International Association of Geomorphologists

11th IAG International Conference on Geomorphology

Christchurch, New Zealand, 2–6 February 2026

and

ICG2026 Young Geomorphologists Training Program

"Methods for assessing geomorphic processes and change"

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Report

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Firstly, I would like to thank the grants committee for awarding me a Young Geomorphologist grant, which helped fund the cost of attending this conference. It is the second time I have attended the IAG International Conference on Geomorphology, having attended in Coimbra, Portugal, in 2022 during my PhD. This year's conference in Christchurch, New Zealand was an invaluable opportunity to disseminate my research and learn about the cutting-edge of geomorphological science, reconnect with my existing network and build new connections, as well as partake in the Young Geomorphologists Training Program.

My first contribution to the conference was an oral presentation in the 'Alluvial fans and rivers: landform archives of long-term landscape development and environmental change' session on Monday. I presented research that I have been doing during my postdoctoral fellowship: 'Reconstructing post-glacial landscape evolution from river terraces in central British Columbia, Canada'. The key results of this project are new records of dated river terraces, which provide new quantitative reconstructions of postglacial incision rates and help us to refine the story of sediment evacuation following deglaciation. We have found that postglacial incision rates are strongly controlled by Holocene climate precipitation and the signal of sediment transmission downstream is rapidly propagated (over 1 kyr timescales). This session was a valuable opportunity to receive feedback on this work, which I am now preparing for submission to a peer-reviewed journal, and it prompted interesting discussions with colleagues.

My second contribution to the conference was a poster presentation in the 'The signature of climate change in arid landscapes' session on Thursday. My presentation, entitled 'Portable luminescence measurements correlate with the age, composition, and stability of aeolian sediments in the Northern Great Plains, western Canada' disseminated the results of a separate project conducted during my postdoctoral fellowship. Being able to date sediments rapidly and in-situ would be extremely

important for expediting Quaternary geomorphology research at scale, and portable luminescence techniques have shown promise for doing so. This research is an important contribution trialling this method for the first time in high-latitude dunefields. Our results show that it is possible to rapidly date sediment with reasonable accuracy, but the spatial scale over which this can be achieved is crucially limited by differences in sediment composition and underlying luminescence sensitivity, which is a product of both composition and dune disturbance history. My poster prompted engaging, and sometimes heated, debate among conference attendees, which has been invaluable in shaping my thinking about how I write these results into a publication.

My final contribution to the conference proceedings was co-chairing and organising the session 'Distributary landforms: past, present and future' with Dr. Anya Leenman, Prof. Andy Russell and Dr Anastasia Piliouras on Tuesday. On behalf of the organisers, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who presented in this session. We were extremely impressed with the high quality of all the presentations. For me, this was my first experience of organising/chairing a session at an international conference. As well as the process of reading abstract submissions exposing me to a wide breadth of current research in the field, this experience is a good demonstration of community service for my early career CV.

Alongside the academic sessions, I was thrilled to take part in the ICG2026 Young Geomorphologists Training Program. The social events, such as the coffees meet-up, provided excellent opportunities to network with other early career scientists. This was especially exciting given the diverse range of nationalities and subject specialisms represented with the group. However, as an early career researcher, I felt that the highlight of the training program for me was the 'Consulting careers night', which occurred on Tuesday evening. This session featured a panel of professional geomorphologists working in a wide range of consulting firms and government agencies. The session was very well-chaired and consisted of an extended Q&A with the Young Geomorphologist audience, lasting about 2 hours in total because everyone was so engaged! I found this discussion very enlightening about the world of professional consultancy as I am currently considering my future career possibilities yet have no experience of doing geomorphology outside academia. In particular, the role of artificial intelligence and its impact on job security in the sector was discussed at length, which helped me to feel more hopeful about my prospects outside of academia should I choose that path. The session concluded with informal drinks and canapes, which was a good opportunity to chat one on one with the panel members to follow up on particular points of interest from the group discussion. I would highly recommend any Young Geomorphologist attend this session at the next IAG International Conference.

Throughout the week, I also enjoyed the morning plenary talks each day. Two particular highlights for me were Oliver Korup's talk on 'Climate Trends, Anomalies, and Large Catastrophic Landslides' and Kat Fitzsimmon's talk 'Of dunes and… moons? A tour of Australia's aeolian landforms and the tales they tell'. Oliver's talk gave me a new perspective on the complexity of landslide drivers, especially the sometimes-contradictory role of climate. I appreciated the clarity of presentation despite the large amount of complex data. Kat's talk was a wonderful introduction to Quaternary dune records in Australia and the role of luminescence dating in reconstructing periods of relatively wetter and drier climate. Whilst I am a luminescence dating specialist, Australia is a region of the world I know very little about and it was inspiring to see Kat's work over her career.

Overall, ICG2026 in Christchurch was the best international conference that I have attended so far in my career. I benefitted hugely, both academically and professionally, from the experience. It was well organised; the venue was excellent and Chritschurch was a very fun city to explore in the evenings. I would like to thank all the organisers and the Grants Committee for such a wonderful week of science.