



International Geographical Union
Union Géographique Internationale



Annual Report

2024

(Reporting period: Nov. 2023 – Dec. 2024)

Compiler:

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Sent to:

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A. Membership

IGU-requirements: The structure of your current steering committee, including all names and contact details. The number of Commission/Task Force corresponding members (i.e. your 'membership' - circulation - list, in total and, if at all possible, by country as of 1 December 2022). The counts of members by country are exceedingly helpful in documenting to the International Science Council (ISC) and other international organizations the IGU's extensive reach.

a. Structure of Steering Committee (SC)

The structure of the SC during the reporting period is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Members of the Steering Committee of the Commission and their respective functions and contact details

SC-Function	Name	Country, sex	SC since	max. to	Affiliation	Portfolio
Chair	Prof. Dr. habil. Frank Winde	South Africa, male	2012	2024	North-West University, Vanderbijlpark Campus, Geography and Environmental Studies, PO Box 1174, Vanderbijlpark, 1900; Extraordinary Professor Wismut GmbH, 09117 Chemnitz, Jagdschänken-straße 29, Monitoring and Radiation Protection, Tel. +49 151 2571 3237, frank.winde@gmail.com	Management and admin, Membership/recruitment, website/public visibility
Vice Chair	Prof. Dr. Daniel Karthe	Germany, male	2016	2024	United Nations University, Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources, Dresden, Germany. Email: karthe@unu.edu	co-organize publications over the next 4 years
Vice Chair	Prof. Dr. Liliana Zaharia	Romania, female	2016	2024	University of Bucharest, Faculty of Geography 1 Nicolae Balcescu Blv., 010041, Bucharest, Romania, Tel: + 40-21-305 38 22, Fax: + 40-21-315 30 74, zaharialili@yahoo.com ; zaharialili@hotmail.com	Outreach activities, reporting, archiving, membership recruitment
Member	Prof. Dr. Danijel Orešić	Croatia, male	2020	2028	University of Zagreb, Department of Geography, Marulićev trg 19/II, 10 000 Zagreb, Hrvatska (Croatia), doresic@geog.pmf.hr	Collaboration + outreach
Member	Dr. Lanhui Zhang	China, female	2016	2024	Lanzhou University, College of Earth Environmental Sciences, Guanyun Building 0912, Tianshuihan Road 222, Lanzhou City, zip code: 730000, Gansu Province, China, Tel/Fax:010 931 8912805 lhzhang@lzu.edu.cn	Proposed: Publications + reporting
Member	Prof. Dr. Heejun Chang	USA, male	2020	2028	Portland State University, Geography, 1721 SW Broadway, PO Box 751, Tel. 503-725-3162, Fax: 503-725-3166; changh@pdx.edu	Book publication, collaborative research, outreach, mentoring.
Member	Dr. Marcela Hebe Gonzalez	Argentina, female	2020	2028	University of Buenos Aires, Department of Atmospheric and Ocean Science – CIMA CONICET. Intendente Güiraldes 2160 2nd floor Building II Ciudad Universitaria C1428EGA CABA ARGENTINA Tel 54-11-52858472 int. 58472, marcelahebe@gmail.com , gonzalez@cima.fcen.uba.ar	Collaboration + proposed publications
Advisory member	Prof. Dr. Natalia Frolova	Russia, female	2020	2024	Lomonosov State University, Moscow, Department of Hydrology, Faculty of Geography, GSP-1, 119991, Leninskie Gory, MSU. Phone: +7 (495) 939-15-33 frolova_nl@mail.ru	non-executive advisor
Advisory member	Prof. Dr. Chansheng He	USA, male	2012	2024	Western Michigan University. Wood Hall, Department of Geography, Western Michigan University, 3234 Wood Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5424. Phone: (269) 387-3425 Fax: (269) 387-3442 chansheng.he@wmich.edu	non-executive advisor
Honorary Member	Prof. emer. Tony Jones	UK, male	2002	open ended	Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences, University of Wales, Aberystwyth. tonyandjenjones@btinternet.com	non-executive advisor

There have been no changes to its composition since the last annual report.

Unfortunately, levels of active participation in commission matters for the overwhelming majority of the SC-members stayed unsatisfactory low, including a lack of participation in annual meetings. Like over the last couple of years, nearly the entire administrative work as well as custodianship of the website rests with the chair. Gratefully acknowledged is the contribution of Prof. L. Zaharia, who as deputy chair supported the chair on various occasions and regularly attended the annual meetings.

In view of this situation, it was decided to extend the terms of the two active SC members (proffs. Zaharia and Winde) as an interim measure to ensure the continued operation of the Commission until

suitable successors have been identified. For more details, e.g. regarding maximal allowable terms of office according to IGU statutes etc. please go to our website at [Steering Committee – IGU Commission for Water Sustainability \(igu-water.org\)](#).

b. Member statistics

Based on a decision taken in 2016 that was aimed to curb the uncontrolled grow of mostly inactive members through simply adding email address of one-time attendants to a circulation list, we only accept applicants as new members who submit filled-in member templates outlining their areas of interests/ expertise and research profile in the field of water. This information is displayed on our website to facilitate better collaboration within and outside the Commission ([Members – IGU Commission for Water Sustainability \(igu-water.org\)](#)).

In 2024, membership of the Commission continued to grow reaching 67 registered members through the addition of two colleagues from India and one from Romania slightly increasing the female share to 34%. Members originate from **26 countries** on six continents of which 11 are in Europe, 9 in Austral-Asia, 5 in Africa and 4 in the Americas. Of these countries, 11 are falling in the high-income category represented by 37% of our members, 9 are middle-income countries represented by the majority of members (48%) and 6 are low income nations accounting for 15% of our members.

The membership per country is as follows:

1 Argentina	2
2 Armenia	1
3 Australia	1
4 Canada	1
5 China	6
6 Croatia	4
7 France	1
8 Germany	6
9 Ghana	1
10 Hungary	1
11 India	6
12 Italy	2
13 Japan	1
14 Nigeria	1
15 Norway	1
16 Portugal	2
17 Romania	7
18 Russia	6
19 South Africa	5
20 Spain	1
21 Swaziland/ Eswatini	1
22 Turkey	2
23 UK	3
24 USA	4
25 Zimbabwe	2

B. Meetings

a. Meetings held: Annual meeting at the 35th IGC Dublin

The annual meeting of the Commission in 2024 was held in conjunction with the 35th IGC in Dublin from 26-30 August.

Our Commission applied for a total six different sessions themes (for details please refer to our Annual Report 2023), which were complemented by another three session themes proposed by non-members and allocated by the LOC to our commission. In order to better align topics and stay within the agreed scope of the Commission we strongly suggest for the next time to consult with affected Commissions before unilateral session proposals are allocated to them.

Nevertheless, the close collaboration at the conference between prof. WINDE and the chairs of the added sessions (Ms Renee GRUNDLING: wetlands, Dr Seema RANI: water management) proved to be successful. Dr. RANI later also became a member of the Commission.

The nine themes originally resulted in a total of 18 sessions attracting some 89 submission (75 oral, 14 posters). All submissions had to be reviewed by the proposed session chairs, which for the five themes submitted by our Commission amounted to 37 abstracts reviewed by the chair. Eventually, the following sessions were approved and held:

- *Water resources management and planning* (3 sessions, 11 papers)
- *Advances in hydrological methodology and water management* (1 session, 5 papers)
- *Emerging water issues – anticipating research and new solutions* (1 session, 3 papers)
- *'Clean water and sanitation for all' – opportunities and challenges to still achieve SDG 6 by 2030* (1 session, 3 papers)
- *Urban water crises – the new normal?* (1 session, 3 papers)
- *Wetlands: changing landforms under changing environmental and climatic conditions* (1 session, 4 papers)
- *PFAS in the freshwater environment: occurrence, pathways and monitoring* (1 session, 3 papers)
- *Geographies of rivers and floodplains* (1 session, 3 papers)

In total, the Commission covered eight different themes in 10 sessions and 35 papers. In the seven sessions I attended there was only one no show (Mr. RAI). Generally, all presentations were of good to very good quality with a few discussions suffering from the language barrier.



Fig. 1: Participants of one of the Commission's session

At the congress, our member Dr. Gabriela MOROSANU from the Romanian Academy in Bucharest received the **2024 Early Career Award in Geography** of the IGU, a well-deserved recognition of her work and achievement on which the Commission cordially congratulates her.

In contrast to other congresses, talks started already on Sunday. In my view, extending conference into weekends is not to be encouraged as the frequent travelling of many academics already puts significant strain on family life.

Unfortunately, the envisaged water-related field trip specifically for our Commission did not materialise despite the promising early attempts to liaise with the local colleagues in Dublin. However, a general field trip open to all participants to the Glendalough valley also touched on water issues and related impacts of mining (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: Impression from the field trip to Glendalough valley mining heritage

c. Meetings planned

The Commission envisages to hold its next meeting together with the upcoming **36th IGC in Australia** in 2026. Given the general constraints in resources of many (if not most) members no annual meeting is planned for 2025.

C. Networking

IGU-requirements: a. Means, if any, by which your commission has collaborated with other IGU Commissions and Task Forces during 2022. b. Collaboration, if any, with other international, intergovernmental, or inter- and multi-disciplinary bodies in 2022. c. Cooperative efforts, if any, with the International Science Council (ISC) and the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH) programs, etc.

a. Collaboration with other IGU Commissions and Task Forces

Nothing to report.

b. Collaboration with other international, intergovernmental or multidisciplinary bodies

Cooperation with UN-agencies continued by some members of the Commission including consultation as external expert to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) regarding several IAEA initiatives like ENVIRONET (prof. Winde was appointed in 2024 as member of the Steering committee of the initiative, which comprises over 80 member states), the Coordinating Group for Uranium Legacy Sites (with special focus on Africa) as well as interregional training programmes on environmental remediation (South Africa).

c. Cooperative efforts with the International Science Council (ISC)

The chair followed a request by the ISC to participate in its Horizon Scanning initiative aimed at identifying crucial future challenges for global science. Subsequent reports have been studied and selected feedback provided.

D. Publications

IGU-requirements: a. Newsletters, special journal issues, and books published in 2021-22 (please provide complete citations). Note these publications should only be included if they are directly related to your IGU Commission activities (i.e. not a list simply pasted in from the CVs of steering committee members!) b. The current (accurate) URL of the commission's website.

a. Newsletter and reports

The annual report for 2023 was submitted in time, as will be the one for 2024. A newsletter for 2024 is still planned.

b. Special issues, books, joint publications

Following an initiative by prof. Opp a special issue was published in MDP's Applied Science to which several members contributed with joint papers:

Alymbaeva Z, Zharkova M, Ayurzhanaev A, Sodnomov B, Chernykh V, Gurzhopov B, Tsydypov B, Garmaev E (subm. 2024): Impact of the high water level of Lake Baikal on rare plant species of the coastal zone. Applied Science

Vasilenko AN, Frolova NL, Grigoriev VY, Magritsky DM, Shevchenko AI, Winde F (subm. 2024): Spatio-temporal variability of water temperature of Arctic rivers in Russia over the past 60 years. Applied Science

c. Website

The Commission's website is available at: www.igu-water.org.

E. Archival contributions

IGU-requirements: Materials and publications transmitted to the IGU archives by your commission. Copies (soft copies if appropriate) of all newsletters, monographs, special journal issues, etc. should be sent to the IGU Secretary-General upon publication for transmission to the archivist. Photographs from your meetings, field excursions, or other events that you are willing to share are especially gratefully received and will be included in the IGU e-Newsletter. The Commission's reports will be published

on the website and in the IGU. These reports will also provide the Executive Committee with information for the evaluation of Commissions in regard to their continuation.

A section on the Commission's revamped website is dedicated to archiving news, reports and other documents at [Newsletters & Reports – IGU Commission for Water Sustainability \(igu-water.org\)](http://Newsletters & Reports – IGU Commission for Water Sustainability (igu-water.org)).