congress, consisting of 156 thematic sessions proposed by 41 IGU Commissions, 44 sessions which focused on 5 key topics: “Geographical Sciences and Future Earth”, “Climate Change and Global Understanding”, “Urbanization and Sustainable Development”, “Environment-Health and Social Welfare” and “Geography in Different Cultures”, 42 forums, symposiums, workshops, keynote lectures and special sessions, such as “Forum for Think Tank of International Scientists Union of ‘the Belt and Road Initiative’”, “Forum for Resources and Environment of Central Asia across Silk Road Economic Belt”, “3rd International Conference on Mountain Environment and Development, ICMED” , “Inheritance and Innovation of Geography: Young Scholar in Action” and 20 business meetings. In about 500 time slots of oral sessions, 2600 presentations were made. In parallel to the oral sessions, 1200 posters were presented.



Group photo of Forum for Think Tank of International Scientists Union of “the Belt and Road Initiative”

The commissions that organized the largest number of sessions were as follows:

- C12.15 Geography of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change: 16 sessions
- C12.11 Geographical Education: 11 sessions
- C12.39 Urban Commission: Urban Challenges in a Complex World: 11 sessions
- C12.11 Political Geography: 8 sessions

During the Congress, nine plenary lectures were given by ten world-renowned scholars, as follows: *Geographical Sciences and Future Earth: Research for Solutions, from Local to Global Scales* given by Prof. Mark Stafford Smith (Australia), *Understanding Chinese Geography: Linking Science and Society* by Prof. Bojie Fu (China), *Back to the Future: Reasoning the Territorial Way of Life* by Prof. Woo-ik Yu (South Korea), *Urban Dynamics and Geo-diversity: From Theory to Modeling* by Prof. Denise Pumain (France), *A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Agenda to Shape "Our Harmonious Worlds" Through Research on the Geographies of Health and Care* by Prof. Mark W. Rosenberg (Canada), *Climate Change and Its Impact* by Prof. Dahe Qin (China), *Geography and Future Earth: Perspectives from Africa* by Prof. Michael Meadows (South Africa), *Global Understanding for Global Sustainability* by Prof. Benno Werlen (Germany), *From Inter-state to Multiscalar Political Geographies* by Prof. Virginie Mamadouh (Netherlands) and Prof. Takashi Yamazaki (Japan). The lectures focused on global issues regarding future earth and sustainable development, such as climate change, urbanization, environment and conflicts, and demonstrated the great success and considerable contribution of Chinese geography and Chinese geographers to the basic researches and our society.



Left, Prof. Mark Stafford Smith, Chair of the inaugural Science Committee for Future Earth was giving the first plenary lecture

Right, Prof. Woo-ik Yu, 2004-2010 Vice President / Secretary General, International Geographical Union (IGU) was giving his plenary lecture

There were 4299 people who participated in the Congress (including 292 for iGeo) and 758 people who attended the pre-Congress meetings organized by IGU Commissions. They came from 101 countries and regions worldwide, including 2349 participants from China mainland. Attendance by countries and regions (outside China mainland) is presented in the figures below. Thanks to the 3 types of grants offered by IGU and the Local Organizing Committee, more geographers from developing countries, more young scholars from the world were able to attend the Congress. 111 researchers from developing countries were awarded the grants, including 28 for IGU travel grant, 18 for LOC all cover grant and 65 for LOC registration fee grant.

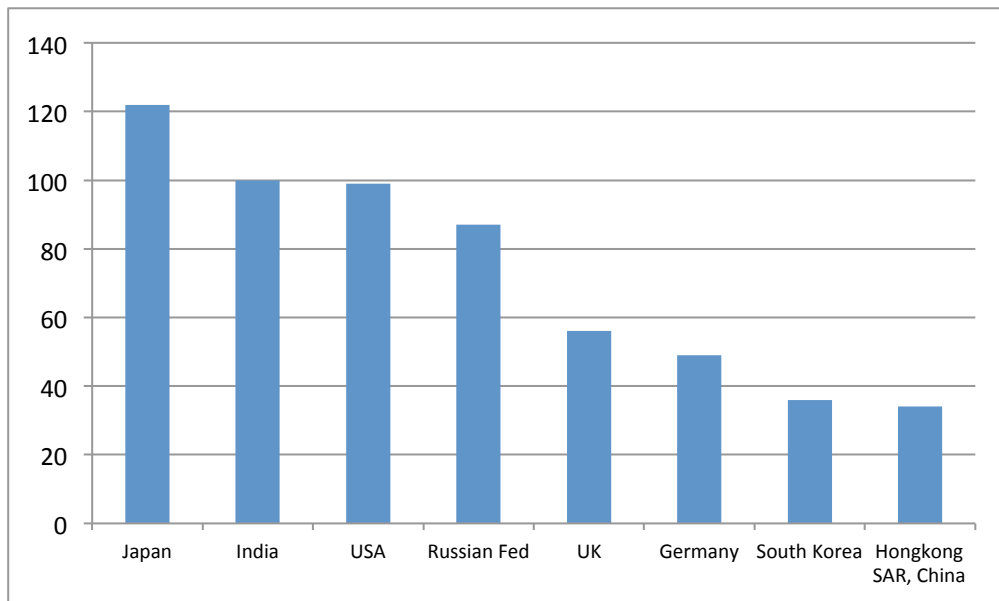


Figure I: Countries with more than 30 participants of the IGC 2016

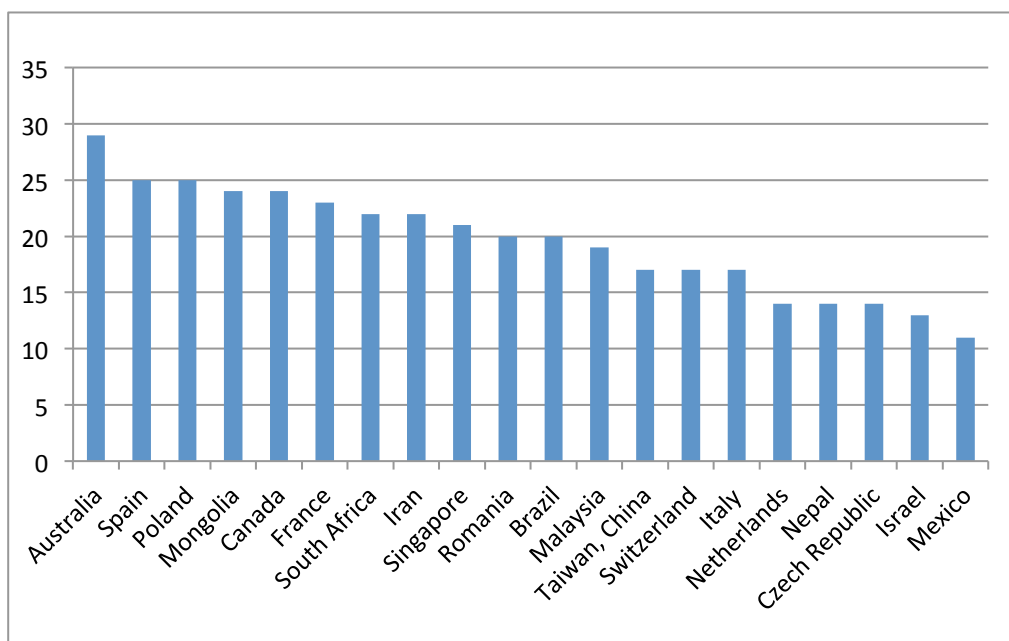


Figure II: Countries with 10-30 participants of the IGC 2016

Apart from scientific sessions of the Congress, there were pre-Congress meetings organized by IGU Commissions, the 13<sup>th</sup> International Geography Olympiad, exhibition, IGU General Assembly, IGU Centennial Interviews, field excursions (during and after the congress) and several social events.

Several days ahead of the Congress, seven pre-conferences under IGU Commissions on GIS, Geographical Education, Urban Challenges in a Complex World, Geography of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change, Political Geography, Health and Environment and Sustainability of Rural Systems took place in various cities of China.



- 17th International Symposium on Spatial Data Handling, August 18-20, Beijing
  - IGU-CGE Special Symposium ECNU, August 18-19, Shanghai
  - 2016 IGU Urban Commission Conference, August 15-20, Shanghai
  - IGU Tourism Commission Pre-Congress Meeting, August 15-18, Nanjing
  - International Forum on Frontiers of Political Geography, August 17-21, Guangzhou
  - Pre-conference on Shaping Geographies of Health, Health Care and Environment, August 18-21, Xi'an
  - Pre-IGC Workshop-Land Use and Rural Sustainability, August 17-20, Xi'An
- IGU Executive Committee Meeting was held in Tianjin on August 18-20.

On August 16-21, 292 teachers and students from 47 countries and regions in the world participated in the 13<sup>th</sup> International Geography Olympiad, which includes written tests, multimedia quizzes and field work tests. The contents of the competition focused on 12 topics including “Climate and Climate Change”, “Economic Geography and Globalization”, “Development Geography and Spatial Unbalance” and others, and 3 skills including map skills (reading, analysis, interpretation and the ability to draw a map), skills of exploring and solving problems, and skills of describing and judging (reading, analyzing, interpreting images, photos, statistics and graphs).

During the Congress, the exhibition was also organized. It attracted nearly 40 domestic and international publishers, companies, institutions and organizations, including Springer, Wiley, Commercial Press, Supermap, UNEP, IGU, IYGU, RSA, AAG, RGS, etc. Many recent published achievements and products in the relevant field were presented. In addition, for this Congress, Journal of Geographical Sciences launched a two special issues (2016, No. 7, No. 8), Human Geography and other domestic journals made poster presentations, Geographical Research has produced a disc concerning about some geographical ideas and arguments. *China Post* has published “the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Geographical Congress” commemorative stamped envelopes. Chinese geographical communities published *The Geographical Sciences During 1986–2015: From the Classics to the Frontiers* (both in English and Chinese versions), *Academic and Social Contribution by Chinese Humanities and Economic Geography Scholars* (both in English and Chinese versions) and a number of other academic monographs.



Left, IGC 2016 Commemorative Stamped Envelope Launching Ceremony in the exhibition area



Right, Books written and compiled by the Local Organizing Committee of IGC 2016

According to the customs of IGU, IGU General Assembly was held during the Congress. On the General Assembly attended by representatives from 46 countries, the new national members, IGU Commissions, Task Forces and their chairpersons were approved. The IGU new President and new Executive Committee were elected, and the host city of the International Geographical Congress 2024 was decided (Dublin, Ireland) by vote.

To continue the existing studies on the IGU history, IGU Sesquicentennial / Centennial Task Force in cooperation with the Commission on History of Geography conducted a series of interviews on 12 influential geographers on August 22-24: Prof. Vincent Berdoulay, Prof. Vladimir Kolosov, Prof. Maria Dolors Garcia- Ramón, Prof. Carmen Delgado- Viñas, Prof. Ronald Abler, Prof. Jean-Robert Pitte, Prof. Aharon Kellerman, Prof. Yukio Himiyama, Prof. Rana Singh, Prof. Dadao Lu, Prof. Dahe Qin and Prof. Michael Meadows.



Left, IGU General Assembly

Right, Prof. Ronald Abler during the IGU Centennial interview

Two types of excursions were available to the participants during and after the Congress:

One-day local tours in Beijing during the Congress:

- Ming Tombs – Great Wall,
- Forbidden City – Tian'anmen Square – Temple of Heaven,
- Hutong Tour – Beihai Park – Jingshan Park,
- Lama Temple – Beijing Zoo(Panda Garden) –Summer Palace

Post-Congress field excursions in China:

- Beijing-Chongqing-Yangtze Cruise-Wuhan,
- Beijing-Xining-Qinghai Lake-Lhasa,
- Beijing-Dunhuang-Turpan-Urumqi,
- Beijing-Guilin-Kunming (co-organized by Institute of Karst Geology)

There were three social events organized for the participants:

- Welcome Reception, on the evening of August 21, on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor and the terrace of the CNCC;
- New International Charter on Geographical Education, on the morning of August 24, joined by officials, high school teachers, IGU Geographical Education Commission & two

European associations – Eugeo and Eurogeo;

- Gala dinner, on the evening of August 23, in the Plenary Hall B of CNCC



Left, Welcome Reception on August 21

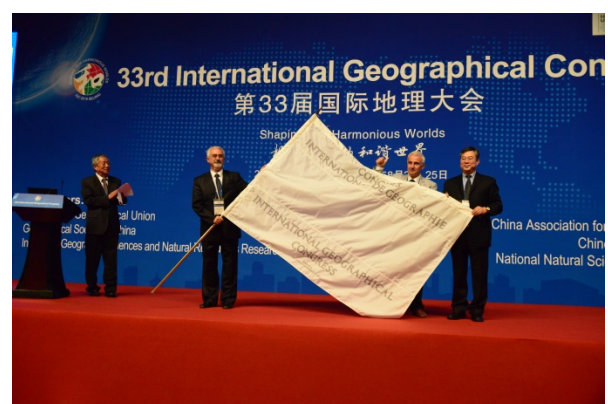


Right, Gala Dinner on August 23

The Congress came to a close in the afternoon of August 25. Bojie Fu, President of the Geographical Society of China presented the basic statistics and made a summary of the Congress. Vladimir Kolosov, the outgoing President of IGU delivered a speech of thanks and confirmed the success of the Congress. Then Joos Droogleever Fortuijn, Vice President of IGU announced the IGU and LOC Grant recipients. Michael Meadows and Vladimir Kolosov handed in the IGU Commission Excellent Award 2015 to Commission on Geographical Education; IGU Planet and Humanity Medal was awarded to Prof. Carl Folke, IGU Lauréats d'Honneur were presented to Prof. Ian Burton, Prof. Maria Dolores Garcias-Ramon and Prof. Benno Werlen. Chinese Geography Outstanding Achievement Awards were presented to Prof. Dadao Lu, Prof. Ke Liao and Prof. Cairui Jing. The representatives from the upcoming IGU Regional Conferences and Congresses, Matthew Hatvany from Quebec 2018, Ehmet Ertek from Istanbul 2020, Antoine Le-Blanc from Paris 2022, Frances Fahy from Dublin 2024 presented successively their programmes. Then the IGC flag was handed over to Ehmet Ertek, the representative of the Organizing Committee of the 34<sup>th</sup> International Geographical Congress. At last, Yukio Himiyama, the new President of IGU made a speech.



Left, Prof. Carl Folke was awarded the IGU Planet and Humanity Medal



Right, IGC flag was handed over to the representatives of the 34<sup>th</sup> IGC



Thanks to the efforts of our Chinese colleagues, the 33rd IGC achieved a great success and became the largest Congress ever in IGU history. Thanks also to those who supported the Congress financially, as well as 236 volunteers from universities and institutions in China, who provided services to participants during the whole Congress.

*This part of report was originally provided by the Local Organizing Committee of the IGC 2016, and edited by Yukio Himiyama and Michael Meadows.*

## Key decisions of the IGU General Assembly, Beijing

Representatives of 46 countries or regions attended one or more sessions of the assembly.

Countries/Regions Represented at the 2016 Beijing, China IGU General Assembly			
Australia	France	Netherlands	Sweden
Austria	Germany	New Zealand	Switzerland
Belarus	Greece	Oman	Tunisia
Belgium	Hungary	Pakistan	Turkey
Canada	India	Poland	Ukraine
Chile	Ireland	Republic of Korea	United Kingdom
China-Beijing	Israel	Romania	United States
China-Hong Kong	Italy	Russia	
China-Taipei	Japan	Saudi Arabia	
Croatia	Kazakhstan	Serbia	
Czech Republic	Latvia	Slovenia	
Denmark	Mexico	South Africa	
Estonia	Myanmar	Spain	

### Approval of New National Members

Applications for membership had been received within the last few weeks from representatives of the following countries: Bolivia, Ecuador, Luxembourg and Venezuela. Membership of all four countries was *approved unanimously*.

### Approval of Commissions, Task Forces, and Their Chairpersons

Secretary-General Meadows presented the recommendations formulated by the IGU Executive Committee regarding commissions and task forces for the forthcoming 2016-20 period. The Secretary-General agreed to circulate a full and updated list once this was compiled at the conclusion of the Congress and this would take account of necessary changes in the identity of chairpersons. Some adjustments to the steering committees would also be required to ensure that individuals do not continue terms of office beyond the 12 year limit as noted in the Statutes. The list below indicates 2012-16 chairpersons where this had already been decided. One new commission was established, viz. the Commission on Global Understanding with Professor Benno Werlen appointed as chair.

### 2016 General Assembly Actions on IGU Commissions and Task Forces

Code	Commission/Task Force	Chairperson 2016-20	Action
C16-01	Applied Geography	Lombard, USA	Renewed
C16-02	Biogeography and Biodiversity	Mizuno, Japan	Renewed
C16-03	Climatology	Matsumoto, Japan	Renewed

C16-04	Coastal Systems	Woodroffe, Australia	Renewed
C16-05	Cold Region and High Altitude Environments	Vlasova, Russia	Renewed
C16-06	Cultural Approach in Geography	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-07	Dynamics of Economic Spaces	Tamasy, Germany	Renewed
C16-08	Environmental Evolution	Novenko, Russia	Renewed
C16-09	Gender and Geography	Johnston, New Zealand	Renewed
C16-10	Geographical Education	Chang, Singapore, Brooks, UK	Renewed
C16-11	Geographical Information Science	Sui, United States; Su, China-Beijing	Renewed
C16-12	Geography of Governance	Nunes Silva, Portugal	Renewed
C16-13	Geography of Information, Innovation and Technology	Inkinen, Finland	Renewed
C16-14	Geography of Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change	Müller, Sweden	Renewed
C16-15	Geoheritage	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-16	Geomorphology and Society	Lin, China-Taipei	Renewed
C16-17	Global Change and Human Mobility	Dominguez-Musica, Spain	Renewed
C16-18	Global Understanding	Werlen, Germany	Established
C16-19	Hazards and Risks	Oguchi, Japan	Renewed
C16-20	Health and Environment	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-21	History of Geography	Schmidt di Friedberg, Italy	Renewed
C16-22	Islands	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-23	Karst	Ravbar, Slovenia	Renewed
C16-24	Land Degradation and Desertification	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-25	Landscape Analysis and Landscape Planning	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-26	Land Use and Land Cover Change	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-27	Latin American Studies	Delgado, Peru	Renewed
C16-28	Local and Regional Development	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-29	Marginalization, Globalization, and Regional and Local Responses	Déry, Canada	Renewed
C16-30	Mediterranean Basin	Paradiso, Italy	Renewed

C16-31	Modelling Geographical Systems	Fotheringham, USA	Renewed
C16-32	Political Geography	Virginie Mamadouh, Netherlands; Alexander Murphy, USA	Renewed
C16-33	Population Geography	Piguet, Switzerland	Renewed
C16-34	Sustainability of Rural Systems	Schmitz, Belgium; Barcus, USA	Renewed
C16-35	Toponymy	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-36	Transport Geography	To be confirmed	Renewed
C16-37	Urban Geography: Urban Challenges in a Complex World	Rozenblat, Switzerland	Renewed
C12-38	Water Sustainability	Frank Winde, South Africa	Renewed
T16-01	Olympiad Task Force	Sue Lomas, UK, Su-Min Shen, China-Taipei	Renewed
T16-02	Centennial and Sesquicentennial Task Force	To be confirmed	Renewed
T16-03	Young and Early Career Task Force	Ramdas, Singapore	Established

The following Commissions have been suspended and are on probation pending development of further information and plans for the period 2016-20: Arid Lands, Humankind and Environment; Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples' Rights; Mountain Response to Global Change; Transformation Processes in Megacities.

### **Report of the President for the Period 2012-16**

President Vladimir Kolosov summarized the major activities of the IGU over the inter-congress period. He noted the main goals of the IGU Strategy that had been developed in consultation with the Executive Committee following his election in 2012 as follows:

- To strengthen the position of the IGU as a truly global organization
- To play a leading role in research on sustainable development and territory
- To promote geography and to foster its integration in the international media space
- To make geographical education a focus of IGU activity

Kolosov reported on the truly global nature of the IGU, given that (following the acceptance of the four new national members approved earlier) has 68 full member countries and 39 with observer status. Efforts to extend contacts with both Latin America and Africa have had varying degrees of success; the developing relationship between Union de Geógrafos de América Latina (UGAL) and IGU has recently been given considerable impetus and the 2017 hosting of an IGU Thematic Conference in La Paz, Bolivia, in association with Encuentro de Geógrafos de América Latina (EGAL) gives effect to this. The situation in Africa is proving more challenging, especially in the francophone countries, and IGU needs to redouble its efforts in this regard.

One of the specific objectives of the IGU in the inter-congress period was to improve the quality of

its major conferences and congresses, in addition to making them more accessible to young and early career scholars and participants from low-income countries. There are some encouraging signs that this has been achieved: Cologne in 2012 attracted more than 3000 delegates, the largest ever gathering of geographers under the IGU banner (now superseded by the current Beijing Congress) and regional meetings in Kyoto (Japan, 2013); Krakow (Poland, 2014) and Moscow (Russia, 2015) had between 1300 to 1700 participants from 65-70 countries in each case.

The IGU has extended its activities into new and innovative areas of the discipline, with the establishment since 2012 of new commissions on Latin American Studies, Mediterranean Basin and Toponymy (jointly with the International Cartographic Association, ICA) and Task Forces devoted to the IGU Centennial and Sesquicentennial and to Young and Early-Career Geographers. It is clear, from the 2012-16 Commission and Task Force reports that there are now considerably more joint commission conferences and other activities. The establishment of the Commission Excellence Award in 2013 has given some effect to this, along with the increase from 2016 in the annual operating grant provided to seed Commission and Task Force activities. Many Commissions publish the proceedings of their meetings and workshops, either in special issues of journals or as edited volumes; Springer is now publishing regular contributions from commissions in the *Advances in Environmental and Geographical Sciences* series.

IGU represents the discipline through its active participation in the International Council for Science (ICSU), the International Social Science Council (ISSC) and, since 2015, the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH). IGU has also been successful in obtaining major research grants from ICSU, including: “Transdisciplinary Intercultural Ecological Research for Sustainability” (TIERS) and “Global Understanding Global Sustainability” (together with ICA, International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG), International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing). There is greater involvement of IGU representatives in the work of international governmental organizations and committees of the UN system such as the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN). Cooperation with the major new international (ICSU/ISSC) programme “Future Earth” is to be encouraged and it is clear that the IGU should play a leading role in interdisciplinary research related to territory and the environment. Both formal and informal regional collaborative networks have been established and joint initiatives with high profile European geographical associations Eugeo and Eurogeo are underway, including the International Charter on Geographical Education.

IGU has several significant specific projects. The inauguration of 2016 as the International Year of Global Understanding (IYGU) is the highest profile of these, but there are other important initiatives, including Our Sustainable Cities (*OurSus*) and the IGU Journals project. *OurSus* aims to connect academic geography with municipal authorities and business communities; to disseminate good practice of sustainability in cities of different sizes and has thus far been particularly successful in China.

Many new tasks lie ahead. We aim to raise the profile of the IGU, to establish relations with international business organizations (for instance, in the field of tourism); to establish relations with the leading institutions in the field of GIS and to continue to make geographical education as a strong focus of IGU activity. The forthcoming centenary of the organisation, which will be celebrated at an extraordinary Congress in Paris in 2022, offers an excellent opportunity for IGU to consolidate its status and give effect to existing and new initiatives.

#### **Report of the Secretary General and Treasurer for the Period 2012-2016**

Secretary-General and Treasurer Meadows presented his brief report to the assembly. He affirmed the country membership details outlined by President Kolosov and noted that the following national



committees had submitted inter-congress reports: China-Hong Kong, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, India, Italy, New Zealand, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. These would be posted on the IGU website in due course along with the Commission and Task Force 2012-16 reports.

Meadows noted that one of the key duties of the IGU Secretary-General is to act as a hub and conduit for communications. This manifests in several different ways, viz. through the biannual publication of the Bulletin, the annual report, the quarterly newsletter (courtesy of former Vice-President Bellezza), and through the IGU website ([www.igu-online.org](http://www.igu-online.org)) which is now available in French, Spanish and Arabic versions. IGU has a social media presence through its Facebook page, which has now almost 3000 'likes'. Maintaining an updated and accurate database of IGU contacts, especially national committee and commission and task force chairs is one of the major tasks of the Secretary-General. The IGU Journals Project database has recently been thoroughly updated.

Meadows also reported on the diverse activities of the other IGU Executive Committee members, which are now formally reported twice annually and include, *inter alia*, liaison responsibilities with both national committees (including contact with potential new members and Commissions and Task Forces. EC members attend Commission and Task Force events where and when possible and review their reports as part of the process that leads to the selection of the winner of the Commission Excellence Award and the inter-congress review. Members of the EC are responsible for the administration of the IGU Travel grant programme, represent IGU (Geography) at national and international events, set-up promotional stands at exhibitions and distribute publicity materials etc. They also provide material for the e-Newsletter, annual report and Bulletin etc. Moreover, the executive act as 'ears to the ground' regarding developments, directions and trends in the discipline of geography.

As Treasurer, Meadows presented summary details regarding the financial situation of the IGU, which remains sound.

#### **Election of the 2016-2020 IGU President and Executive Committee Members**

Nominations for vacancies on the IGU Executive Committee were solicited from the chairs of national committees in October 2015 to be received at the IGU Secretariat no later than 1st March 2016. One nomination was received for president (Yukio Himiyama, Japan) and eight individuals were nominated for four vice presidential seats on the IGU Executive Committee.

In a secret ballot, Himiyama was elected President 2016-2020 until the conclusion of the Istanbul 34<sup>th</sup> International Geographical Congress (43 votes, one abstention). The election for four Vice President vacancies, with the votes cast in their favour, produced the following result:

<i>The Netherlands</i> -- Joos Droogleever-Fortuijn, University of Amsterdam	32
<i>Turkey</i> --Barbaros Gönençgil, University of Istanbul	23
<i>Slovenia</i> --Anton Gosar, University of Primorska	11
<i>France</i> --Nathalie Lemarchand, University of Paris VIII	21
<i>Finland</i> --Jarkko Saarinen, University of Oulu	19
<i>Israel</i> --Izhak Schnell, University of Tel Aviv	9
<i>India</i> --RB Singh, University of Delhi	32
<i>Canada</i> --Rémy Tremblay, Télé-Université (University of Quebec)	20

Accordingly, Droogleever-Fortuijn, Gönençgil, Lemarchand and Singh were elected as Vice-Presidents for the period 2016-2020 through the 34<sup>th</sup> Istanbul International Geographical Congress.

Given that Himiyama, who was now elected Vice-President for the period 2014-18, was elected President, this created a Vice-President vacancy for the remaining period. The General Assembly agreed that a runoff ballot should be held between the four originally nominated candidates who were not elected in the initial ballot. The result of the runoff ballot was as follows:

<i>Slovenia</i> --Anton Gosar, University of Primorska	11
<i>Finland</i> --Jarkko Saarinen, University of Oulu	8
<i>Israel</i> --Izhak Schnell, University of Tel Aviv	9
<i>Canada</i> --Rémy Tremblay, Télé-Université (University of Quebec)	15

Accordingly, Rémy Tremblay is elected to the position of Vice-President for the period 2016-18 with a possibility of renewal for a further term of four years.

### **Selection of the location of the 2024 36th International Geographical Conference**

Four invitations to host the IGU Congress in 2024 were received from the following IGU National Committees: Denmark/Sweden (Copenhagen-Malmö); Ireland (Dublin); Australia (Melbourne); Czech Republic (Prague). Following presentations to the General Assembly by representatives of the bids, the EC presented its rank order recommendation to the General Assembly as follows: 1. Melbourne, 2= Copenhagen/Malmö and Dublin, 4 Prague. Following presentations by representatives of the bids, the ballot, with votes cast in favour, produced the following result:

<i>Denmark-Sweden: Copenhagen-Malmö</i>	6
<i>Ireland: Dublin</i>	19
<i>Australia: Melbourne</i>	12
<i>Czech Republic: Prague</i>	7

Accordingly, Dublin was selected as the location of the 2024 36th International Geographical Congress.

### **International Charter on Geographical Education**

The IGU Commission on Geographical Education has been pioneering efforts to re-establish a revised International Charter on Geographical Education. The charter was officially signed and ratified at a special ceremony at the Beijing IGU 33<sup>rd</sup> Congress.

### **Memorandum of Agreement between International Geographical Union and International Association of Geomorphologists**

Following discussion over the previous few months, the International Geographical Union and the International Association of Geomorphologists has prepared a memorandum of understanding in order to facilitate co-operation on activities and projects of mutual interest. The memorandum was signed at the General Assembly by the President of the International Association of Geomorphologists (Professor Eric Fouache) and IGU President Kolosov.

### **Announcement of IGU Honors and Awards**

President Kolosov announced the IGU awards, as recommended by the IGU Awards Committee, to be conferred in 2016 as follows: *IGU Planet and Humanity Medal*: Professor Carl Folke, University of

Stockholm. IGU *Lauréat d'Honneur*: Professor Ian Burton (University of Toronto, Canada), Maria Dolores Garcia-Ramon (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain), Benno Werlen (Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, Germany). Secretary-General Meadows presented the actual Planet and Humanity medal to Professor Folke at a special ceremony in Stockholm in October 2016.

### **Schedule of Future IGU Meetings**

The schedule of major IGU meetings through 2024 is as follows:

- 2018 Quebec, Canada Regional Conference
- 2020 Istanbul, Turkey, 34<sup>th</sup> International Geographical Congress
- 2022 Paris, France, Extraordinary International Geographical Congress
- 2024 Dublin, Ireland 36<sup>th</sup> International Geographical Congress

### **Highlights of the IGU Executive Committee meetings of 2016**

#### **IGU Executive Committee 2016-18**

##### **President**

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Left: Geography students outside the Institute of Geography at Paris-Sorbonne University; Right: Members of the IGU Executive Committee at the University of Paris Sorbonne



Three Executive Committee meetings were held in 2016. The first was in Delhi in March, the second was in Tianjin/Beijing in August, and the third was in Paris in November.

The first EC meeting in 2016 was held at Indian National Science Academy, Delhi, India during 17-19 March. It was held at the same time as the annual Indian IGU International Conference on Land Use Change, Climate Extremes and Disaster Risk Reduction, so that the EC members had a good opportunity of getting together with Indian geographers. It was the last EC meeting before the one immediately before the Beijing IGC, hence much time was devoted to the issues related with the Beijing IGC, such as session themes or grant programs, and some suggestions, e.g. inclusion of some events for school teachers, were made. IGU's relations with such international bodies as ICCS, ISSC, CIPSH, AAG, RGS, or Future Earth also remained high on the agenda. In this meeting an important decision was made for the promotion of activities of Commissions, Task Forces and National Committees for IGU. The 'Urbanization, Health and Wellbeing' Conference in Hyderabad, India, in March 2017 was recognized as representing an opportunity to promote the 'thematic conference' concept, and it was agreed to label this and the other future meetings of equivalent significance officially as an 'IGU Thematic Conference'.

The second EC meeting was held at Shangri-La Hotel, Tianjin, China and at Institute of Geography and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China during 17-21 August 2016, i.e. immediately before the IGC Beijing. With the assistance of Tianjin Normal University, the IGC Beijing Organizing Committee hosted the EC meeting including local study tours which gave the EC members a good chance of meeting Chinese geographers and observing the region. The EC meeting was quite intensive in order to cover various aspects of the IGU activities in general and the IGC and the General Assembly in particular. For detail, please see the minutes of the meetings. Following the General Assembly and the election of new members, the Executive Committee, including outgoing and incoming members, reconvened at the China National Convention Centre on 25 August 2016, soon after the Closing Ceremony of the IGC. The meeting was chaired by newly elected President Yukio Himiyama, who welcomed Past President Vladimir Kolosov, Secretary-General Mike Meadows, new Vice Presidents Barbaros Gönengil, and Nathalie Lemarchand, re-elected Vice-Presidents Joos Droogleever-Fortuijn and RB Singh, and continuing Vice-Presidents Elena dell'Agnese and Zhou Chenghu. Outgoing members of the committee, Professor Ron Abler (accompanied by Barbara Abler) and Dieter Soye, were also in attendance. Newly elected Vice-President Rémy Tremblay, outgoing Vice-President Jarkko Saarinen and continuing Vice-President Iain Hay were unable to attend. President Himiyama suggested that Joos Droogleever-Fortuijn be the First Vice-President for the period 2016-20, and the nomination was accepted and enthusiastically approved. In saying farewell to outgoing Executive Committee members there was a special tribute paid to Professor Ron Abler, a stalwart of the committee, as Vice-President, as Secretary-General and Treasurer and as President and Past President over twenty years of selfless service.

The third EC meeting in 2016 was held at Maison de la Recherche, Paris, France, during 14-17 November 2016. It was the first official EC meeting since the EC for 2016-2018 started at the end of the IGC Beijing, hence assignment of Commissions/Task Forces, member countries and other duties to each EC member, checking of the states of the Commissions/Task Forces and confirmation of the time table of EC meetings during this period had priority in the meeting. The confirmed dates of the forthcoming EC meetings are: 8 - 10 May 2017, Quebec; 7 - 9 September 2017, Amsterdam; 10 - 12 April 2018, Tokyo. The EC members had good opportunity of meeting not only French geographers including

the representative of the French Geographical Society, but also the President of University of Paris. The venue enabled re-consolidation of the somewhat weakened relation between the IGU and the French speaking world, and paving the way to the 2022 Extraordinary Geographical Congress to be held in Paris to celebrate the IGU centennial.

### **International Year of Global Understanding**

The Opening Ceremony of the 2016 International Year of Global Understanding (IYGU) was held at Volkshaus, Jena, Germany, on 2 February with the attendance of some three hundred participants, including four IGU EC members. IYGU was initiated by IGU and was endorsed and proclaimed by ICSU, ISSC and CIPSH, and was concluded with a great success. 2017 will be the harvest year. Although it is not yet clear if IYGU succeeds in getting sizable funding for further activities in the coming years, it will at least continue and develop part of its mission with the new IGU Commission on 'Global Understanding' at its core. The budget of a Commission is generally modest, but with the support of the many IYGU Regional Action Centres throughout the world and the willing IGU community, the new Commission can do something substantial. An impressive fact is that the number of IYGU Regional Action Centres is still increasing in January 2017.



An IYGU Symposium organized by Science Council of Japan in Tokyo, 3 December 2016

### ***OurSus* Sustainable Cities Project**

Activities in association with the Beijing Congress kept a high profile during the Congress. There are several Commissions willing to engage with the project. Funding has been obtained from the Geographical Society of China and one of the Beijing Normal Universities. The domination of Chinese city cases remains, but Ton Dietz, who has already identified several possible new participant cities, will have an opportunity to be even more active with *OurSus* following his retirement in 2017. The possibility of a Task Force devoted to this project needs to be further explored.

## Co-operation with other organizations

**ICSU (incl. GeoUnions):** Meadows and Droogleever-Fortuijn attended the Extraordinary General Assembly held in Oslo on 24 October 2016 on behalf of IGU, and presented the view that, while IGU is supportive of the merger of ICSU and ISSC, this should not be at the expense of research and projects on core aspects of our discipline. Following considerable discussion and voting, the decision to take forward the merger in principle in accordance with the agreed framework was ratified.

**ISSC:** Meadows attended the ISSC General Assembly in Oslo as a follow-up to the previous meeting (see above). The major item of discussion was the proposed merger.

**CIPSH:** CIPSH has good connections with UNESCO through a recently signed framework agreement; there are also strong linkages with IYGU. Both the Cultural Geography and History of Geography Commissions have obvious synergies with CIPSH, and are encouraged to forge a closer relationship.

**EUROGEO, EUGEO:** IGU representation at the events of both these organisations is desirable. The next EUGEO conference is being held in Brussels shortly before September 2017 EC meeting in Amsterdam and is to attract attendance from several EC members.

**UGAL/EGAL (dell'Agnese):** The success of this organization (UGAL) and its meetings (EGAL) continues to impress, and the fact that the next EGAL meeting in La Paz has been branded as an IGU Thematic Conference is a very exciting development, especially since some 3000 delegates are expected to attend.

**IAG (International Association of Geomorphologists):** The President of the IAG proposed a possible 'joint working group/commission' along the lines of the IGU/ICA Commission on Toponymy. It was approved by the EC, and Meadows is to engage with the relevant IGU Commission in this regard.

**AAG:** IGU stand was set up in the AAG Annual Conference held in March-April 2016 in San Francisco, and was periodically attended by EC members. Many people visited the stand and signed up to become a corresponding member of receiving IGU E-Newsletter.

## Forthcoming events

8-10 May 2017: IGU EC meeting in Quebec, Canada.

7-9 September 2017: IGU EC meeting in Amsterdam, Netherland.

10-12 April 2018: IGU EC meeting in Tokyo, Japan.

17-19 March 2017: IGU Thematic Conference on 'Urbanization, Health & Well Being and Sustainable Development Goals', in Hyderabad, India.

23-25 April 2017: IGU Thematic Conference on 'Geographies for Peace', in La Paz, Bolivia.

11-14 September 2017: IGU Thematic Conference on 'Land Use/Cover Changes, Biodiversity, Health and Environment, Local and Regional Development', in Bucharest/Tulcea, Romania.

6-10 August 2018: IGU Regional Conference on 'Appreciating Difference' in Quebec, Canada.

## Communication and outreach

The main communication tools of the IGU are its quarterly newsletter, compiled by former Vice-President Giuliano Bellezza and its website, maintained by Secretary-General Mike Meadows. As usual, four issues of the new series of the e-Newsletter were published in 2016 and can be downloaded from the website by following the newsletter link from [www.igu-online.org](http://www.igu-online.org). The IGU Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Geographical-Union/282917935136850>) continues to attract 'likes' and the website also attracts many visitors.

## IGU Financials 2012-16

Since 2016 was a year in which there was a General Assembly, it is possible to present an overview of IGU finances for the inter-congress period, as well as a summary of the 2016 balance sheet etc. Table 1 indicates that, although there is a substantial amount of variation between years in terms of income and expenditure, income generally exceeds expenditure during most years and the total amount held in the various IGU accounts has increased over time.

**Table 1:**

<b>IGU Income and Expense 2011-2015</b>			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expense</i>	<i>Surplus (Deficit)</i>
2011	\$167,148.72	\$140,518.00	\$ 26,630.72
2012	\$138,916.26	\$146,209.01	(\$ 23,111.13)
2013	\$223,508.90	\$187,891.21	\$ 36,617.69
2014	\$151,903.86	\$131,196.39	\$ 20,707.47
2015	\$120,405.12	\$125,272.32	(\$4,867.20)

Table 2 illustrates two key elements of the IGU accounts, viz. the operating account balance at year-end, the annual cost of EC member attendance at IGU events and the total amount disbursed to Commissions, Task Forces and special projects. Net assets continue to grow in dollar terms, the EC costs are being reduced in general, and that the funds disbursed to the community of geographers by the IGU have grown substantially since 2008.

**Table 2:**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Operating account balance at year end</i>	<i>EC costs</i>	<i>Grants to Commissions and projects</i>
2008	\$124,104.33	\$57,313.00	\$24,300.00
2009	\$165,617.92	\$34,274.00	\$13,300.00
2010	\$179,072.94	\$39,343.77	\$9,300.00
2011	\$205,947.56	\$28,508.87	\$31,700.00
2012	\$162,139.10	\$45,007.75	\$61,100.00
2013	\$186,957.76	\$37,219.77	\$89,700.00
2014	\$207,666.40	\$41,059.63	\$52,400.00
2015	\$202,798.03	\$31,657.13	\$71,500.00



**Table 3:**

<b>IGU Endowment Fund</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Balance</b>
13/01/01	Opening Balance*	\$4 509,11	\$4 509,11
13/03/27	ESRI Contribution	\$25 000,00	\$29 509,11
13/07/14	Cologne LOC Capitation	\$6 411,00	\$35 920,11
13/07/29	Anonymous	\$655,00	\$36 575,11
13/10/24	Interest	\$9,22	\$36 584,33
13/12/26	Kyoto LOC Capitation	\$10 000,00	\$46 584,33
14/01/31	Interest	\$9,22	\$46 593,55
14/04/30	Interest	\$5,74	\$46 599,29
14/07/31	Interest	\$5,81	\$46 605,10
14/10/31	Interest	\$5,87	\$46 610,97
15/01/26	Interest	\$5,88	\$46 616,85
15/04/24	Interest	\$5,74	\$46 622,59
15/04/30	Krakow LOC Capitation	\$12 600,00	\$59 222,59
15/12/31	Interest	\$21,81	\$59 244,40
16/03/11	Moscow LOC Capitation	\$11 000,00	\$70 244,40
16/04/24	Interest	\$14,77	\$70 259,17
16/05/12	Anonymous	\$528,71	\$70 787,88
16/06/02	Anonymous	\$165,66	\$70 953,54
*The IGU Endowment was established in 2003. A number of small contributions over the next ten years created the balance as of 1 January 2013			

Table 3 illustrates progress in the endowment fund, which is now growing consistently due to Promotion and Solidarity Fund contributions from the local organising committees of the IGU Congresses and Regional Conferences as a result of the development of the conference and congress memorandum of understanding. Past-President Abler, under whose supervision the funds are held in the United States, has agreed to source higher interest rate , yet still conservative, options for these funds.

## 2016 Financials

The IGU ended 2016 with a small operating surplus (see Appendices 1 and 2). This is particularly gratifying in a year in which there was a Congress (with commitments to travel grants), three Executive Committee meetings, an ICSU Unions meeting and a special General Assembly of the ISSC. Many Executive Committee members access sources outside IGU in order to attend Executive Committee meetings, costs for which have been consistently reduced over the years and a greater proportion of IGU expenditure is now allocated to Commissions and for travel grants than was the case in the past. The IGU Endowment fund now stands in excess of US\$70k and is expected to continue to grow as a reserve and for use in special projects as determined by the General Assembly.

**Profit & Loss**

Cash Basis

January through December 2016

	Jan - Dec 16
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
Contributions	11,694.37
Investments	
Banking Accounts Interest	4,395.09
Total Investments	4,395.09
Program Income	
Country Member Dues	144,332.02
Total Program Income	144,332.02
Total Income	160,421.48
<b>Gross Profit</b>	160,421.48
<b>Expense</b>	
Awards and Grants	
IGU Travel Grants	19,293.16
Total Awards and Grants	19,293.16
<b>Operations</b>	
Collaboration and Outreach	
Conference, Convention, Meeting	635.00
Memberships and Dues	8,651.60
Collaboration and Outreach - Ot...	2,407.69
Total Collaboration and Outreach	11,694.29
Executive Committee Meetings	24,387.87
IGU Commissions	66,618.67
IGU Honors Programs	8,803.12
Total Operations	111,503.95
<b>Secretariat</b>	
Banking Fees	3,115.90
Internet and IGU Web Site	1,323.11
Postage, Mailing Service	2,957.05
Secretarial Assistance	3,730.74
Supplies	1,765.09
Total Secretariat	12,891.89
Total Expense	143,689.00
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	16,732.48
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>16,732.48</b>

**Balance Sheet**

Cash Basis

As of December 31, 2016

	<u>Dec 31, 16</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
Johnson Bank IGU Endowment	70,968.32
Johnson Bank Operating Acco...	2,865.44
Petty Cash	590.95
SBCT Market Link	781.68
SBCT Money Market	129,501.80
SBCT Operating Account	14,811.70
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<u>219,519.89</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<u>219,519.89</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>219,519.89</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
Opening Balance Equity	151,339.52
Unrestricted Net Assets	51,447.89
Net Income	16,732.48
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u>219,519.89</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b><u>219,519.89</u></b>