

International *Geographical Union* *Union Géographique Internationale*

2022 Annual Report of the International Geographical Union (IGU)



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1. Highlights of the IGU Executive Committee meetings of 2022

The year 2022, which marked the Centennial of the formal establishment of the IGU was characterized by a return to relative normality following the havoc caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions in the two preceding. This made possible three in-person meetings of the IGU Executive Committee.

The first IGU Executive Committee meeting of 2022 was held on 12th April, 2022. In addition to regular IGU business matters, the ongoing invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces received considerable attention. In solidarity with Ukraine geographers, the EC had previously issued a declaration suspending the IGU National Committee of the Russian Federation from membership and it was agreed that this would be put to the General Assembly at the General Assembly for debate, amendment as necessary, and formal adoption. IGU Past President Himiyama tabled the summary report of the IGU Awards Committee, whose recommendations were approved for presentation at the Paris Congress. Gönençgil noted that 37 of 43 Commissions and 2 of 3 Task Forces had submitted annual reports for 2021, on which basis the Commission Excellence Award sub-committee, chaired by Vice-President dell’Agnese, recommended the IGU Commission on Sustainability of Rural Systems as the winner for 2021. Gönençgil reported on the call for nominations for the positions of Secretary-General and four Vice-Presidents. Following discussion, it was agreed to invite the IGU National Committee for Turkey to host the IGU Regional Conference in 2026, in Istanbul. Gönençgil reported on arrangements for the e-ballot for vacancies on the IGU Executive Committee.

The second IGU Executive Committee meeting of 2022 was held on 17th July 2022 in Paris, on the eve of the Extraordinary International Geographical Congress. It was noted that the responsibilities of the IGU Secretary-General and Treasurer are substantial and there are considerable efficiencies to be gained through establishing a separate position on the EC of Treasurer. This requires a change to the Statutes for consideration by the forthcoming IGU General Assembly. Gönençgil on the outcome of the recent e-ballot election for the positions of Secretary General and four Vice Presidents. Barbaros Gönençgil (Turkey) was unanimously elected as Secretary-General for the period 2022-26, while Vice Presidents Ruben Lois-González (Spain) and Bojie Fu (China) were re-elected, and Professors Maria Paradiso (Italy) and Phil McManus (Australia) were newly elected for the same period. There followed a brief discussion to consider how to deal with the vacancy

arising from Gönençgil's election to the position of Secretary-General. It was agreed to appoint Yazidhi Bamutaze (Uganda) as IGU Vice President for two years (2022-2024), after which he will be eligible for re-election for one further four year term. The EC decided to maintain the services of Dr. Pankaj Kumar as Assistant Secretary General until the 2024 Dublin Congress. These decisions are to be reported to the General Assembly for formal approval.

The third IGU Executive Committee Meeting of 2022 was held on 17th and 18th October, 2022 in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. The list of EC member liaison responsibilities to National Committees, and to Commission and Task Forces for the period 2022-2024 was confirmed. It was agreed to consult the chairs of the Olympiad Task Force, and the Young and Early Career Geographers Task Force, both of which have been operating successfully for many years, with a view to accepting status as IGU Commissions. In light of challenges that many geographers face in participating in IGU events, the need to address the issues of responsiveness and inclusiveness received considerable attention. Kumar reported on progress relating to the IGU Thematic Conference scheduled for 24-25th November 2022 in Mahandregarh, India. Lemarchand presented a summary report of the Extraordinary International Geographical Congress, Paris, July (see report below). The decision was also taken to limit the number of face-to-face IGU Executive Committee meetings each year.

2. IGU Extraordinary General Assembly 2022

The IGU Extraordinary General Assembly was held in Amphitheatre 3, Panthéon Sorbonne, Paris, from 15h00 to 17h00 on both 19th and 20th July 2022, chaired by the IGU President Meadows. Representatives of 43 member countries were present, along with a number of other congress participants and observers. Based on annual reports submitted to the secretariat, the assembly approved the Commissions and Task Forces for the period 2022-2024. Following discussion and a formal vote by full national members (24 votes in favour, 2 abstentions), the decision was ratified to expel the membership of Russia from the International Geographical Union. The IGU President then presented this report for the period 2021-22. Despite the problems brought about by the pandemic, IGU activities had continued with a successful online Congress hosted in Istanbul and many other initiatives had progressed well. In revisiting the IGU Strategy, adopted by the Executive Committee in 2020, Meadows reaffirmed the IGU commitment to advancing the discipline based on the most up-to-date methods and concepts and promoting the voice of geography in major global debates. In regard to the latter, active and vocal IGU membership of the International Science Council and International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences remains of vital importance. Interim Secretary-General Gönençgil presented a report highlighting the work of the Executive Committee since the Istanbul virtual General Assembly and the meetings that had taken place. A hybrid meeting attended in person by some EC members was held in Rome, Italy, on 7th and 8th December 2021 (subsequent meetings are reported on above).

The President invited Interim Treasurer Holly Barcus to report on the situation regarding IGU finances to GA. He noted that, since the Finance Committee had fully scrutinized the IGU accounts at the 2021 General Assembly, it was not necessary in this case to present a comprehensive report. The Interim Treasurer noted that the main IGU operating account has been transferred from Cape Town to Macalester College, who have kindly agreed to curate the IGU account under her responsibility. Macalester provides full oversight free of cost, including everyday operations and auditing, which situation is very helpful. Overall, IGU operational finances remain sound (see summary below in section 7). The IGU Promotion and Solidarity Fund balance is retained in Japan, currently under the auspices of Past President Himiyama.



Welcome note by Chair IGU President Michael Meadows



IGU acting Treasurer reporting general account



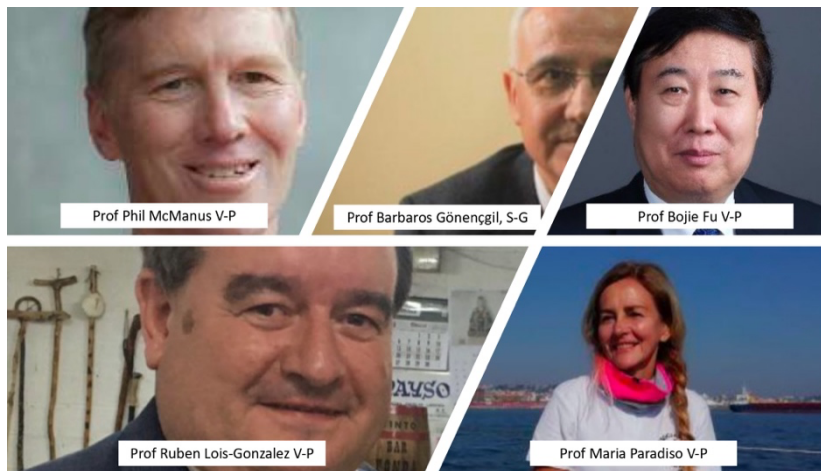
GA Second day session Chaired by FVP Iain Hey



General Assembly in action

Photos: IGU General Assembly (GA) on 19th and 20th July 2022 at the Sorbonne University, Paris

The outcome of the recent e-ballot election for the positions of Secretary General and four Vice Presidents was announced to the General Assembly. Barbaros Gönençgil (Turkey) was unanimously elected as Secretary General for the period 2022-26, while Vice Presidents Ruben Lois-González (Spain) and Bojie Fu (China) were re-elected, and Professors Maria Paradiso (Italy) and Phil McManus (Australia) were newly elected for the same period. There followed a brief discussion to consider how to deal with the vacancy arising from Gönençgil's election to the position of Secretary General. It was agreed to appoint Yazidhi Bamutaze (Uganda) as IGU Vice President for two years (2022-2024), after which he will be eligible for re-election for one further four year term. The General Assembly agreed to the suggestion of maintaining the services of Dr. Pankaj Kumar as Assistant Secretary General until the 2024 Dublin Congress.



Photos: Elected EC members for period 2022-2026 (right inset: Yazidhi Bamutaze, Uganda, elected to the IGU EC for the period 2022-24)

The President briefed the General Assembly regarding the advantage of separating the current EC position of Secretary-General and Treasurer into two separate positions. Essentially these are two very different, and extremely time-consuming tasks. Moreover, in the past it has proved impossible for the elected Secretary-General and Treasurer to take responsibility for the treasury due to banking requirements in their country of residence (this had been the case when the late Professor RB Singh was elected). Separation of the role into two positions offers greater flexibility. The proposal specifies the arrangements by which the Treasurer is appointed from among the elected members of the EC. Interim Secretary-General Gönençgil noted that this change requires an amendment of the IGU Statutes/Statuts and highlighted the nature of the technical revisions needed. The proposal was put to the vote and was unanimously approved by the General Assembly. Revised Statutes/Statuts are provided as Annexure IV. The President further noted the EC's recommendation that Vice-President Holly be appointed as IGU Treasurer for the period 2022-24 and this was approved by acclamation.

President Meadows tabled the summary report of the IGU Awards Committee for IGU Honors and Awards 2022 in the General Assembly. Awards are being made in four categories, including two new awards, and are to be conferred at the closing ceremony of the Extraordinary Centennial Congress on 22nd July 2022. Congratulations were extended to all awardees.

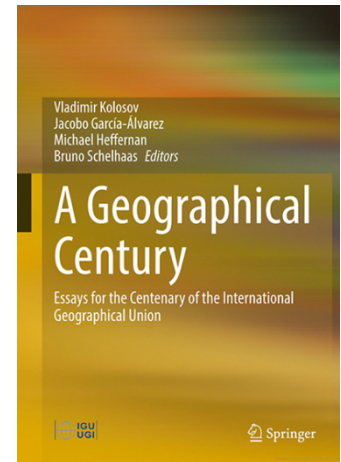
The awardees in their various categories are as follows:

Distinguished Practice Award	Early Career Award	Lauréat d'Honneur	Planet and Humanity Medal
Liu, Yansui (China-Beijing)	Kubo, Tomoko (Japan)	Berg, Kath (Australia)	Thunberg, Greta (Sweden)
Ono, Yugo (Japan)	Lim, Kean Fan (UK)	Lew, Alan (USA)	
Pain, Rachel (UK)	Wang, Shuai (China-Beijing)	Murayama, Yuji (Japan)	
Thom, Bruce (Australia)	Yang, Yuanyuan (China-Beijing)	Qin, Dahe (China-Beijing)	
	Yenneti, Komali (UK)		

3. Report on the Extraordinary International Geographical Congress, Paris

This landmark event, held to celebrate 100 years since the formal establishment of the International Geographical Union was held from 18th to 22nd July 2022, in Paris. Organized by the French National Committee of Geography (CNFG), this historic congress took place in the most emblematic places of French geography, i.e. the Sorbonne, Institut de Géographie, and Société de Géographie. The opening ceremony was held at the Maison de l'Océan, an institution founded in 1906 by Albert I, Prince of Monaco, a pioneer in oceanography. More than 2,300 scientists, including nearly 2,100 face-to-face participants from nearly 80 countries, exchanged views in more than 263 sessions organized over 5 ½ days in 30 rooms and 600 time slots and engaged with the most important contemporary themes that included, by way of example, Anthropocene, climate change, environment, biodiversity, borders, cyberspace and digitization, urbanization, territorial governance, migrations and mobilities, wars, pandemics, gender and diversity.

Three round tables ("Anthropocene", "A Planet of Migrants" and "Open Science") and three plenary conferences ("Space and Disability"; "Meta Geographies: Major Divisions to tell the World", and "Himalayan Mountains in Transition") were organized, bringing together geographers from all parts of the world. Three IGU Commission Excellence Award winners (Geography of Tourism; Urban Geography; Geography of Governance) presented their valedictory lectures. A special session was held in order to present the recently published Springer Volume: *A Geographical Century: Essays for the Centenary of the International Geographical Union* edited by former IGU President Vladimir Kolosov, with Jacobo García-Álvarez, Michael Heffernan and Bruno Schelhaas. Numerous festive and scientific events punctuated the week of meetings, including a 'Top Carto' competition, a documentary festival, a *Nuit Blanche*, inspired by the *Nuit de la Géographie*. This centenary congress offered an opportunity to underline the significance of the IGU as an international scientific organization for geographers from all over the world, in all their diversity.



A number of Commissions and Task Forces held Steering Committee meetings during the congress and there was an open session with members of the IGU Executive Committee where chairs or their representatives, were able to raise comments and questions regarding their IGU-related activities and initiatives. The participation of a very large number of geographer colleagues from all regions of the world is testimony to this, as are the meetings of the regional geography associations and the international thematic working groups held during the congress. The Congress concluded with a magnificent gala dinner, held on a launch on the Seine which represented a truly memorable occasion to celebrate the IGU centennial.



Photo: IGU Vice-President Nathalie Lemarchand, with Jerome Verny and Antoine le Blanc at the opening ceremony in the Maison d'Océan, Paris



Photo: IGU President Michael Meadows (centre) with members of the Paris 2022 Local Organizing Committee (from the left: Jerome Verny, Antoine le Blanc, Amaël Cattaruzza, Nathalie Lemarchand).

4. Co-operation with other organizations

IGU actively participates in both the International Science Council and the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences. We enjoy a particularly strong relationship with the *GeoUnions* and are prominent within the ISC Standing Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction. IGU also plays an important role in the United Nations Group of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Geospatial Societies, in the ISC Standing Committee for Gender Equality in Science, and in the UN International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development (IYBSSD). Kumar represented the IGU at the Second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC 2022) in Hyderabad, India, from 10-14 October 2022. The Executive Committee consistently nominates individuals and organizations for various ISC positions, including the Governing Board and for several of the ISC awards. IGU Vice-President Maria Paradiso is currently a Governing Board Member and Meadows was recently elected as Fellow of the ISC. In partnership with the Royal Geographical Society, and the Scottish Royal Geographical Society, a second 'gathering', along the lines of the 2021 event that was held ahead of COP26 (Climate) took place on 30th March 2022 to discuss possible roles for geographers and actions in advance of 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) on Biodiversity. In association with the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, *Canadian Geographic*, and *National Geographic*, and in recognition of the commencement of the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages, the IGU EC supported and signed the *Geographical Societies Joint Declaration for the Decade of Indigenous Languages*. IGU is consistently represented at the annual *Festival International de Géographie* (FIG) and helps to promote *GeoNight* which was celebrated on 1st April 2022.

5. Communication and Outreach

Vice-President Céline Rozenblat redesigned the IGU e-Newsletter ~~has been to~~ make it more widely accessible and consistent with the changing expectations of readers. The new *IGU e-newsletter* is published **four** times a year (<https://igu-online.org/igu-e-newsletters/>). It complements the IGU's new listservers that have simplified email correspondence with IGU members (igu_members@unil.ch) and Commissions (igu_commissions@unil.ch). In addition, a general list is now open to everybody who would like to be directly informed: (igu_news@unil.ch). To subscribe to this diffusion list, visit:

https://sympa.unil.ch/sympa/subscribe/igu_news

IGU continues to maintain an active website (<https://igu-online.org/>) along with presence on *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *LinkedIn*.

6. Forthcoming Events

6.1 IGU Congress:-

- 35th International Geographical Congress (IGC), 24-30 August, 2024, Dublin, Ireland <http://igc2024dublin.org/>

6.2 IGU Thematic Conferences:-

- IGU Thematic Conference on “*Islands in Relations: Conflicts, Sustainability, and Peace*” April 4-6, 2023, Osaka, Japan <https://polgeog.jp/igu-tc2023/>
- IGU Thematic Conference on “*The Ocean and Seas in Geographical Thought*” June 6-7 2023, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy <https://igu-chg-2023.unimib.it/>
- IGU Thematic Conference on “*Urban transformations: Towards resilient cities*” August 20-23 2023, UNAM Mexico City, Mexico <https://igumexico2023.org/>

6.3 Other IGU Conferences: -

- VI International Congress on “*Risks and Territorial Conflicts*”, 23 to 26 May 2023, Coimbra, Portugal <https://vicir.riscos.pt/en/>
- The 28th IUGG General Assembly (IUGG2023), 11-20 July 2023, the City Cube in Berlin, Germany <https://www.iugg2023berlin.org/>
- International Conference “Paradigm Shifts in Local and Urban Governance” 4- 6 September 2023, Budapest, Hungary <https://sites.google.com/view/geogov2023/home?pli=1>
- ISC Distinguished Lecture Series: “Firepower, Geopolitics and the Future: Rethinking Environmental Security, 21 February | 15:00 – 16:00 CET | 14:00 – 15:00 UTC <https://council.science/events/rethinking-environmental-security/>

7. Financials

At the Paris General Assembly (July 2022) Holly Barcus, USA was officially designated Treasurer of the IGU, following a 1.5 year period as Assistant Treasurer. The majority of IGU financials are now held at Macalester College, USA with a small balance maintained by President Michael Meadows in the Cape Town account. The South Africa account remains operational and a proportion of IGU business is still transacted in this account. The balance on this account has been substantially reduced as revenue is now directed to the Macalester IGU accounts. The accounts are presented separately, with an operating balance for 2022 indicating expenditure over income of just over US\$22,000.00. This contrasts with previous years when

IGU accumulated modest surplus funds. The situation in 2022 is a result of additional expenditure due to substantial costs associated with ensuring the success of the Centennial Congress in Paris, and loss of revenue due resulting from COVID-related economic difficulties for several dues-paying members, as well as the expulsion of the Russian National Committee for IGU. Despite higher expenditures for 2022, the lower operating costs for 2020 and 2021, associated with low, or zero, travel in late 2020 and 2021, the IGU retains a healthy positive balance and is considered financially sound.

IGU Financial summary for 2022

IGU ACCOUNTS	Macalester	South Africa
OPENING BALANCE	\$226,564.37	\$46,750.86
EXPENSES	USD	USD*
Commission & TF Stipends	\$58,709.40	\$1,557.06
Dues to Other Orgs	\$8,342.47	\$0.00
EC Travel	\$35,334.87	\$13,768.15
Bank & Wire Fees	\$1,300.69	\$305.31
Postage / Web other admin	\$1.40	\$7,058.68
Publications (Century of Geog)	\$0.00	\$3,907.92
Travel Grants (Paris)	\$0.00	\$18,928.99
REVENUE	\$124,042.53	\$3,000.00
CLOSING BALANCE	\$246,677.67	\$4,236.12
Net Profit / Loss	\$20,113.30	-\$42,514.74
*Mean exchange rate applied		
Differences due to exchange rate fluctuation	-\$240.40	\$11.36