

## **Extract from IUGS E-Bulletin September 2013**

### **Current status of geosciences in UNESCO**

After the disastrous down ranking of geosciences during the 191<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Executive Board meeting, several initiatives by the IUGS, with strong support from other ICSU GeoUnions, have had a positive effect.

During the 192<sup>th</sup> EC Board meeting at UNESCO, the Geoparks initiative was brought back to the agenda and the current status is that creation of a Category V advisory board is being considered, with the Director-General of UNESCO Ms Irina Bokova encouraging "... the holding of further discussions with the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) to deepen mutual partnership and agree on joint support of the Geopark Initiative..."

This is certainly a step in the right direction, but it is far from sufficient. Within major international scientific institutions like UNESCO and ICSU, and more generally, the geosciences must be regarded as fundamentally important given their underpinning roles in understanding our Planet's processes and managing use of its water, energy, raw material and soil resources.

We are still far from this goal. Your ongoing assistance in bringing geosciences to the minds of authorities, national committee members, UN/UNESCO ambassadors, etc. will be most appreciated.

For now, however, we appreciate UNESCO's move and are prepared for further fruitful co-operation.

### **Additional notes**

1. The future of the joint IUGS-UNESCO International Geoscience Program (IGCP) is to be discussed in the light UNESCO budget cuts. It is possible that it will be reformulated with a focus on projects related to Resourcing Future Generations.
2. The Global Geoparks Network (<http://www.globalgeopark.org/>) is growing at a considerable rate – but not in Australia, where the declaration of the Kanawinka Global Geopark (Newer Volcanics Vic-SA) was resisted by the previous Government and rejected by the Environment and Agricultural Ministerial Councils.

With the new Government, there is a chance to have Global Geoparks reconsidered in Australia, under the Industry and Resources portfolio. AGC should consider whether it wishes to promote this. With IUGS likely to have a partner role with UNESCO, the time for promoting Australian Global Geoparks is good. Basically, Geoparks are areas with globally significant geological features, which are highlighted and explained for visitors. There are no restrictions on activities in these areas, provided the geological significance is not degraded. In some cases, Global Geoparks are also World Heritage areas, where the geological features have been given higher profiles

### **Resourcing Future Generations**

The IUGS New Activities Scoping Committee (NASIC) will report to IUGS on 26 October on its recommendations for the Resourcing Future Generations Initiative.

The program for the Pardee Keynote Symposium on Resourcing Future Generations, convened by Ian Lambert, at the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting in Denver has been finalised as follows:

**Session 1. Chair: Edmund Nickless**

<b><i>Time</i></b>	<b><i>Presenting Author</i></b>	<b><i>Title</i></b>
1.00 pm	<i>Ian Lambert</i>	RESOURCING FUTURE GENERATIONS: THE CHALLENGES
1.20 pm	<i>Larry Meinert</i>	TRACKING RESOURCES AND ESTIMATING FUTURE SUPPLIES
1.40 pm	<i>Damien Giurco</i>	RESOURCES AND SUPPLY-DEMAND OVER THE VERY LONG TERM
2.00 pm	<i>Anjian Wang</i>	ANALYSIS OF CHINESE AND GLOBAL SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR KEY MINERALS IN THE COMING 20 YEARS
2.20 pm	<i>Marcio Godoy</i>	RESOURCING FUTURE GENERATIONS: AN INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

**Session 2. Chair Pat Leahy**

3.10 pm	<i>Murray Hitzman</i>	MINERAL DISCOVERY IN KNOWN AND AS-YET-UNKNOWN MINERAL SYSTEMS
3.30 pm	<i>Neil Willams</i>	MINERAL EXPLORATION UNDER DEEP COVER
3.50 pm	<i>Mxolisi Kota</i>	THE CHALLENGES FOR RESOURCING FUTURE GENERATIONS FROM AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE
4.10 pm	<i>Manfred Strecker</i>	GEOGOVERNANCE - PREPARING FOR THE UNPREDICTABLE
4.30 – 5 pm	<i>Panel Discussion and closing remarks Chair: Nick Arndt</i>	<i>Resourcing Future Generations</i>

**IUGS Business Meetings**

The IUGS Bureau (President, Secretary General and Treasurer) will meet in conjunction with the GSA Annual Meeting in Denver, 26 October. It will receive and discuss the NASIC report on Resourcing Future Generations.

In mid-November, the Secretary General will attend a meeting of the International Council for Science (ICSU) GeoUnions, which will discuss collaboration in the Resourcing Future Generations Initiative and its partial incorporation into the ICSU-led major new program – Future Earth.

The 2014 IUGS Executive Committee meeting will be held in Goa (India) from 8 February and will be followed the next week by meetings in Paris of the IGCP (a strategic meeting to discuss its future) and Commission for the Geological Map of the World (which is affiliated.

with IUGS and has extensive metadata that could be useful for Resourcing Future Generations, including for the various metallogenic maps it has prepared).

### **Support for Ian Lambert's IUGS travel**

I hesitate to raise this after the sensitive negotiations that led to acceptance by the AGC and member societies to support (out of 34 IGC surplus) Ian Lambert's travel as IUGS Secretary General, up to a total amount of \$100,000 over 5 years from August 2012.

I am very grateful for this support which was necessary for my acceptance of the SG position. But it has proven difficult to manage the travel with a \$20,000 annual limit. For example, I have to travel to the ICSU Geounions meeting in Turkey by discount economy (only a few days after returning from Denver), which is not easy at my age. I have also not been able to attend significant meetings discussing future Earth observation systems focussed on natural resources, etc.

Could I respectfully request that AGC consider agreeing to more flexibility as to when the AGC/geosocieties support can be committed, **without altering the total amount** available. This would mean, in effect, the earlier use of some funds currently allocated for 2017 (which would be a quieter year for me as past SG). I hope that all can see I have been driving a number of promising initiatives that could benefit the geosciences in Australia.