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## **WELCOME**

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

2004 has been a great year for the IGU and the Commission. The IGC in Glasgow was a very important and interesting event, where our Commission was well represented with many papers and sessions. We thank everybody for the active participation and I hope we will have the same high participation also in future events. You find the list of the planned meetings below.

For now, I wish you all happy holidays and a happy and successful New Year.

Berne, December 2004

*Doris Wastl-Walter*

## **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Changes in the Steering Committee**

According to the IGU rules, members of the steering Committee can only serve a certain time and thus we had to change the team at the IGC. Robert Bennett, Max Barlow and Rex Honey served the Commission in different functions for nearly 20 years, first as founders of the study group and later Bob and Max as Chairs and Rex as secretary. The success that the Commission has had since the beginning is largely due to the ample network and relevant issues that they were able to develop and maintain.

Dear Bob, dear Max, dear Rex, we appreciate very much your pioneering work and your extraordinary commitment with the field of geography and the IGU. We would like to thank you very much for your activities and we hope that you will be able to continue your support for the Commission. We wish you the best for your personal lives and your scientific future.

# IGU Commission on Geography and Public Policy

Steering Committee 2004-2008

**Commission Chair:**

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***New members:***

**Shannon O'Lear**

Department of Geography, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045-7613. E-mail: [olear@ku.edu](mailto:olear@ku.edu) Phone: 785 864 20 41. Fax: 785 864 5378.  
MA (University of Colorado at Boulder), PhD (Syracuse University).

Research interests: Political geography of environmental issues, environmental security and vulnerability, political construction of scale, political geography of former Soviet republics, human dimensions of global change, political geography of communication.

Current research focuses on political and environmental issues in the Caucasus and Caspian Sea regions. Shannon O'Lear speaks fluently Russian.

**Willie Smith**

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Senior Lecturer. MA (University of Aberdeen, Scotland) MSc, PhD (McGill University in Montreal, Canada).

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### **Dates of the Future Commission Meetings**

The planned and confirmed future commission meetings are:

#### **2005**

IOWA (USA), joint conference with the AAG West Lakes Division "Geography Of and For Public Policy." November 3-5. Organiser: Rex Honey, University of Iowa. [rex-honey@uiowa.edu](mailto:rex-honey@uiowa.edu)

#### **2006**

BRISBANE (Australia), Session of the Commission at the IGU Regional Conference "Regional Responses to Global Changes – A view from the Antipodes", July 3-7. Organiser: Willie Smith, University of Auckland. E-mail: [w.smith@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:w.smith@auckland.ac.nz)

BRATISLAVA (Slovakia), IGU GAPP Conference "New tasks, approaches and spatial perspectives in public policy", September – October. Organiser: Jan Bucek, Comenius University, Bratislava. [bucek@fns.uniba.sk](mailto:bucek@fns.uniba.sk)

#### **2007**

KATHMANDU (Nepal), IGU GAPP Conference, Topic to be defined, First week of February. Organiser: Pushkar K Pradhan, Tribhuvan University. [puba@mail.com.np](mailto:puba@mail.com.np)

ZÜRICH/BERN (Switzerland) Joint Conference with the IGU Commission on Gender, Topic to be defined, May 2007. Organiser: Elisabeth Buehler, University of Zuerich and Doris Wastl-Walter, University of Bern. [buehler@geo.unizh.ch](mailto:buehler@geo.unizh.ch)

#### **2008**

TUNIS (Tunisia), Sessions at the IGC in August.

### **FUTURE CONFERENCES**

*Brisbane, AUS, July 3-7, 2006*  
**IGU Regional Conference "Regional Responses to Global Changes – A view from the Antipodes"**

The Brisbane IGU 2006 Regional Conference focuses geographical attention on critical physical and human processes driving global change. Complex, global-scale processes exert pressures on environmental, social, cultural and economic resources at regional and local scales both between and within nation states. Such pressures encourage societal division and undermine practical efforts to enhance the sustainability of human society. The Conference will take up this challenge by

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focussing on regional responses in a changing world, with emphasis on equatorial and tropical zones, particularly in south-east Asia and the south-west Pacific.

*Key symposia will include:*

- local and regional impacts of resource exploitation and community responses
- mobilisation of regional capabilities to sustain and enhance social, cultural and environmental values
- constructive responses to natural disasters, climatic change, and other global-scale processes

Analysis of contemporary development issues will be a key theme, including the role of indigenous/nonindigenous co-management of resources. The Regional conference enables a timely audit and review of these issues and an opportunity for agenda setting research discussion. These necessarily involve debate over the cross-national engagements geographers seek to nurture and over the policy and political outcomes of geographers' work.

## **Planned Excursions:**

### *Australia*

- Sustainable Management of Australia's Tropical Savannas
- Desert Homelands and Livelihoods: Central Australia Great Barrier Reef
- Red Centre of Australia
- Tropical North Queensland Limestone and Lava
- World Heritage Rainforests of the Border Ranges
- Great Sand Islands of Southern Queensland
- Heritage Towns of Southeast Queensland
- Sunbelt Migration and Cultural Change on the Subtropical Coast

### *New Zealand*

- Cultural landscapes of the North Island
- Glacial landscapes in the South Island
- Volcanic landscapes in the Central North Island
- A tourism and wine trail in Central Otago

## **Organizers**

Joint meeting of the Institute of Australian Geographers and the New Zealand Geographical Society.

*Steering Committee:* Professor John Holmes, University of Queensland (*Chair*); Professor Richard Bedford, University of Waikato; Professor Ruth Fincher, University of Melbourne; Professor David Gillieson, James Cook University; Professor Peter Holland, University of Otago; Professor Jamie Kirkpatrick, University of Tasmania; Professor Richard Le Heron, University of Auckland; Professor Warren Moran, University of Auckland; Professor Phillip O'Neill, Newcastle University; Professor Nigel Tapper, Monash University

For enquiries and information contact:

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# IGU Commission on Geography and Public Policy

*Bratislava, Slovakia, September-October, 2006*

**IGU GAPP Conference**

**“New tasks, approaches and spatial perspectives in public policy”**

## **Introductory Announcement**

Wide range of papers is expected, but contributions addressing narrow group of topics will be highly appreciated. They should discuss the latest administrative territorial reforms including decentralisation, their limits and consequences. Governments at all level also are changing approaches to delivery of various public goods and services with various outcomes. Communities, cities and regions also face large variety of problems – innovative public policies are adopted, responding on them in different ways and different effects. Rising differences in social and economic situation across localities ask for addressing local economic development issues once again, including role of institutions, financial tools, planning and implementation strategies, as well as central state intervention. The relations among levels of government also remain very complicated and ideal for fruitful exchange of ideas. The role, scope and forms of citizens' involvement in managing public affairs also need more attention. We should understand much more how governments perceive and deal with spatiality inherent in many of their policies.

Further information on the conference is to be followed in the next IGU GAPP newsletter.

## **Organizers**

Jan Bucek ([bucek@fns.uniba.sk](mailto:bucek@fns.uniba.sk)), Pavol Korec and Vladimir Slavik, Department of Human Geography and Demogeography, Comenius University, 842 15 Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

## **CONFERENCE REPORT OF THE IGC**

The IGU Commission on Geography and Public Policy (C00.09) has held about 15 sessions with about 60 papers during the IGC-UK 2004 in Glasgow, including. Four joint sessions together with the Commission on Evolving Issues of Geographical Marginality (C00.05) and the Commission on the World Political Map (C00.22). This means, that we have been one of the most active Commissions at the IGC, with many important and interesting contributions and we all thank the organisers, esp. Lorraine Craig, for their hard work and we thank all the presenters of the Commission for their valuable input!

However, there are also some points to think about in the future: As several other Commissions, we had also the problem that some speakers did not show up. I understood that they tried to come, announced a paper, and finally could not make it to Glasgow, often due to lacking finances. Although the Organising Committee in Britain has given a great financial support to many participants, some were quite late with their applications. So please take care that you meet the deadlines when you want to apply for subsidies. Nevertheless, the IGU will take care that the next congress will not be as expensive as this one.

Regarding the work of the Commission, the broad interest, and participation needs some work to continue to be focussed and to keep the profile. We will work on that for the next meetings.

## News from the IGU General Assembly

The IGU General Assembly met for three sessions during the Glasgow International Geographical Congress, on 17, 18, and 29 August. The major actions the assembly took include:

1. Köln, Germany was selected as the site of the 2012 International Geographical Congress from among the three proposals to host the congress.
2. Twenty-eight IGU Commissions and Two IGU Task Forces were renewed. Four commissions were retired, though from one to three of the retired commissions will be reconsidered at the IGU Executive Committee meeting in late September. Four new commissions and one new task force were started.
3. An increase of \$75.00 (from \$375.00 to \$450.00) in the IGU's basic dues unit was approved.
4. The 2004-2008 IGU Executive Committee elected or re-elected by the general assembly consists of:
  - Adalberto Vallega (Italy), President
  - Nikita Glazovsky (Russia), Vice President
  - Changming Liu (Peoples Republic of China), Vice President
  - Markku Löytönen (Finland), Vice President
  - Lindisizwe Magi (South Africa), Vice President
  - José Palacio-Prieto (Mexico), Vice President
  - Hiroshi Tanabe (Japan), Vice President
  - Woo-ik Yu (South Korea), Vice President
  - Ronald Abler (USA), Secretary General and Treasurer

Anne Buttimer succeeded automatically to Past President at the close of the congress. In a meeting subsequent to the final session of the general assembly, the IGU Executive Committee appointed José Palacio-Prieto of Mexico First Vice President.

From the President's Circular letter:

### **Mediterranean Renaissance Programme**

This programme was convened last October to encourage scientific discussions, publications, exhibitions, and any other initiatives concerned with the Mediterranean. The basic goal is to achieve a sequence of scientific outcomes over the next four years, in such a way as to provide effective scientific support to the 2008 Tunis International Geographical Congress (IGC). The programme may be found on the IGU website. All the IGU research bodies and National Committees are invited to co-operate with this initiative.

### **Corresponding membership**

An action plan relevant to the corresponding membership is going to be adopted by the EC. It aims at widening the «IGU family» with the participation of geographical bodies, such as University departments and institutes, geographical associations and societies, and individual geographers by providing specific services and occasions for communicating and networking.

## **International co-operation**

International co-operation has been marked by the following events:

- A Geoparks initiative has been undertaken, co-ordinated by Prof. Narciso Barrera-Bassols, with Prof. José-Luis Palacio Prieto serving as EC liaison person;
- The Megacities Task Force has started operations;
- The «Oceans 21» programme has re-started, focusing on the use of GIS for integrated coastal management and coastal education;
- Co-operation with the FAO has been designed in the framework of the FAO Globally Important Ingenious Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) program. An *ad hoc* Memorandum of Understanding is going to be signed by FAO and IGU.

## **Visibility vis-à-vis the United Nations**

A Memorandum of Understanding between the IGU and the Réseau Universitaire International de Genève (RUIG), at the University of Geneva, is going to be signed. Following this agreement, RUIG will provide assistance in widening, and making more effective, the co-operation of IGU with UN organisations and programmes.

## **2008 International Geographical Congress**

Moving from the presentation of the Tunis 2008 International Geographical Congress (IGC) in the Glasgow General Assembly (August 2004), interaction between the IGU Executive Committee and the Organising Committee of this event has strengthened. Meanwhile the above mentioned Mediterranean Renaissance Programme (MRP) was convened with the aim of promoting useful initiatives for the Congress. A report on the state of preparation of the Congress will be circulated in a short term.

## **Home of Geography**

This branch of IGU, managed by the Celimontana Committee under the presidency of Prof. Anne Buttimer, has continued to offer services, primarily the management of the IGU archives, the provision of technical assistance for IGU scientific events, and assistance to geographers wishing to study or work there. IGU National Committees, Commissions, Task Forces and Regional Networks are cordially invited to make use of the Home of Geography, and individual geographers are invited to visit Villa Celimontana and to benefit from its facilities, particularly the library and map collection of the Società Geografica Italiana.

## **Presentation of IGU**

I have performed a presentation describing the IGU, which may be used on those occasions where the roles, the position in the international arena, and organisation and activities of the IGU are to be illustrated. The presentation consists of about thirty Macromedia slides. It is available into English and French. Colleagues interested in using this tool are cordially invited to contact me. I will convey to them these materials including instructions on how to manage the Macromedia file.

## **Seasonal Greetings**

On behalf of the EC members I send you the best seasonal greetings. I hope that the next year will be marked by an increase in the efficiency of the Union as a whole, together with an improvement of visibility in the international arena.

Adalberto Vallega  
President, International Geographical Union