

TRAGIC EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI HIT JAPAN

On 11 March 2011 a magnitude 9.0 earthquake struck Japan, near the east coast of Honshu, 129 km east of Sendai and 373 km northeast of Tokyo. As informed by the US Geological Survey this earthquake is one of the largest in the world since 1900, and the largest in Japan since modern instrumental recording began 130 years ago. The earthquake generated a devastating tsunami that swept over cities and farmland along the northern part of Japan. This area is particularly vulnerable to tsunami waves because it has many deep coastal embayments that amplify tsunami waves and cause great wave inundations. The result has been an immeasurable loss of life and damage to critical infrastructure. Once again we are humbly reminded that many tragedies around the world often relate to the dynamic nature of planet Earth.

As Earth Scientists, we all well appreciate the need to better understand the causes of natural hazards. Our collective efforts through geoscience education, practical field research and innovative studies have helped to minimize the risks of natural hazards, reduce human vulnerability and enhance the safety of the global society. Moreover, we know that in order to confront natural disasters not only the geosciences but numerous other disciplines are needed to respond to and mitigate such events.

With a long historical record of earthquakes and tsunamis Japan has developed the most stringent safeguards to ensure that buildings and infrastructure are built to be resilient and capable of surviving this type of disaster. That nation has also developed and maintained the organizational capacity and equipment needed for prevention, early warning and rapid emergency response to natural hazards. This earthquake and its aftermaths, however, show that there is a limit beyond which most efforts are neutralized. Thus, even a society like the Japanese, well prepared for this type of event, may be subject to tremendous losses when the effects of the dynamics of planet Earth reach unusual magnitudes in a given context.

These circumstances surely will not change in the future. On the contrary, as it has already been pointed out by some analysts, not only will we see more natural disasters, but also our human population and built-up settlements could be increasingly vulnerable to them. This vulnerability results from a continuous increase in population, the presence of new and larger human settlements in areas prone to natural hazards, and the development of technologies needed to maintain that population and the standards it requires even at the cost of some actual or potential negative effects on our environment.

What is basically needed then to cope with these types of inevitable events is the ethos that the Japanese have learned since childhood and are showing today as an example for the rest of the World - an ethos in which resilience, perseverance, patience, and solidarity are some of the most outstanding features, as expressed in the Japanese word "gaman".

On behalf of the many geoscientists represented by the IUGS, we send our heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the many people affected by this recent catastrophe. Ganbaru Nihon!
Alberto C. Riccardi, President IUGS

IUGS 50TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT PARIS 2011

On 21 February 2011 at the UNESCO Headquarters building in Paris, France, some 200 people from around the globe joined to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the IUGS. The meeting featured guest speakers to address past, present and future challenges for IUGS and the geosciences, the presentation of medals to those who have shaped the IUGS over the years (see below), and the viewing of a video on the history of the IUGS since its formation. (You can view the video on the IUGS website at: <http://www.iugs.org/> or at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtKYeYJIAG8>). Commemorative medals were presented to past officers of the Executive Committee (EC) attending the meeting: U. Cordani (Vice President 1984-1989, President 1989-1992), E. de Mulder (President 2000-2004), Zhang Hongren (President 2004-2008), A. C. Boriani (Secretary General 1996-2000, 2000-2002), P. Bobrowsky (Vice President 2000-2004, Secretary General 2004-2008), Z. Johan (Treasurer 1996-2000), A. Brambati (Treasurer 2004-2008), M. Bensaid (Vice President 1984-1989, 1989-1992), E. Moores (Vice President 2004-2008), J-P. Cadet (Councilor 2002-2006). The commemorative medal was also presented to R. Missotten (UNESCO) to express IUGS appreciation for the collaboration developed throughout the years in the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP) and other joint IUGS-UNESCO initiatives. Other past members of the EC that could not attend the event will be presented with the commemorative medal during the year.

34TH INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS 5-10 August, 2012, BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA-IMPORTANT UPDATE

Australia, on behalf of the Oceania region, is hosting the 34th IGC, in Brisbane from 5 to 10 August 2012. The 34th IGC will feature a wide ranging scientific program, field trips through the region, a large exhibition, workshops and an education and outreach program. The Congress will also be the venue for the 2012 meetings of the IUGS' Commissions, Task Groups, and Joint Programs and other IUGS-related groups. In addition, the 34th IGC will incorporate the 2nd Young Earth Scientists Network (YES) congress and will benefit from UNESCO patronage.

The scientific program will be closed on 8 April 2011. Any IUGS group intending to organise a scientific meeting for which they want abstracts published in the IGC proceedings should formally register it before that date, if they have not already done so. This should be done by emailing 34igc@ga.gov.au and requesting details of how to enter the required information on the title of the meeting, the communicating convenor, and a short synopsis.

For IUGS-related groups wishing to organise business meetings or scientific meetings without abstracts, these details should be registered by 14 July 2011, for inclusion in the Third Circular. Early registration is strongly advised as the number of rooms available within the 34th IGC venue will be limited.

Preparations are well advanced for electronic distribution of the Second Circular in late April-early May 2011. This will list the general Symposia that have been developed under 36 Themes, and will call for abstracts. In addition, it will announce a "Super Early Bird" (SEB) registration for individuals at a cost of A\$895, representing a discount of not less than 10% off the Early bird rate which will be released in the Third Circular in August 2011. Further, IUGS related groups, government organisations, or companies, will be able to purchase multiple registrations at an even more discounted price of A\$850 per person. These Super Early Bird registrations can be purchased only until the end of August 2011 or until 500 are sold. For bulk purchases, the names of the actual delegates will be able to be provided later (up to May 2012).

On-line applications for the GeoHost support program will be also be launched in the Second Circular. GeoHost will provide financial support to eligible applicants under the Funded Delegate

Program (FDP) and the Training Workshop Program (TWP). Funding is of course limited and the application process is competitive.

The Second Circular will call for expressions of interest in the field trips. For further information please visit the Congress website: <http://www.34igc.org>.

IGCP IN AFRICA - WORKSHOP ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN PREPARING IGCP PROJECT APPLICATIONS

The involvement of Africa in the UNESCO-IUGS International Geosciences Programme (IGCP) since its launch in 1974 has remained very marginal, both in term of number of projects devoted to the continent (only 7%) and in term of number of project leaders from the continent (5%). Thanks to special funding from the Swedish International Developing Agency (SIDA), UNESCO is committed to promote this worldwide recognised programme in Africa, especially through the "Young Scientist IGCP" scheme. See:

<http://www.unesco.org/science/doc/2010GuidelinesProposalForm.doc>

The UNESCO-Nairobi office will organise a training workshop aiming at developing skills of writing successful IGCP proposals during the second half of 2011 at a date and venue to be determined. The workshop will be open to about 10 African participants; women geoscientists are particularly encouraged to apply. The overall goal of this workshop is to increase the number and the quality of IGCP proposals from African earth scientists during the 2012 session of the Scientific Board meeting.

Applicants Requirements: Be within 10 years of the PhD at the end of 2012; Be affiliated to a research institute, university, geological survey or equivalent organization; Submit a short CV (one page maximum); Submit a preliminary proposal following the guidelines of "Young Scientists IGCP"; and dealing with one or more of the five science themes of IGCP. The Deadline of application is 30 May 2011. A committee will evaluate the preliminary proposals and the best authors will be invited to participate in the workshop.

Send your application via e-mail to: Ms Jacqueline Mengo, UNESCO Nairobi Office, P.O. Box 30592-00100, Nairobi, Kenya. E-mail: j.mengo@unesco.org

EPISODES - THE IUGS JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL GEOSCIENCE

The Editor for Episodes Dr. Mudlappa JAYANANDA welcomes short, innovative, scientific articles, as well as items dealing with geological sciences and society. For guidance on contributions etc. visit the web address at <http://www.episodes.org/Files/Guidance.htm> or download a pdf version from <http://www.geosocindia.org/episodes/2/cover2.pdf>. Spectacular geological photographs for the magazine cover are also welcome. To submit your papers, or to make any other enquiries, contact Dr. JAYANANDA at email: episodes.editor@gmail.com. Back issues of "Episodes" from 1978 to 2008 are available on-line at <http://www.episodes.org/backissues.htm> and the latest back issues are available on the new Indian website for Episodes at <http://www.episodes.co.in>

SURVEY ON FUTURE SCIENCE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ANTARCTIC AND SOUTHERN OCEAN

At the request of the United States National Science Foundation and the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, the Committee on Future Science Opportunities in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean of the National Research Council (NRC) requests that members of the Antarctic science community complete a short survey. The committee aims to build on the work of other organizations and recent scientific achievements

(including International Polar Year activities and previous workshops and reports) to identify likely changes to the types and foci of scientific research programs for the United States. To complete the survey, go to the "Survey on Future Science Opportunities" link at:
<http://dels.nas.edu/global/prb/Links>. Deadline: Monday, 11 April 2011. For further information, please contact: Lauren Brown email: LBrown2@nas.edu

NEED TO CONTACT A GEOSCIENCE ORGANIZATION SOMEWHERE AROUND THE WORLD?

See the Directory of Geoscience Organizations of the World website:
<http://www.gsj.jp/Intl/Dir/a.htm>

RECENT INFORMATION ON PUBLICATIONS, JOURNALS AND NEWSLETTERS

To download any individual IUGS E-Bulletins issued since October 2002 go to:
<http://iugs.org/index.php?page=e-bulletins>

The Geological Society of Africa 2011-2nd Newsletter pdf can be downloaded at:
http://www.geologicalsocietyofafrica.org/file/News_4d6cb550c825a6.30079951.pdf. To view all the newsletters from the Geological Society of Africa regions go to:
<http://www.geologicalsocietyofafrica.org/news/newsletter/>

GeoAfricaSciences Newsletter Vol. 2 Issue 2 dated 24 February 2011 is now available. To download the pdf file go to:
<http://www.geoafricasciences.com/images/GeoAfricaSciencesNewsletter2Of2011.pdf>

"ICSU Insight" the Newsletter of the International Council for Science (ICSU) can be downloaded from the ICSU website at:
http://www.icsu.org/2_resourcecentre/RESOURCE_list_base.php4?rub=12
To subscribe to the newsletter go to:
http://www.icsu.org/3_mediacentre/INSIGHT_1.php4

The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) latest electronic E-Journal is on their website at: <http://www.iugg.org/publications/ejournals/>

e-Journal Earth Science India publishes their Open and Free Access quarterly e-Journal of peer-reviewed primary research/review papers For details see: <http://www.earthscienceindia.info/>

All copies of the GEOETHICS NEWS newsletter since publication started in 2007 are now available for downloading from the right side of the Geoethics website homepage at:
http://tierra.rediris.es/Geoethics_Planetary_Protection/

To subscribe to the email distributed Global Water Partnership Monthly Newsletter "NewsFlow" go to:
<http://gwpforum.us1.listmanage.com/subscribe?u=2e4d7bb2bd4f7590eb7d7929e&id=8e059efa29>

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

NOTE the listings of forthcoming meetings shown below will normally be included in an IUGS E-Bulletin only once and then they will appear on the IUGS website. To see the IUGS listing of

forthcoming geoscience meetings, conferences, and workshops, check the Calendar section of the IUGS website at:

<http://iugs.org/index.php?page=calendar&phpMyAdmin=2c9f06db78f0953a55b10dcfdc5907f6>

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June 19 - 25, 2011. SGEM 2011 - The 11th International Multidisciplinary Scientific GeoConference & EXPO. Albena, Bulgaria. Theme "Modern Management of Mine Producing, Geology and Environmental Protection". For details visit the Surveying Geology & mining Ecology Management website at: <http://www.sgem.org/>

August 1-5, 2011. 10th International Congress for Applied Mineralogy (ICAM), Trondheim, Norway. The ICAM has plans for 6 pre-congress workshops (30-31st July) and 2 x 4-day excursions to Southern Norway (6-9th August). See <http://www.icam2011.org/>

August 22-26, 2011. 25th International Applied Geochemistry Symposium 2011. Rovaniemi, Finland. It is time to ensure places in the excursions and the workshops. Registration with payment for them, and the deadline for abstract submission, is 31st March 2011. The abstract submission and registration can be done online at the symposium's web: <http://www.iags2011.fi>

September 5-9, 2011. International Association for Mathematical Geosciences Annual conference (IAMG 2011). Salzburg, Austria. Theme "Bridging theory and practice". Full details at <http://www.iamg2011.at/>

September 6-8, 2011. The International Conference on Environmental Geosciences and Engineering Survey for Territory Protection and Population Safety (EngeoPro-2011), Moscow, Russia. Organized under the aegis of the International Association for Engineering Geology and the Environment (IAEG) with participation of the Russian national group IAEG, and the Scientific Council RAS, on the problems in environmental geoscience, engineering geology and hydrogeology. Abstract submission deadline March 31, 2011. Full details at: http://www.engeopro2011.com/index_eng.htm

September 19-23, 2011. GEOITALIA 2011, VIII Forum Italiano di Scienze della Terra. Torino, Italy. Theme "Sciences for Sustainable Development", Website: http://www.geoitalia.org/index.php?action=folder_list&folder_id=214

September 20-25, 2011. The 4th International Conference on Medical Geology (GEOMED 2011). Bari, Italy. Theme "Geological and Medical Sciences for a safer Environment". A unique opportunity for mineralogists, physicians, soil scientists, toxicologists, geochemists, veterinarians, biologists, chemists and for many other specialists to share ideas and knowledge on the impact of natural environment on health. Abstract submissions deadline March 20, 2011. Full details on the website: <http://www.geomed2011.it/index.html>

September 26-October 8, 2011. Advanced School on Understanding Prediction of Earthquakes and other Extreme Events in Complex Systems, Trieste, Italy. See: <http://cdsagenda5.ictp.trieste.it/askArchive.php?base=agenda&categ=a10170&id=a10170/announcement>

October 5-8, 2011. 9th International Hydrogeological Congress, Kalavrita, Greece. The proceedings of this Congress will be included in a book to be published by Springer. Congress website: <http://www.hydrogeocongress.gr>

October 19-21, 2011. The 1st International conference on Clays and Clay Minerals in Africa and The 2nd international conference on Geophagia in Southern Africa. Venue: Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein, South Africa. Theme: "An innovative perspective on the role of clay and clay minerals and geophagia on economic development". See website: <http://www.saweb.co.za/claymineralsafrica/> The first circular is now available. Download the pdf at: <http://www.aipea.org/downloads/Africa%20Clay%20conference%20announcement.pdf>. For all correspondences regarding the conference, please use the email: africanclays@gmail.com

November 14-18, 2011. The Regional Geographic Conference UGI 2011. Santiago, Chile. Deadline for Abstracts extended to 11 April 2011 - abstract submissions via the website at: <http://www.ugi2011.cl/index.html> or go to: <http://acreditacion.fisa.cl/ugi/autor/index.php?lan=en>.

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April 4-6, 2012. The first International Congress on the Management of Mining Risk and Environmental Impact (GESRIM2012). Marrakech, Morocco. Organized by the DRCI (Canada), UCA (University Cadi Ayyad), UQAT (University of Quebec in Abitibi-Temiscamingue), GEODERIS (France), BRGM (France), and INSA-Lyon (National Institute for Applied Sciences) (France), and the International Mine Water Association. Website: <http://www.gesrim2012.gesrim.com>

July 2-6, 2012. The 4th International Congress EUROSIL 2012. Fiera Del Levante, Bari, Italy. Presented by the European Confederation of Soil Science Societies (ECSSS). Congress website at: <http://www.eurosoil2012.eu/>

August 5-10, 2012. 34th International Geological Congress (IGC) in Brisbane, Australia. The primary IUGS conference that is held every 4 years. Congress website at: <http://www.34igc.org/>

August 5-10, 2012. INHIGEO will meet in conjunction with the 34th IGC in Brisbane, Australia. See: <http://www.inhigeo.org/coming-symposia>

August 26-30, 2012. The 32nd International Geographical Congress. Cologne, Germany. Theme "Down to Earth" which will focus on: Global Change and Globalisation; Society and Environment; Risks and Conflicts; Urbanisation and Demographic Change. For details see: <http://www.igc2012.org/>

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July 22-28, 2013. INHIGEO Symposium 38 - Manchester, England, UK, (at the 24th International Congress for the History of Science, Technology & Medicine). Initial details available at <http://www.meeting.co.uk/confercare/ichst2013>

-----2014 and 2015 -----

The INHIGEO Board is currently considering the conference venues for 2014 and 2015. If any member or national delegation is interested in hosting the annual INHIGEO conference in either of

these years please contact the Secretary General (email: barry@ananian-cooper.com) or any member of the INHIGEO Board as soon as possible. For details of all INHIGEO activities see: <http://www.inhigeo.org>.

August 31-September 5, 2014. 21st General Meeting of the International Mineralogical Association (IMA2014). andton Convention Center, Johannesburg, South Africa. First announcement on the website: <http://www.ima2014.co.za>

September 28-October 3, 2014. The Fourth International Palaeontological Congress (IPC 2014), Mendoza, Argentina. If you need information now, or if you have suggestions for the organizers contact: Dr. Claudia V. Rubinstein (crubinstein@mendoza-conicet.gov.ar); Dr. Beatriz G. Waisfeld (bwaisfeld@efn.uncor.edu); Dr. Claudia A. Marsicano (claumar@gl.fcen.uba.ar).

With best regards,
Colin SIMPSON
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