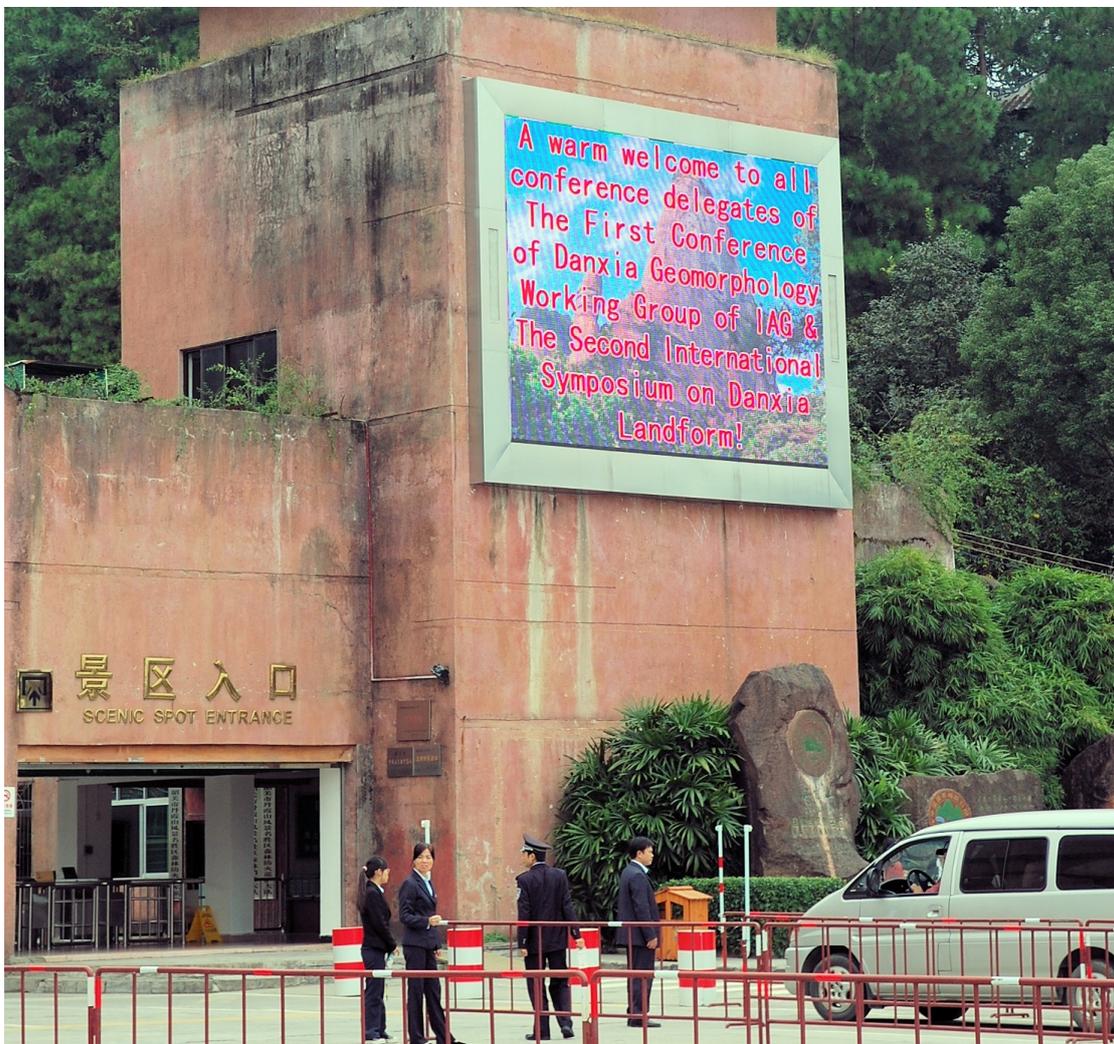


The First Conference of Danxia Geomorphology Working Group of IAG and The Second International Symposium on Danxia Landform



Warm welcome of the conference participants at the gate to Danxiashan National Park.

The Danxia Geomorphology Working Group was established during the 7th International Conference on Geomorphology in Melbourne in 2009, with the main objective to encourage further research of landscapes developed on clastic deposits, particularly in red bed basins, but also to disseminate research achievements of Chinese scholars who have been investigated such landscapes, known in China as Danxia, for more than 80 years. Shortly after, six Danxia sites in south China, selected on the basis of their outstanding scenic and geoscientific value, have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as the serial property China Danxia.

On 28-31 October 2011 the first meeting of the working group was held in Shaoguan, Guangdong, close to the mountains of Danxiashan – the type locality for the red bed landscape in China. It was jointly organized by the Sun-Yat Sen University, Guangzhou, China and the Administrative Committee of Danxiashan World Natural Heritage and Global Geopark, with the key support of local government of Shaoguan. The conference was attended by 95 participants, including 15 from overseas (Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Poland, United States), among them the IAG President, Michael Crozier, and Executive members Mauro Soldati and Xiaoping Yang. Most members of the working group were present.

The conference was divided into sessions and field trips. There were 30 presentations, some focused explicitly on Danxia landscapes in China or their morphological equivalents elsewhere, whereas others addressed broader issues of geoheritage, hazard management at protected sites, and outreach activities in Earth Science. Field trips were organized to see red cliffs and sandstone mesas of Danxiashan and to the adjacent Nanxiong Basin, where red beds give rise to a rather subdued landscape, occasionally turned into badlands. Important sites of discovery of dinosaur eggs and tracks were visited. During two business meetings of the working group further activities were discussed and agreed, among them publication plans. In addition, the need of international comparative research on Danxia and related landscapes was highlighted.

An important moment was signing the agreement between the Working Group and the Administrative Committee of Danxiashan World Natural Heritage and Global Geopark, with the latter offering a research base to conduct further scientific activities focused on Danxia landscapes. During the closing ceremony a declaration on the promotion of the global research on Danxia landform agreed by the working group members was presented and unanimously approved by the participants.

A further acknowledgement of IAG's support for Danxia landscapes was the active part given to the Association in the award ceremony, where officials from each of the six sites within the World Heritage property were presented with a plaque acknowledging their success.

The conference was an exciting event that strengthened the role of IAG in researching red bed landscapes and provided support to many Chinese scholars who have chosen fascinating Danxia landscapes as their subject of study. The conference was very well organized and it is my great pleasure to express sincere thanks and praise to Professor Peng Hua, co-chair of the group, whose dedication to Danxia has made the conference possible and to his collaborators, particularly to Becky and Rachel for their invaluable assistance.

*Piotr Migoń
Danxia Geomorphology Working Group
Co-chair*



Natural rock bridge in Danxiashan.



Spectacular example of a fluted rock slope in red beds of Danxiashan.



Professor Peng Hua, co-chair of the Working Group, explaining the origin of Danxiashan landscape and work towards global recognition of Danxia Landform as World Heritage. Ren Fang, Secretary of the Group, is standing to the right of Professor Peng Hua.



Erosional landscape of Danxiashan.



IAG President, Professor Michael Crozier, climbing red bed badland in the Nanxiong Basin.



Fig. 7. Conference participants at the K/T boundary in the Nanxiong Basin.