

International Association of Geomorphologists

Association Internationale des
Géomorphologues

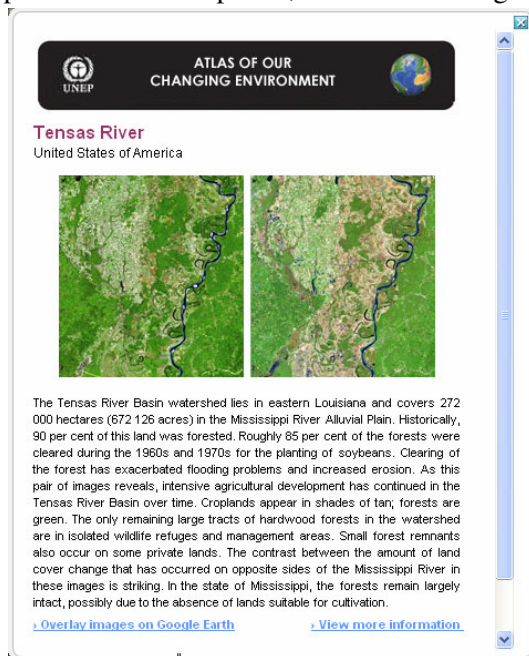
IAG/AIG Newsletter No. 23 (1/2007)



A note from the editor...

I am delighted to announce a new collaboration between the IAG and Google. As some of you may know, I produced a Geomorphology CD-ROM about four years ago to raise money for student research through the AAG Geomorphology Specialty Group. At last year's executive committee meeting in Oxford, we talked about raising the profile of the IAG. I suggested we contact Google to talk about becoming a partner in their Featured Content section. This layer in Google Earth contains highly informative, multimedia-enhanced data about various places around the planet, overlaid on Google Earth imagery. It allows you to see high-resolution

satellite imagery coupled with detailed information from various sources. The inset shown here, for example, is from the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) that includes successive time-stamped images illustrating 100 areas of extreme environmental degradation around the world.



Our proposal to Google, which they have accepted, is to have a Great Landforms of the World layer sponsored by IAG. The format will be double page with a high resolution photograph of the landform(s) or geomorphic process and a page (~ 300 words) of text. Google will do all of the design, host the content, and update the images and text as needed. What we require, of course, are examples of geomorphology from around the world. So we are asking **you** to send us your best-quality geomorphology images with text. Copyright for each photograph will remain

with you. Andrew and I will act as editors to ensure we have geographic and thematic breadth. Google are keen that we have examples from every continent. They are also willing to sponsor a glossy book featuring the content, and they will cover all expenses associated with that. As with the CD-ROM, the success of this endeavour will depend on the quality and quantity of submissions, so please give this some thought and contribute. We plan to keep you abreast of what has been submitted and accepted on the IAG website. Please send your material to:

m.slattery@tcu.edu

News from the IAG Working Groups

Working Group on Planetary Geomorphology (from Mary Bourke)

The International Association of Geomorphologists' Working Group on Planetary Geomorphology announces the publication of

'A Photographic Atlas of Rock Breakdown Features in Geomorphic Environments' (2007), Bourke, M.C and Viles, H.A. (Eds.), Planetary Science Institute, Tucson, p. 79.

Free online edition available through the Planetary Science Institute bookshop portal at <http://www.psi.edu/bookshop/>

Statement of the IAG Working Group on the Geomorphic Implications of Global Environmental Change, 21 September 2006 (from Olav Slaymaker)

The Working Group held its first meeting at Magdalene College, Cambridge on 20-21 September 2006. The members of the Working Group agreed that:

- Global environmental change driven by climate, sea-level and human activity is one of the most important issues facing the world in the 21st century.
- Geomorphology, the study of landscape change, can play a crucial role in both identifying the nature and magnitude of the expected changes at the landscape scale, and in informing the development of appropriate coping and adaptation strategies.
- To further the role of geomorphology in predicting and addressing the consequences of global environmental change, the IAG Working Group will produce an authoritative volume considering change in critical environments and processes.

The book, 'Landscape Change in the 21st Century' (working title) will be published by Cambridge University Press and will be produced to coincide with the 7th International Conference on Geomorphology to be held in Melbourne in July 2009.

Working Group on Large Rivers (from Avi Gupta)

IGCP-518 and IAG Working Group on Large Rivers
Fluvial Workshop (Nanjing and Shanghai) and
Fieldtrip (Upper Yangtze/Jinsha Jiang)
9-16 October 2006

A fluvial conference and a subsequent field excursion were jointly organised by FLAG Focus 1/IGCP-518 and the IAG Working Group on Large Rivers in China, 9-16 October 2006. The conference started in the East China Normal University, Shanghai and then transferred to Nanjing in association with the 2006 Chinqua Congress. About forty papers were submitted for the conference on the two themes of 'long-term fluvial geomorphological processes (tectonic and climate couplings)' and 'large rivers in Asia'. The speakers of the papers selected for presentation included Gordon E. Grant (USDA Forest Service), David Bridgland (Durham), Pan Baotian (Lanzhou), J.C. Stevaux (Guarulhos), Rod Westaway (Open University), L.-D. Ho ((Melbourne), Zhanghua Wang (East China Normal), Ali Seyrek (Harran), Yoshiki Saito (Geological Survey of

Japan), J. Chen (East China Normal), Rajiv Sinha (IIT, Kanpur), Shouye Yang (Tongji), A. Bhattacharya (Calcutta), H. Lu (Institute of Earth Environment, Xian), D. Wang (Nanjing), D. Fan (Tongji), Y. Wang (Nanjing), Edgardo M. Latrubesse (Universidad Nacional de La Plata), J.-S. Youn (Cheju National), L. Zhu (Chengdu), J.-F. Zhang (Peking) and S. Gao (Nanjing).

The conference was followed by a field trip in western Yunnan focused on the upper Yangtze, locally known as the Jinsha Jiang (the river of gold). On October 12, the participants travelled from Dali to about 3500 m up the formerly glaciated fault-block of the Cang Shan (Jade Green Mountain). A subsequent brief excursion to the ancient city of Dali was followed by the circumnavigation of the possible fault-bounded Erhai Lake and its terraces. The group then travelled north from the drainage of the upper Mekong (Lancang Jiang) to that of the upper Yangtze via the Jianchuan Basin. It was a wonderful experience to stand at the first bend of the Yangtze at Shigu and vigorously discuss this spectacular tectonically-controlled landscape and the river that flows through a profusion of terraces, faulted blocks, and tributary-mouth fans. The discussions turned even more vigorous next day as the party walked through the Tiger Leaping Gorge where the Yangtze narrows, becomes astonishingly turbulent through boulder-strewn passages, and between 3000 m high cliffs drops 300 m in 17 km over 18 rapids. This large river narrows to 30 m where the legendary tiger is reputed to have jumped across. The gorge ends near Daju where a magnificent landscape of strath terraces can be identified as the valley widens. The last two days were based at the beautiful old town of Lijiang from which the group travelled to the Yulong (Jade Dragon) Mountain to an elevation of nearly 4700 m at the edge of the glacier, and next day, enjoyed a further visit to the upper Yangtze before flying back to Shanghai. It was a spectacular trip, almost a laboratory visit, to learn how the forms and behaviour of large rivers are controlled by huge tectonic movements. For this the Working Group is indebted to Zhongyuan Chen (East China Normal), Lidong Zhu (Chengdu), and their many colleagues and students.

The Working Group met and decided to form a small committee of three vice-chairs (Zhongyuan Chen, Edgardo Latrubesse and Gordon Grant) to assist the Chair. The number of conferences, field trips and publications of the Working Group now requires a small and active committee.

The next conference (on river management) will be in Lyons in 2007 (organizer J.P. Bravard) with an associated field trip on the Rhone.

Working Group on Geomorphosites (from Paola Coratza and Emmanuel Reynard)

1. WG chairs and committee.

The chairmen and the secretary met in Lausanne (CH) the 1-2 May 2006. An administrative meeting of the committee was organised in Sion (CH) the 4th September 2006. Various decisions were taken (see below).

2. Intensive course on geomorphosites (Bagnes, CH, 4-8 September 2006)

Thirteen PhD students took part to this intensive course (3 days course; 2 days field trip). A new edition is scheduled in Lesvos (Greece), 25-29 September 2006 (organiser: Nickolaos Zouros; Univ. of the Aegean; nzour@aegean.gr). You will receive the first circular before the end of the year 2006.

3. A list of typical geomorphosites is to be prepared. You can send proposals to Geraldine Bissig (geraldine.bissig@unil.ch)

4. A list of references on geomorphosites is to be prepared. You can send new references, with a brief comment and keywords to Georgia Fontana (Georgia.Fontana@unil.ch). You can also send a copy of the paper to Georgia Fontana, University of Lausanne, Institute of Geography, Batiment Anthropole, CH-1015 Lausanne, Switzerland. The database will be available in 2007 on a CD-rom, in Endnote, Filemaker and PDF formats.

5. Project of book on geomorphosites.

A book (manual for students) is in progress. It will be published in 2008 and will be available at the next International conference on geomorphology in Melbourne (2009). The book is edited by Paola Coratza and Emmanuel Reynard and several WG members have been contacted for a contribution.

6. Publication proceedings Florence (2004) and Zaragoza (2005) conferences.

The edition is in course and the proceedings (special issue of *Geografia Fisica e Dinamica Quaternaria*) are to be published in 2007.

7. Regional Conference on geomorphology, Svalbard, August 2-5, 2007

The WG will chair a topical session on the theme "Managing geomorphosites in fragile environments". The focus of the session will be on:

- Geomorphosites in polar regions
- Managing active geomorphosites in a context of climatic change
- Geomorphosite assessment and mapping methods
- Geomorphosites as tourist resource

8. Workshop, Lesvos (Greece), 30 September-3 October 2007

Organised by N. Zouros (University of the Aegean), the workshop will deal with the theme "Geomorphosites, geoparks and geotourism". The workshop follows directly the intensive course (see point 2) and can be combined with it.

Meetings and Workshops

Italo-Maltese Workshop on the "Integration of the geomorphological environment and cultural heritage for tourism promotion and hazard prevention"

MALTA, 25-27 APRIL 2007
Italian Cultural Institute, Valletta

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Maltese Islands, situated in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea, have always attracted ancient civilizations and European powers. In fact, Malta's strategic location has contributed to its rich history and wealth of cultural heritage. Being at the crossroads of maritime routes, the Islands have been colonized since 5200 BC, thus boasting over 7000 years of history. The aim of the Workshop is to raise awareness on the strong relationship that exists between the

environment and the cultural heritage in several regions of the world, including Malta. The Workshop will provide the opportunity to present current research on the topic at an international level. A round-table discussion is being proposed to put forward ideas and other initiatives of research collaboration with local institutions. Top level international scientists have been invited to deliver speeches related to the topic. In addition, oral and poster presentations from the Workshop delegates are welcome.

The Workshop will extend over 3 days. On the first day oral and poster sessions will be presented, whereas on the second and third day field trips will be conducted. The FIRST CIRCULAR of the Workshop will be delivered in December 2006.

Organising Institutions

University of Malta - Mediterranean Institute, Geography Division

Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia - Dipartimento di Scienze della Terra

Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR), Padova - Istituto di Ricerca per la Protezione Idrogeologica

Istituto Italiano di Cultura - Malta

Contact persons

For further information regarding the Workshop please contact:

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The complete ANNOUNCEMENT is available on the following web link:

<http://www.terra.unimore.it/download/Geomorfologia/Italo-Maltese%20Workshop/>

European Geosciences Union

General Assembly 2007

Vienna, Austria, 15- 20 April 2007

With special reference to the session: **NH3.13 Time and intensity prediction in landslide hazard assessment**

The session will be devoted to the aspect of prediction of activation time and intensity in landslides and related phenomena.

A short description of the Session follows:

"An important component of landslide hazard assessment is predicting the location and timing of landslides and their impacts. Given the present state of knowledge, understanding, forecasting and controlling the hazard is still an empirical task. It involves qualitative and quantitative analyses, including regional inventories, slope parameters monitoring and model simulations. Analysis can be performed at several spatial and temporal scales according to the objective of the hazard assessment. Accordingly, the techniques used to predict landslide spatial occurrences (e.g. susceptibility) are radically different: empirical or statistical techniques (e.g. multivariate analysis) are generally used at regional scale; more process-based approaches (e.g. limit-equilibrium methods, numerical deformation methods) are applied at the local scale. However these techniques cannot still be considered truly satisfactory for landslide hazard assessment which should include, by definition, an evaluation of the probability of occurrence of

new landslides thus implying the consideration of a time dimension, and the evaluation of the intensity which is a measure of the destructive potential of a landslide.

The objective of this session is to present innovative approaches and techniques (experimental prototypes, monitoring devices, statistical and physically-based models) in order to better assess the temporal occurrence and the frequency of landslide processes and where possible to assess intensities in terms of velocity, thickness of the displaced debris, volume, energy and impact forces.

This session welcomes contributions dealing with but not limited to:

- new monitoring and modelling techniques to identify landslide patterns and possible forerunners that characterize significant changes in landslide dynamics, and therefore time dimension;
- new modelling techniques to forecast the spatial and temporal distribution of landslides, and their intensity at both hillslope and basin scale;
- new methodologies to handle the uncertainties associated to the simulation and prediction of landslide occurrence, in order to progress towards "satisfactory" probabilistic assessments;
- discussions of future research directions."

Conveners: Filippo Catani, Jos□ Luis Zezere, Jean-Philippe Malet

Please note that the contributions to the Session will be published in a Special Issue of an internationally reviewed Journal.

Please find more information on Session, abstract submission and the conference in general at the following addresses:

http://www.cosis.net/members/meetings/sessions/information.php?p_id=247&s_id=4462
(Session)

<http://meetings.copernicus.org/egu2007/> (Conference Home Page)

http://www.cosis.net/members/meetings/programme/view.php?p_id=247 (Programme)

*IAG/AIG Regional Conference on Geomorphology: Geodiversity of polar landforms
Longyearbyen, Spitsbergen, August 2-5, 2007*

Organised on occasion of **the International Polar Year 2007/2008**

There will be a focus on geomorphological challenges in high latitude environments. All geomorphologists are invited to attend and to enjoy the varied landscapes of Spitsbergen.

Send Registration Form to:

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*Regional Conference on Geomorphology
Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, 25-29 June 2007*

There will be a focus on geomorphological challenges in low latitude environments. All geomorphologists are invited to attend and to enjoy the varied landscapes of Northeast Borneo. A number of one day field excursions and longer pre- and post-conference trips are being planned. Several of the IAG/AIG Working Groups will convene specialist sessions at the conference.

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Editor's Note

The success of the IAG/AIG Newsletter depends upon the contributions that we receive. Please assist by sending commentaries, reviews of regional or national meetings and field trips, summaries of issues pertinent to geomorphology, and announcements of future meetings and workshops. Your contributions should be forwarded to the IAG/AIG Publications Officer:

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