



11TH IAG INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GEOMORPHOLOGY

2–6 February 2026

Christchurch, New Zealand (Ōtautahi, Aotearoa)

Report

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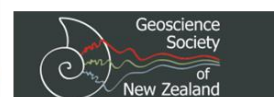
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Report on the 11th International Conference on Geomorphology

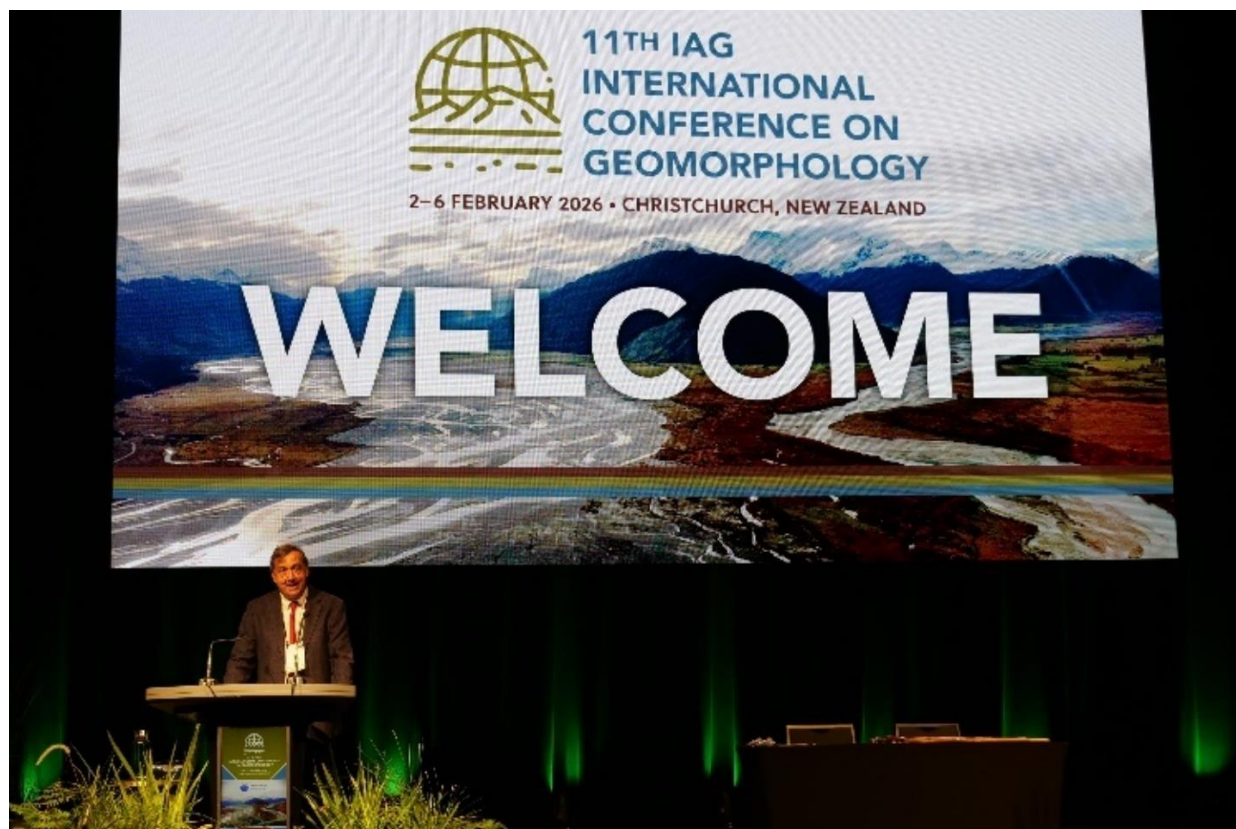
Prepared by the Local Organising Committee

Conference background

The 11th International Conference on Geomorphology (ICG2026) was held from Monday 2nd to Friday 6th February 2026 in Christchurch, New Zealand, with supporting pre- and post-conference activities.

The ICG is the official conference of the International Association of Geomorphologists (IAG) and is held once in every four years. The last conference (10th ICG) was held in Coimbra, Portugal in 2022. The 2026 conference was the first ICG to be held in New Zealand, and the second in Oceania following the 2008 ICG in Melbourne, Australia.

The ICG2026 was hosted by the Australian and New Zealand Geomorphology Group (ANZGG) and the New Zealand Rivers Group, with the close support of the School of Earth and Environment, University of Canterbury. The main conference was held in Te Pae convention centre in central Christchurch, with supporting activities taking place at the University of Canterbury.



Opening ceremony – welcome by Jamie Shulmeister

Organisation

The local organising committee comprised 13 geomorphologists from across New Zealand and Australia (Figure 1). They were supported by a professional conference organising company 'Conference & Events Ltd' with a team led by Amy Abel. The Young Geomorphology Training Program was organised by a team of six geomorphologists including several early career researchers (Figure 2). Workshops and fieldtrips were led and supported by 29 other volunteers, and there were 21 student volunteers who helped with ensuring a smoothly run conference.



Figure 1: Local Organising Committee



Figure 2: Young Geomorphologist Training Programme Committee



Te Pae - the venue sits alongside the Avon River and its design integrates aspects of geomorphology

Sponsorship and exhibitors

The conference was financially underwritten by hosts ANZGG, NZ Rivers Group, IAG, and Conference and Events Ltd, and the conference benefited from the generous support of the following sponsoring organisations:

Organisation

Earth Sciences New Zealand
Environment Canterbury Regional Council
University of Canterbury
Natural Hazards Commission
Vicus
Zealandia
Tourism New Zealand
ChristchurchNZ
European Geosciences Union
British Society for Geomorphology
Zealandia
Geoscience Society of New Zealand
International Association of Geomorphology
ANZGG
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Geographical Society of China

Sponsorship Package

Platinum Sponsorship
Gold Sponsorship
Gold Sponsorship (and in-kind venue hire)
Silver Sponsorship
Silver Sponsorship
Bronze Sponsor
Conference Assistance Programme Funding
Business Event Partnership Event Funding
Young Geomorphologist Training Program
Young Geomorphologist Training Program
Young Geomorphologist Training Program
Young Geomorphologist Training Program
Young Geomorphologist Travel Grants
Young Geomorphologist Travel Grants
Exhibition Stand
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Exhibition Stand
Exhibition Stand



Opening ceremony – traditional welcome

Participation

The conference attracted **927** participants from **45** countries (Figure 3). This included **221** students, and **111** complimentary registrations. There were in total **559** fieldtrip and **336** workshop attendants, and over **150** people participated in some or all of the Young Geomorphology Training Program. About 65% of the fee-paying registrants were eligible for the IAG member fee (by way of their country of residence with, or membership of, a financially-active NSM).

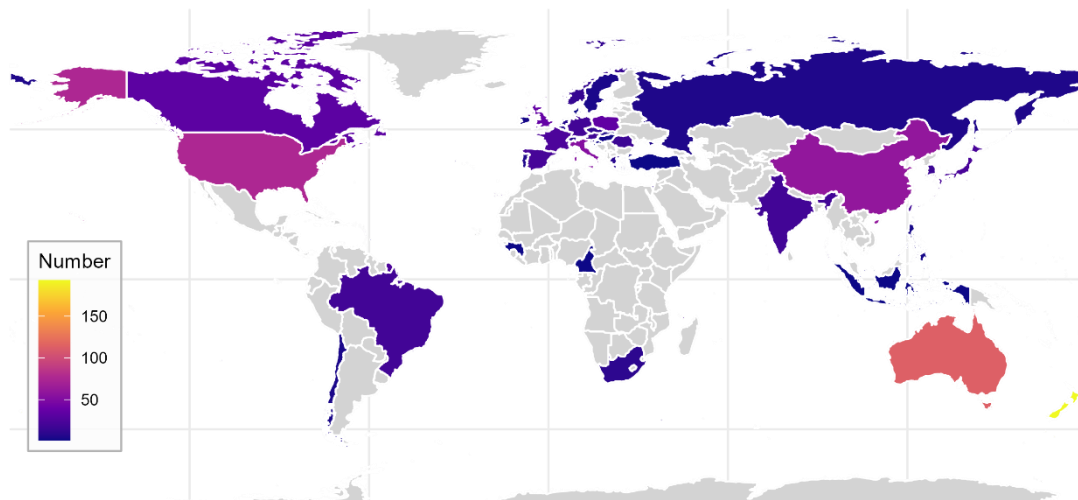


Figure 3: Distribution of participants by country



Young Geomorphology Training Program – pre-conference fieldtrip and consulting careers session

Conference themes and sessions

There were **13** conference themes including a generic geomorphology theme. There were **90** session proposals for the conference, and after review and merging, resulted in **67** sessions (Figure 4). A total of **1195** abstracts were submitted to these sessions. Of these, **619** were accepted for oral presentations and **347** for poster presentations, and **229** were withdrawn or declined. The orals were split across **134** oral slots (typically 6 × 15-minute presentations) and three poster sessions. In addition, there were 8 plenary presentations (8 × 30-minute presentations; Table 1) and many session convenors invited keynote speakers in their sessions.

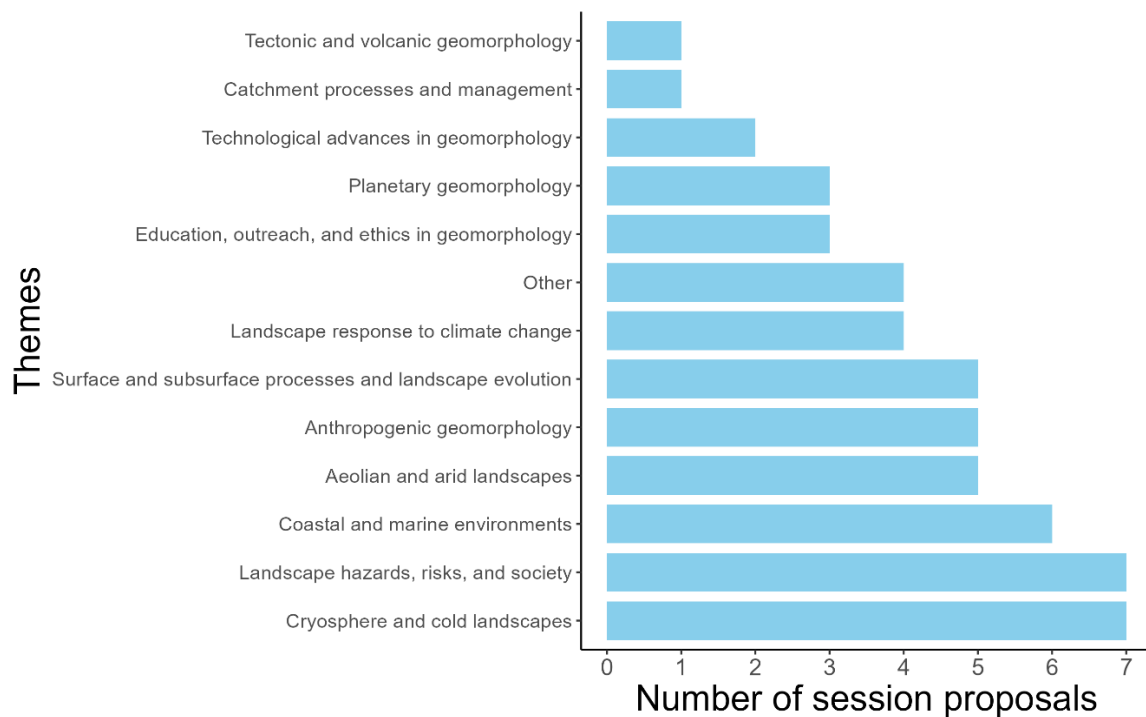


Figure 4: Distribution of sessions by theme

Table 1: Plenary speakers and their topics

Plenary Speaker	Title
Tim Barrows , University of New South Wales Sydney, Australia	The climate of Australia during the last glacial maximum
Pascale Biron , Concordia University, Canada	Freedom space for rivers: from a research project to integration into legislation in Quebec (Canada)
Fahu Chen , Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), China	Spatiotemporal pattern of late Quaternary lake evolution on the Tibetan Plateau
Dan Hikuroa , Waipapa Taumata Rau - University of Auckland, New Zealand	‘Be a good ancestor’ – an approach to weaving indigenous knowledge and geomorphology
Kat Fitzsimmons , Monash University, Australia	Of dunes and... moons? A tour of Australia’s aeolian landforms and the tales they tell
Oliver Korup , University of Potsdam, Germany	Climate Trends, Anomalies, and Large Catastrophic Landslides
Elizabeth Rudolph , University of the Free State, South Africa	Reading the landscape to understand past climate: a story from sub-Antarctic Marion Island

Young Geomorphologist Training Program and Workshops

A program of activities was put together to support student and early career geomorphologists (Table 2). The program ran from Friday 30th January through to Saturday 7th February, and aimed to develop technical skills, field observation, professional development, and build community. Participants could pick and choose which activities they wished to register for, and over 150 people participated in one or more activities. A small fee was charged for some of the activities with direct expenses. Some activities were exclusive to young geomorphologists, and they were given preferential placements on those open to all conference participants.

Table 2: Young geomorphology training program and workshops, with number of attendees

Activity	Duration	Summary	Number	Leader(s)
Fieldtrip	Full day	A field excursion to the Canterbury Southern Alps, to examine tectonic, glacial, fluvial, soil, hillslope and karst geomorphology.	36	Peter Almond, Sarah McSweeney, Carol Smith, Sam McColl, Justin Rogers
Geomorphic Change Detection (GCD)	Half day	Practical computer-based training in quantitative geomorphic change detection using the ArcGIS GCD plugin.	24	Joe Wheaton and James Brasington
Submarine Geomorphology Mapping	Half day	Training in modern seabed mapping methods using ArcGIS Pro toolboxes developed by the International Seabed Geomorphology Mapping Working Group.	24	Rachel Nanson, Zhi Huang, Riccardo Arosio
Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR)	Full day	Combined introductory theory with field data collection and data processing to demonstrate how GPR can be used to investigate geomorphic, sedimentary and geoarchaeological environments.	22	Harry Jol, Allen Gontz
Peer Review	2 hours	An introduction to the scientific peer-review and editorial process, explaining how reviews are conducted, how to respond constructively, and tips.	48	Ann Rowan
Getting Published	2 hours	A professional development session covering strategies for writing, preparing and successfully publishing scientific journal articles.	31	Jasper Knight
Consulting Careers & Networking	2 hours	A panel discussion and networking session introducing careers in professional geomorphology, with networking opportunities with experienced consultants.	121	Ian Rutherford, Ranjie Yuan
The Great Big GEO Quiz	Evening social	An informal social event designed to help participants meet other young geomorphologists in a relaxed setting while competing in teams on geology, geomorphology and general trivia.	66	Alissa Flatley, Sarah McSweeney, Justin Rogers
Coffee Catch-ups	Informal	A hub at the conference providing opportunities for young geomorphologists to meet one another and interact during the conference week.	?	N/A

Two full-day workshops had to be withdrawn at short notice due to changes to leader availability: Geodiversity and wetland conservation of cold deserts, and Coastal shoreline mapping.



Pre-conference fieldtrip for young geomorphologists



Young Geomorphology Training Program – Peer Review Session by Ann Rowan



Young Geomorphology Training Program – Quiz with quizmaster Ian Rutherford

Fieldtrips

There were three pre-conference, eight mid-conference, and two post-conference fieldtrips (Table 3). The fieldtrips took participants to view a wide range of geomorphology across New Zealand, and participants were charged a fee to cover expenses, such that the fieldtrips did not impact the conference budget.

Table 3: Conference fieldtrips, including number of attendees

Fieldtrip name	Dates	Number	Leaders
Active Geomorphology from Marlborough to Canterbury – How Faults, Landslides and Sediment Cascades have Shaped Contrasting Landscapes	31 Jan – 1 Feb	32	Katie Jones, Andrea Wolter, Andy Howel
The Making and Erosion of Te Ika-a-Māui – Fluvial, Coastal, Tectonic, and (a little) Volcanic Geomorphology of Aotearoa New Zealand’s North Island	26 Jan – 30 Jan	49	Ian Fuller, Jon Tunnicliffe, Will Conley, Sophie Horton
Young Geomorphologists Training Program: Pre-conference fieldtrip: Cass & Beyond.	30 January	36	Peter Almond, Sarah McSweeney, Carol Smith, Sam McColl, Justin Rogers
Coastal Geomorphology of the Northern Canterbury Coastline	4 February	43	Sarah McSweeney, Sophie Horton
Earthquake Faulting and the Leader River Landslide Dam	4 February	32	Andy Nicol, Anna McCarthy
Engineering Geomorphology and Alpine Hazards Around Arthur’s Pass, Southern Alps	4 February	45	Sam McColl, Tom Robinson
Glacial Geomorphology of the Waimakariri Valley in Canterbury	4 February	79	James Shulmeister, Kate Pedley
Landscape Layers of Te Pātaka-o-Rākaihautū Banks Peninsula: Volcanic and soil geomorphology and their connections to place	4 February	28	Sam Hampton, Peter Almond
River geomorphology and management in a Canterbury braided river: A tour of the Waimakariri catchment	4 February	91	Jo Hoyle, Shaun McCracken, Naomi Wells
Seismically-Induced Landscape Evolution and Environmental Impacts in Ōtautahi Christchurch	4 February	32	Mark Quigley, Brendan Duffy, Catherine Reid, Sarah Barrett
Walking Tour of Kaikōura Peninsula Tectonics and Rock Coasts	4 February	44	Wayne Stephenson, Ranjie Yuan, Mark Dixon, Sophie Horton
Geology and Geomorphology of Chatham Islands	8-13 February	5	Hamish Campbell, Kat Holt
Geomorphology of the New Zealand Southern Alps	7-12 February	43	Sam McColl, Peter Almond, Ian Fuller, Carol Smith, Tim Barrows



Selection of fieldtrip photos

Social Functions & Supporting Events

The evening before the conference, a geomorphology-themed quiz was held at the University of Canterbury Staff Club. It was part of the Young Geomorphology Training Program, and Ian Rutherford was Quizmaster.

The first day of the conference included an evening welcome function with food and drinks provided. This was followed by a Public Townhall event titled '*Going with the flow in Canterbury; how to survive and thrive on braided river floodplains*' in which members of the public were invited to listen to scientists discuss relevant local issues that geomorphology help to address.

The IAG General Assemblies included the awarding of four IAG honorary fellows (Ian Evans, Jiun-Chuan Lin, Richard Marston, and Gerald Nanson), the Brunsdon Medal (Piotr Migoń), and the Early Career Medal (Edward Park).

A conference dinner was held at Te Pae on the Thursday 5th, with local cuisine and cultural performances, and a geomorphology-themed quiz for entertainment provided by Tim Barrows.

The closing ceremony included the recognition of eight student poster presenters, and 32 student oral presenters, as well as announcement of the newly elected IAG Executive Committee. Following the closing ceremony, drinks and nibbles were provided.

Lunchtime meetings were held by several Working Groups and other special interest groups or associated organisations.

In addition, socialising was encouraged during the catered morning and afternoon breaks, during the lunch breaks (not catered on Weds and Thurs), and during catered poster sessions.



Entertainment during the conference dinner – Māori cultural song and dance



Socialising during the conference

Journal special issues arising

At least three special issues have arisen from the conference:

Sediment hazards in a changing world: Dynamics, drivers, and landscape responses in the journal *Geomorphology* (Status: In Progress)

Tectonic Geomorphology of Active Orogens in the *New Zealand Journal of Geology and Geophysics* (Status: In Progress)

Geomorphological Impacts of Landslides: Advances in Techniques, Dynamics, and Applications in the journal *Geomorphology* (Status: Proposal under consideration)

Summary and acknowledgements

The conference exceeded expectations on the number of participants and was overall a great success. Although some aspects could have been better (e.g. the conference App), much of the feedback was highly positive:

“It was truly a great conference, and everybody enjoyed not only the very high level of scientific presentations and venue infrastructure (truly perfect!), but also the very warm, welcoming, and friendly atmosphere you were able to create! The choice of this ICG was indeed a very good one, and the IAG will greatly benefit from the relationships developed during those days.”

“It was wonderful to attend such a slick conference; there was a fantastic atmosphere throughout and I think you and your colleagues have showcased Aotearoa NZ in the best possible light, as well as facilitating a space for the community to come together and progress the discipline.”

To achieve such a conference there are many thanks to be given:

- Amy Abel and her team at Conference and Events Ltd, who were a pleasure to work with and who invested much effort and financial support to achieve the conference;
- The sponsors and exhibitors whose presence and support was greatly appreciated.
- Michael Stokoe of Tourism NZ for seeding the conference bid and financial support;
- The many leaders of the excellent fieldtrips, workshops, and conference sessions;
- The eight plenary speakers and the invited keynote speakers;
- The student volunteers who helped keep things running smoothly including on fieldtrips, workshops, and during the conference sessions;
- Jacqui McCord for providing photography during the event, including those in this report – we also acknowledge photographers of other photos used in this report
- Dave Brennan and his team for the cultural ceremonies and welcome;
- Rory Clifford for helping to arrange the carving of the tokotoko (traditional walking sticks for the honorary fellows);
- The Executive Committees of the IAG, ANZGG, and NZ Rivers Group for their faith in the LOC and their support of the conference.
- Finally, everyone who attended the 11th IAG International Conference on Geomorphology.

The Local Organising Committee