

International Geographical Union Union Géographique Internationale



2020 Annual Report of the IGU

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1. Highlights of the IGU Executive Committee meetings of 2020

The year 2020 was an extraordinary one for everyone on earth and there were major implications for the International Geographical Union, including the postponement of the 34th International Geographical Congress in Istanbul and the cancellation of the planned IGU Thematic Conference in Lecce, Italy. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact, all IGU Executive Committee meetings during 2020 were held using the online meeting platform Zoom.

The First IGU Executive Committee The first meeting of the year was held across 1st, 2nd, 6th and 9th April. The most significant decision made during the meeting was to postpone the 34th IGC 2020 Istanbul by one year to 16th – 20th August 2021, and the associated postponement of the International Geographical Olympiad. All registration fees received, abstracts accepted, travel grants awarded, and the conference programme already developed for this year will be carried over to 2021. Any delegate who has already paid the registration fee may use that fee to participate in the Congress in August 2021 and, if desired, submit a new paper for the August 2021 Congress. Himiyama presented details of the necessary transfer of the Promotion and Solidarity Fund of the IGU from the USA to Japan.

The Second IGU Executive Committee of 2020 was held online on 20th May and 3rd June 2020. There was considerable discussion about the IGU awards as the Honors and Awards Committee has renewed membership under the guidance of recently appointed chair, former IGU President Professor Ron Abler. The Committee will make the call and evaluate additional nominations for awards to be presented at the postponed Congress, and will plan the establishment of two new awards, *viz.* the *IGU Early Career Award in Geography* and the *IGU Award for Distinguished Geographic Practice*.

The Third IGU Executive Committee was held online on 20th and 21st August 2020. The reports of IGU Commissions and Task Forces were tabled for discussion regarding their continuation for 2020-2024; recommendations were confirmed at the virtual General Assembly which followed the meeting (see below).

The Fourth IGU Executive Committee took place on 15th September, 2020, chaired by

newly elected President Mike Meadows. Among the agenda items there was discussion regarding arrangements for the relocation of the IGU Treasury. Vice-President Barcus agreed to formally approach Macalester College to ascertain the practicalities of hosting the IGU operating account under its auspices.

The Fifth IGU Executive Committee in the year 2020 held on 15th October, 2020. The main item on the agenda was to agree EC member portfolios and national and Commission and Task Force responsibilities.

Following discussion, the following portfolio allocations were agreed:

- Congresses/conferences (Meadows, Singh, EC members as appropriate)
- Treasury (Barcus, Meadows)
- IGU Congress and Conference travel grants (Barcus, Meadows)
- Commissions and Task Forces (Singh, Kumar; others as per list approved at EC meeting of 15.09.2020)
- Commission review and Excellence Award (dell'Agnesse; with Lois-González, Gönençgil, Hay)
- National Committees (Singh, Kumar; others as per list approved at EC meeting of 15.09.2020)
- Databases/record keeping etc. (Singh, Kumar)
- IGU annual report (Singh, Meadows)
- Elections/National Committee applications etc. (Singh, Kumar)
- General correspondence (Singh, Meadows)
- Website and other social media (Rozenblat, Kumar, Hay, Meadows)
- Publications (Series) (Singh, Hay, Meadows)
- IGU e-Newsletter (Rozenblat, with former V-P Bellezza)
- Bulletin (Singh, Kumar)
- Awards (Himiyama*)
- External relations (all, as per attached Appendix 1)
- French/Spanish outreach/translation (Lemarchand, Lois-González, Rozenblat)
- FIG/Night of Geography/International Day of Geography (Lemarchand, Gönençgil)
- IGU publicity brochure (Meadows)
- Governance (Hay, Lemarchand)
- IGU Journals project (Fu)

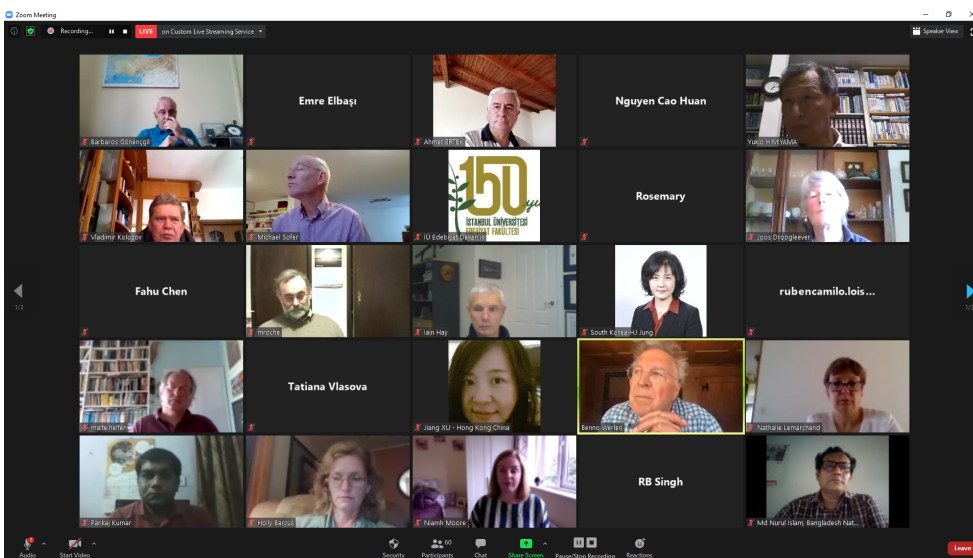
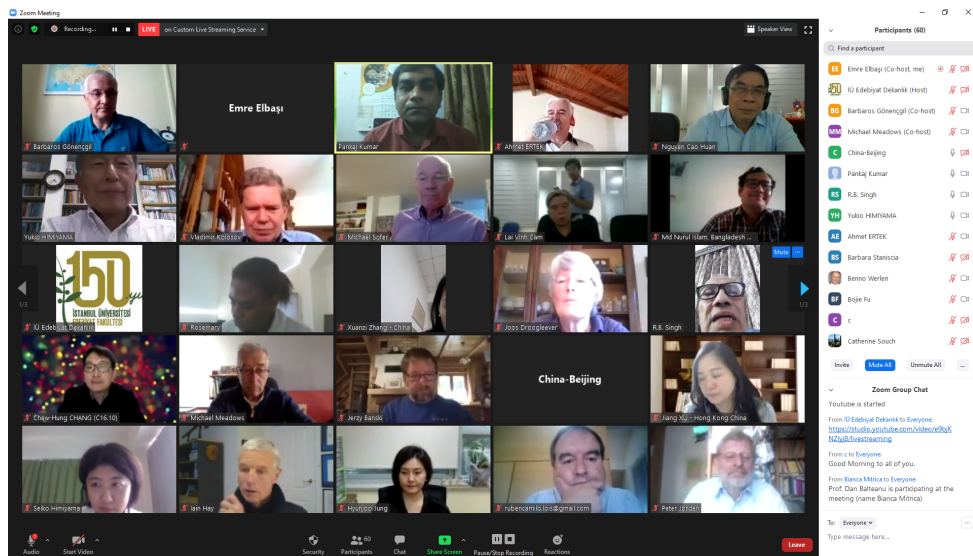
The Sixth IGU Executive Committee was held over two sessions, on 24th November and 8th December 2020. Developing the IGU Strategy was the main agenda item. Following discussion and further post-meeting iterations, the IGU Strategy was adopted and subsequently distributed and posted on the website in English, French and Spanish. The Strategy is available at: <https://igu-online.org/igu-strategy/>

2. IGU Virtual General Assembly (21st August 2020, 7:30-11:30 GMT)

The General Assembly was hosted on the Zoom platform and chaired by President Yukio Himiyama who presided over representatives from 37 IGU National Committees along with 20 or so other online delegates. A further 700 participants joined the General Assembly via the dedicated YouTube channel. The results of the previously held e-ballot for positions on the Executive Committee were announced as follows: Professor Michael Meadows (South Africa) was elected as President; Vice-Presidents Professor Nathalie Lemarchand (re-elected), Holly Barcus, Barbaros Gönençgil (re-elected), and Professor Céline Rozenblat were confirmed as new members of the IGU Executive Committee.

Major items of business at the General Assembly included discussion on EC recommendations for continuation of IGU Commissions and Task Forces. All were confirmed to continue to 2024 with changes in identities of the chairpersons and steering committee members where this was required according to the IGU Statutes. Two new Commissions, Mountain Studies and Research Methods in Geography were established.

Reports by the President Secretary-General and Acting Treasurer were all accepted by the assembly by consensus. Full membership of the Dominican Republic was approved and the re-application of Colombia was accepted pending clarification of their National Committee membership. A discussion on IGU priorities was followed by items relating to IGU relations with external bodies such as the International Science Council. There were votes of thanks to outgoing members of the Executive Committee, Past-President Vladimir Kolosov, Vice-Presidents Joos Droogleeveer-Fortuijn and comments by incoming new members who will serve office for the period 2020-24, viz. President Michael Meadows, and Vice-Presidents Holly Barcus and Céline Rozenblat.



Screen shots of Virtual General Assembly

3. Report on the IGU-related Conferences

Report on the XIV IGU-India International Conference on “Agriculture, Food, Water, Biodiversity and Health in Changing Climate, 6-8 March 2020

XIV IGU-INDIA International Conference under the auspices of five IGU Commissions: Commission on Biogeography and Biodiversity, Commission on Land Use and Land Cover

Change, Commission on Hazard and Risk, Commission on Climatology, and Commission on Geo-Heritage was held during 6-8 March 2020. The focal theme of the conference was “Agriculture, Food, Water, Biodiversity and Health in Changing Climate”. This mega conference was organized by the Department of Geography, The University of Burdwan, West Bengal, India in collaboration with Association of Bengal Geographers. The inaugural session started with the Welcome Address by Prof. N. C. Jana, Convener of this conference followed by the Greetings (video message) of International Science Council and Address (audio message) by Prof. Yukio Himiyama, President of International Geographical Union, who was supposed to deliver the Keynote Address as Guest-in-Chief. It may be mentioned in this context that he did not come as his Visa was suspended at the last moment due to worldwide COVID-19 Pandemic. Prof. R. B. Singh, Secretary General & Treasurer, International Geographical Union, and Mr. Shyamal Santra, Hon’ble Minister-of-state in charge of Public Health Engineering & Panchayats & Rural Development, Government of West Bengal addressed the august gathering followed by other dignitaries present on the dais. 436 abstracts had been received and nearly 400 participants presented their papers in 38 parallel technical sessions under the sub-themes: (i) Agricultural Development, Forestry and Biodiversity; (ii) Development and Sustainability; (iii) Ecosystem Management, Monitoring and Modelling; (iv) Environment, Human Health & Well-being; (v) Globalization, Industrialization and Environmental Issues; (vi) Land Use Land Cover and Climate Change; (vii) Land Use Land Cover Change and Biodiversity; (viii) Population Pressure, Natural Resource Use and Climate Change; (ix) Role of GIS Technology; (x) Sustainable Natural Resource Management and Development; (xi) Tourism Potential of Geo-Heritage Sites in South Asia; (xii) Urbanization and Environmental Issues; and (xiii) Water Resource Management. Late Dr. Manju Singh Memorial Young Scientist Best Paper Award 2020 competition was under the auspices of *International Geographical Union Taskforce for Young and Early Career Geographers* under the leadership of Dr. Komali Yennetti, Chair and Dr. Gaurav Sikka, Secretary General. Two-days software training on Snow Cover Dynamics and Glacier Fluctuations in the Himalaya were organized during 7-8 March 2020, supported by IGU Commission on Biogeography and Biodiversity. Prof. R. B. Singh introduced the programme. Dr. Suraj Mal and Dr. Pankaj Kumar of Delhi University conducted the training programme in which there were 14 participants.



Inauguration



Abstract Volume release



Best Paper Awardee



Mr. Shyamal Santra
Minister-of-state in charge of
Public Health Engineering &
Panchayats & Rural
Development, Government of
West Bengal

Prof. R. B. Singh
Secretary General and
Treasurer, IGU

Prof. N. C. Jana, Convener, XIV
IGU-INDIA International
Conference



Participants of Training Programme



Valedictory Session

Glimpses of the XIV International Geographical Union (IGU)- India International Conference

Report on the The IGU-India International Conference 2020 on “Global to Local Sustainability & Future Earth, 18-20, December 2020

The IGU-India International Conference 2020 on “Global to Local Sustainability & Future Earth” being organized by the Department of Geography, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Rajasthan, INDIA on 18-20 December, 2020. The conference was joined by more than 800 of participants from about 40 countries including Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Algeria, Kenya, Argentina, Kyrgyzstan, Australia, Libya, Bangladesh, Lithuania, Benin, Macedonia, Canada, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nigeria, China, Philippines, Egypt, Poland, Ethiopia, Qatar, Haiti, Romania, Hungary, Russia, India, South Africa, Indonesia, Thailand, Iran, United States, Italy, Vietnam, Japan, Zambia, Zimbabwe, etc. Three days’ conference is held in Mohanlal Sukhadia University, in the meeting hall and other buildings. More than 800 attendees, paper presenters, keynote and numerous panel discussion, academic and social community have benefited in many ways from this conference. More than 200 scientific papers were presented by authors from all participated countries. This Conference is organized in collaboration with several IGU Commissions such as Commission on Future Earth, Commission on Geo-Heritage, Commission on Tourism, Commission on Local and Regional Development, Commission on Bio Geography and Biodiversity, Commission on Mountain Studies, Commission on Karst.



Glimpses of The IGU, India International Conference 2020 on “Global to Local Sustainability & Future Earth

4. Co-operation with other organizations

ISC: ISC requested that IGU nominate a candidate for a small group of experts that will represent the Council on an international alliance around COVID-19 education entitled

COVID-Education Alliance of partners (COVIDEA), and in response, IGU has nominated Professor Eyüp Artvinli, Eskisehir Osmangazi University Faculty of Education, Turkey, who was recommended by Gönençgil. Secretary General Singh is representing in CODATA and ISC Urban Health and Wellbeing Programme. Céline Rozenblat is also representing in the ISC Urban Health and Wellbeing Programme. The growing number of IGU initiatives in relation to the coronavirus pandemic was noted. The ISC will hold an extraordinary General Assembly (eGA) from 1st to 5th February 2021 with the main agenda item being ISC Statutes and Rules of Procedure.

GeoUnions: Himiyama noted the invitation from Prof. Orhan Altan, Honorary Member of ISPRS, to nominate two people from IGU to the ISC GeoUnions Committee on Risk and Disaster Management. After discussion and exchange of ideas, it was agreed to nominate Dr. Peijun Shi, President, Qinghai Normal University, China, and Prof. R.B. Singh, Secretary-General and Treasurer of IGU (IGU EC representative). Singh shared this view, mentioning that IGU is participating in UN-GGIM, that UN-GGIM publishes our report and circulates to several UN agencies and globally and therefore it is a great opportunity for IGU to continue working with them. Singh informed that the GeoUnions Committee on Risk and Disaster Management has prepared a policy brief initiated by Singh which is being circulated at the meeting. A second, ocean-related, policy brief is being prepared in line with the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development on initial draft presented by Singh.

FIG: Lemarchand summarised the announcement and schedule for the next *Festival International de Géographie* (FIG), which will be held from 1st to 3rd October 2021 under the theme “Bodies” and the invited region of “Europe(s)”. The festival is no ordinary scientific conference: more than 150 events will be organized over three days throughout Saint-Dié and in some neighboring towns, in various formats, divided into three main categories: round tables, plenary lectures, geo-café. Proposals for workshops are also welcome, particularly those that focus on the theme, either specifically for teachers to encourage experimentation with pedagogical practices, or aimed at a wider audience. There are also exhibitions of photographs, documents, maps, field visits, *in situ* observations, collective listening, moving debates, text surveys - all possibilities are being explored. Meadows thanked Lemarchand for maintaining the important and strong IGU connections with FIG.

Night of Geography/Day of Geography: Lemarchand noted that GeoNight/GéoNuit 2021 will take place on 9th April 2021. She is working this year with Alexis Alamel from France and Massimiliano Tabusi from Italy. Tabusi is planning to develop a website that highlights information, images, videos and other materials about GeoNight/GéoNuit (the suggested title for this event going forwards) under an appropriate domain name. The website will indicate information on location (these will be mapped) and include a link to all online events. A common webform is being developed to make it easier for each local organizer to manage their respective event. Kumar agreed to assist in developing the webform and to share it on the IGU website. Gönençgil continues to explore the idea of the international ‘Day of Geography’, especially in light of the upcoming IGU Centennial in 2022.

CIPSH: Kolosov tabled a letter from the Secretary-General of CIPSH regarding the CIPSH_SDU Conference Announcement. The ‘European Humanities and Beyond’ conference will be held in Lisbon, Portugal, during 5th to 7th May 2021 and has several sessions on multidisciplinary humanity and society topics of interest to geographers. The organisers have accepted an IGU request to hold a special session on Sustainability and this information should be circulated to appropriate IGU commissions. The CIPSH General

Assembly was scheduled for 14th to 15th December 2020, in Odense, in Denmark but will be attended online by Himiyama, Lemarchand and former IGU Vice-President Kolosov, who is to be re-nominated as Executive Committee member.

UN-GGIM: Himiyama informed EC that the most important work of UN-GGIM is to support developing countries in the field of geospatial data infrastructure. UN-GGIM helps developing countries to prepare standard geospatial data infrastructure projects to obtain support from the World Bank. The International Cartographic Association (ICA) is playing a leading role in this body and IGU is requested annually to send a report to UN-GGIM.

EUROGEO, EUGEO: EUROGEO Conference 2021 will be held in Madrid, April 22nd to 23rd 2021. The EUGEO Seminar and General Assembly planned in Vilnius, Lithuania, for 23rd to 25th April 2020 have been postponed because of the COVID-19 emergency in Europe. Himiyama asked Kolosov to nominate an IGU liaison officer. Himiyama noted that IGU and EUGEO do not have a formal agreement and Kolosov replied that it will be good to formalize our relations in a form of Special Memorandum that could be signed at the Istanbul 2021 Congress. Kolosov suggested preparing and circulating a draft memorandum among EC members of each organization for comment with a view to formal ratification. Lois-González had attended the recent meeting of Eugeo as representative of the Spanish geographical associations. Eugeo is planning a congress in the end of June 2021, from June 28 to July 1, in Prague.

EGAL/UGAL: Lois-González reported that the Latin American Conference of Geographers (EGAL) is delayed because of the very serious coronavirus situation in Latin American countries. This may now only be held as late as 2022.

Other organizations (e.g. AAG, RGS, AGA etc.): Meadows noted that the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) has conferred a prestigious Honorary Fellowship on IGU Vice-President Bojie Fu. Meadows had met online with the Director of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG). The RGS/IBG is willing to host/co-host an exhibition in line with IGC 2022 events if desired. Singh noted that the AAG celebrated a successful Geography Awareness Week. AAG has proposed a Complimentary Advertising Exchange Program whereby AAG will promote IGU events, etc. in exchange for IGU promoting the upcoming AAG 2021 Annual Meeting.

5. Forthcoming events

16-20 August 2021: 34th International Geographical Congress, Istanbul, Turkey. Details on the website at:

6. Communication and outreach

The main communication tools of the IGU are its website, maintained by Secretary-General R.B. Singh and Assistant Secretary-Dr. Pankaj Kumar, and its quarterly newsletter, compiled by former Vice-President Giuliano Bellezza. As usual, four issues of the Newsletter were published in 2018 and can be downloaded from the website by following the newsletter link from www.igu-online.org.

IGU Series on Contemporary Geographies: The IGU's book series with Springer (edited by Singh) and Edward Elgar Publishers (edited by Hay and Meadows) are attracting strong submissions.

7. Financials

The IGU accounts (see below) indicate a surplus in 2020 of more than US\$70,000 due very largely to the fact that all Executive Committee meetings were held in online format during the year. Some airfare costs have been incurred but these are related to flights that are still valid for future travel once the coronavirus travel restrictions are relaxed. Overall the financial situation remains reasonably sound, but it may be anticipated that more national members will struggle to pay their dues in 2021 due to constraints imposed by the pandemic crisis and associated economic recession in many countries. The surplus is, therefore, a useful cushion. Transfer of the IGU operating account (Business Current Account) held in Cape Town to the new account hosted at Macalester College has commenced. Funds in the IGU Promotion and Solidarity Fund have been transferred to a new bank account in Japan under the curatorship of IGU Past-President Yukio Himiyama.

International Geographical Union
Profit & Loss
January through December 2020

	\$
	Jan - Dec 20
Ordinary Income/Expenses	
Income	
Investments	
Banking Accounts Interest	\$3 712,81
Program Income	
Country Member Dues	\$129 913,46
Donation received and Travel Grant refund	\$1 912,80
Total Income	<u>\$135 539,08</u>
Gross Profit	\$135 539,08
Expenses	
MEMBERSHIPS	-\$7 066,39
SUNDRIES (STATIONERY, PRINTER COSTS, SOFTWARE, POSTAGE	-\$1 099,16
COMMISSION GRANTS (NET)	-\$36 307,76
EC TRAVEL (NET)	-\$10 959,60
HONORARIA (TECHNICAL, SECRETARIAL	-\$3 335,16
WEBSITE AND INTERNET COSTS	-\$1 645,91
BANK FEES (NET)	-\$1 119,96
Total Expenditure	-\$61 533,94
Net Income	<u>\$74 005,13</u>

International Geographical Union

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2020

	Dec 31 2020
Assets	\$
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
P&S (North Pacific Bank)	\$102 508,41
Macalester College IGU account	\$50 000,00
Japan Operating Account	\$397,92
Cape Town Market Link	\$114,96
Cape Town Money Market	\$140 989,96
Cape Town Operating Account	\$43 173,42
Total Checking/Savings	\$337 184,67
Total Current Assets	\$337 184,67
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$337 184,67</u>
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	\$200 952,40
Unrestricted Net Assets Reserve account	\$62 227,14
Net Income	\$74 005,13
Total Equity	\$337 184,67
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	<u>\$337 184,67</u>