



International Association of Geomorphologists

Newsletter No. 21 (3/2004)

New Journal: *Landslides*

Landslides, a new journal, was launched in April 2004. It is associated with the International Programme on Landslides, which is coordinated by the International Consortium on Landslides (ICL). The IAG is represented on the ICL board by President Mario Panizza. The new journal is published by Springer, and the Editor-in-Chief is Kyoji Sassa of Kyoto University in Japan. There is also a large and distinguished Editorial Board and Journal Management Committee. The first issue contains nine original papers that cover a wide range of topics, and they benefit from the fact that maps, plates and diagrams are reproduced in colour. An electronic edition of the journal is available at springerlink.com.

A.S. Goudie, Oxford
IAG Vice President

The Quaternary

The IAG Executive Committee discussed the proposal to redefine the Quaternary and shared the concerns of the INQUA Executive Committee about the elimination of the word "Quaternary" from the Geological Time Scale. The IAG wrote the following statement: "The International Association of Geomorphologists (IAG) has considered the proposed revisions to the Geological Time Scale by the International Commission on Stratigraphy. The IAG regrets the proposed elimination of the Quaternary as a system. However, if this change does take place then it supports the idea that within the Neogene a Quaternary Subsystem is established with a long time-scale (i.e. the last 2.6 million years). This would remove problems with regard to the placing of the Plio-Pleistocene boundary, and would reflect the major changes in the global environment which took place at 2.6 Ma (as recorded both in loess sections and in the deep sea oxygen isotope record)."

Mario Panizza, Modena
IAG President

Olav Slaymaker Retirement

The international conference on "Sediment and Geochemical Budgets in Geomorphology" was held from June 27–30, 2004 at the University of British Columbia to celebrate the achievements of Olav Slaymaker on the occasion of his retirement. Mario Panizza (IAG President) sent the following message:

“On behalf of the IAG and my own, I wish to express my appreciation and thanks to Professor Olav Slaymaker for his personal commitment in his role of President of the IAG

from 1997 to 2001. We all wish him many more years of research, teaching and scientific organization activity as well as a future of excellent collaboration with IAG and his colleagues and of serenity within his own family.”

José Lugo-Hubp, as IAG EC representative, made a speech and presented an IAG silver plaque. Olav Slaymaker later sent this message to Mario Panizza:

“It is with the greatest pleasure that I thank you for your personal greetings and presentation on the occasion of my retirement. José Lugo-Hubp, who represented you at the ceremony, held on Monday, June 28, gave a splendid and much appreciated speech before presenting me with the IAG plaque. Because José and I have shared in many IAG activities, he was a most fitting choice to act as your representative on this occasion. Please extend my sincere thanks to the whole Executive Committee and best wishes for success of the forthcoming meetings in Glasgow, Firenze and Zaragossa.”

Report on the First Science Meeting of the European Science Foundation Network SEDIFLUX held in Iceland from June 18-June 21, 2004.

Forty scientists from 12 countries participated in two field excursions and two days of technical paper sessions under the theme of "Sedimentary source-to-sink fluxes in cold environments." The event was master-minded by Dr. Achim Beylich, the coordinator of SEDIFLUX (Department of Earth Sciences, University of Uppsala; now at the Geological Survey of Norway, Trondheim); brilliantly organized in the field by Dr. Thorstein Saemundsson (Director of the Natural Science Research Centre of Northwestern Iceland, Saudarkrokur) and ably assisted by Armelle Decaulne (Clermont Ferrand) and Olga Sandberg (Goteborg). The opening day's field trip, from Reykjavik to Saudarkrokur, illustrated active sediment sources, latest Quaternary and Holocene landscape development, the omni-presence of volcanism, the use of tephrochronology and evidences of 18th and 19th century rural ways of life. Topics covered in the technical sessions on June 19 and June 20 included sedimentary source-to-sink fluxes in cold environments, process monitoring and modelling, analysis of sediment sinks and storages, source to sink correlations, sediment budget studies, landscape ecology and international scientific network management. The final day's field trip, from Saudarkrokur to Reykjavik, via the highland road that runs between Langjokull and Hofsjokull, was a spectacular demonstration of the unique Icelandic landscape. The final stop was a pilgrimage to the Thingvellir National Park, the site of the establishment of the first western style parliamentary democracy.

The event was honoured by the presence of Professor and Mrs. Frank Ahnert. Special acknowledgment goes to Achim Beylich for his conscientious and sensitive leadership. The publication of many of these papers, the future Science Meetings at Clermont Ferrand, Durham and Trondheim, and the research outcomes of this exciting team of scientists are anticipated with interest. For my part, I thank the organizers for their excellent work and recommend that some formal association of this group with the International Association of Geomorphologists be pursued to mutual advantage.

*Olav Slaymaker,
Emeritus Professor of Geography and Past President of IAG, Vancouver*

Report on IAG Large Rivers Yangtze Fluvial Conference, 24 June -2 July 2004, Shanghai and North Sichuan, China

The second IAG Large Rivers Yangtze Fluvial Conference was organised by Zhongyuan Chen at East China Normal University (ECNU), Shanghai. It included papers on both fluvial and estuarine issues and overlapped with a conference on Monsoon Evolution and Tectonics–Climate Linkage in East Asia and its Marginal Seas during the Late Cenozoic (IGCP 476), arranged by Hongbo Zheng at Tongji Univ., Shanghai. The IAG conference was inaugurated by Professor Chen Qun, Vice President, East China Normal Univ., with brief opening addresses by Dénes Lóczy (Secretary, IAG) and Avijit Gupta (Chair, IAG Large Rivers Working Group). The first day focused on fluvial topics and included papers by Yin Hongfu (China Univ. of Geosciences, Wuhan), John Chappell (ANU), Gordon Grant (USDA Forest Service), Shi Yafeng (Nanjing Institute of Geography and Limnology), Steve Goodbred (Stony Brook, USA), Takashi Oguchi (Tokyo), Chen Xiqing (Changjiang Water Resources Commission), Adrian Harvey (Liverpool), Avijit Gupta (Leeds and CRISP, Singapore), Vishwas Kale (Pune), Zhongyuan Chen (ECNU), Dénes Lóczy (Pécs), Xu Chongyu (Uppsala), Lu Xixi (National University of Singapore), Gholamreza Lakshkaripour (Sistan and Baluchistan), and Shogo Murakami (National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan).

Papers dealing with both fluvial and estuarine topics were presented on the second day and included contributions from Eric Wolanski (Australian Institute of Marine Science), Yoshiki Saito (Geological Survey of Japan), Shen Huanting (ECNU), Ding Pingxing (ECNU), Wu Chaoyu (Zhongshan), Gao Shu (Nanjing), Zong Yongqiang (Durham), Matti Kummu (Helsinki University of Technology), Yang Dayuan, (Nanjing), Yang Shuoye (Tongji), Wu Jiaxue (Tongji), and Zhang Yufen (China Univ. of Geosciences). The third and final day was the EMECS/NIES session focusing on catchment impact on estuary and coastal management. Papers were presented by the EMECS Director Nobuo Kumamoto (Hokkaido University), Kinga Malgorzata Kruse (International Centre for Ecology, Poland), Masataka Watanabe (National Institute for Environment Studies, Japan), Joseph Hun-Wei Lee (Hong Kong), Hi-Il Yi (Korea Ocean R&D Institute), Ying Wu (ECNU), Jiang Tong (Nanjing Institute of Geography and Limnology), Kaiqin Xu (National Institute for Environment Studies, Japan), Zhu Jianrong (ECNU) and Tran Duc Thanh (Haiphong Institute of Oceanology). The conference was concluded by a panel discussion on better management of estuary and coastal seas.

A number of posters were also displayed at the conference. Poster presenters were from Northern Jiaotong, National Univ. of Singapore, Ferdowsi, Rajshahi, Viet Nam National Center for Natural Science and Technology, Ocean University of China, Ocean Univ. of China, Chengdu Univ. of Technology, Southwest Normal, Lanzhou, Shanghai, Qingdao Institute of Marine Geology, CAC, Nanjing, and ECNU. Poster presenters gave short oral introductions under the extremely able time-keeping of Zhongyuan Chen.

A number of participants from both the ECNU and Tongji conferences opted for the field trip, which began with an evening flight to Chengdu and then one to an airport high up on the Minjiang Plateau in North Sichuan. The first day was spent driving at elevations between 3000-4000 m through a magnificent landscape of past glaciation and steep slopes marked with innumerable landslides and grazed by yaks. The group climbed up the glaciated alpine valley of Huanglong National Park with its waterfalls, flowstones, and travertine-dammed ponds of various colours from algae and bacteria. The second day was in the valleys of Jiuzhaigou Park, which is a national nature reserve. It is home to the protected pandas, golden monkeys, deer and takins, although nothing beyond a wide range of bird species and tourists was seen.

Jiuzhaigou is a Y-shaped alpine valley (2000-4300 m) in pristine condition and wonderfully maintained in spite of a very large number of visitors and several villages located inside the park. Both Jiuzhaigou and Huanglong are UNESCO World Heritage sites. The high slopes of

Jiuzhaigou are forested and the valleys are drained by a series of connected lakes held behind tufa embankments, and in certain cases, separated from each other by tufa-encrusted waterfalls. The lakes usually carry characteristic vegetation development from carbonate-enriched water near the shores. The drainage runs to Jiulingjiang, one of the major Sichuan tributaries of the Changjiang (Yangtze).

After Jiuzhaigou, the road travelled up the Jiulingjiang valley, at one point crossed the Hwang He-Changjiang divide, and entered the Min valley very near its source. The 400 km long Minjiang valley was followed next day. Terraces, changing channel patterns and loess-covered steep slopes mark the upper Min. For almost its entire course, the Min is a spectacular river with continuous macroturbulence and standing waves on its surface as it flows through a relatively narrow valley, in many places enclosed by flights of terraces, with hillsides beyond crowded with mass movement tracks. On 25 August 1933, hillslopes slid into the Min valley following a 7.5 magnitude earthquake near Zhenjiangyuan, leading to widespread death and destruction and formation of a series of lakes. The present lakes cover 3.5 million km² and the maximum depth is 98 m. The Min continues in the same fashion downstream, collecting a high sediment load from its steep and narrow basin slopes.

About 7:00 pm the tour bus came to Aba where a dam is being built across the Min. It was the beginning of the rainy season, and a large landslide had blocked the road, resulting in a 3 km long line of traffic. After the bus had been waiting for 3 hours in the queue, the road was closed for the night. There were very few places to stay as the town had been partially evacuated prior to inundation, and hotel rooms were not available for everyone. Most of the party slept in the bus after spending half the night in the inner courtyard of a restaurant. Next morning, after the landslide was cleared, the bus was allowed to move to the head of the queue, thanks to the kindness of local police and engineering authorities, and much to the relief of people with tight flight schedules.

The landslide crossing was followed by a huge Sichuan hotpot lunch at a restaurant in Dujiangyan and a visit to the fascinating ancient (about 250 BCE) irrigation project on the Min, designed and executed by Li Bing and his son. The project diverted part of the water of the Min in a steady flow to irrigate the Chengdu Plain and also to control flooding and silt built-up in the Min channel. The evening flight took the party back to Shanghai where a comfortable hotel, privacy and access to running hot water were much appreciated. The final day was spent in either visiting the Yangtze estuary and the huge island of Chongming or the city of Shanghai.

It was a wonderful conference and a memorable field trip, for which the group is indebted to Zhongyuan Chen, his colleagues and their students. Two selections of conference papers will be reviewed and published. Fluvial papers will be in a future issue of *Geomorphology* and coastal papers in *Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science*. It is expected that the IAG Large Rivers Group will continue to carry out its standard mix of conferences and river trips, although perhaps landslides and a continuous run of field lunches based on boiled eggs will be avoided in the future.

Avijit Gupta
Leeds and CRISP, Singapore

Editor's Note

The success of the IAG 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 Publications Officer:

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