

IGU Executive Committee Special Sessions

EC-0	Chairs' Meeting	August 7	10:00-11:30	Room 555A
EC-1	IYGU	August 6	08:00-09:30	Room 662
EC-2	IGU Publications	August 6	10:00-11:30	Room 662
EC-3	'OurSus' Project	August 7	08:00-09:30	Room 662
EC-4	Academic Teaching	August 8	17:30-19:00	Room 662

EC-0 Session for IGU Commission Chairs (Mike Meadows)

The core work of the IGU is conducted through its 41 Commissions which, together with the Olympiad Task Force, ensures that research, teaching and outreach in the discipline of Geography is relevant, state-of-the-art and truly global in its scope. This special session offers the chairs of commissions (and/or members of their steering committees) the opportunity to discuss current issues in relation to their work with the Executive Committee.

EC-1 Session for IYGU (Benno Werlen)

Promoting Geography's Competences through an International UN-Year

Thinking globally and acting appropriately locally presupposes global understanding. A global understanding of socio-cultural and natural realities is an essential human condition in the 21st century: People need to understand how their everyday actions are embedded in global processes, and what the global impacts of these actions are in order to achieve more sustainable ways of living.

To reach these goals and to promote geography's visibility in the field, the International Geographical Union (IGU) has launched an initiative for an International UN-Year of Global Understanding (IYGU) in 2016. This is a unique opportunity to gain worldwide public attention for geography's competences in mastering major challenges of our time.

This initiative aims to bridge the awareness gap between local acts and global effects by stimulating trans-disciplinary research initiatives through education and information, which will yield actionable insights into the ways people can live together more sustainably.

For the implementation the IYGU organization will include regional action centers, as well as national working groups. This initiative is gathering the best-known experts from all scientific fields. The IYGU initiative has the full support by the International Council for Science (ICSU), the International Social Science Council (ISSC), the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (CIPSH), the International Human Dimensions Programme for Global Environmental Change (IHDP), and is expected to become part of the Future Earth initiative, co-sponsored by

ICSU, ISSC, UNESCO, UNEP, UNU and the Belmont Forum. The IYGU has strong partners in economy, media, and politics. Nobel Prize laureates and leading representatives of sustainability policies act as goodwill ambassadors.

This Session is chaired by Benno Werlen, Executive Director IYGU, Germany, and invited speakers include: Vladimir Klossov, President IGU, Russia; Ron Abler, Past-President IGU, USA; Yukio Himiyama, Vice-President IGU, Japan; Shangyi Zhou, China; Margaret Robertson, Australia

We invite all geographers to support this vital initiative on the national, continental, and global level. If you are interested in this initiative, please contact the secretariat IYUN_IGU@uni-jena.de. For further information, see www.global-understanding.info

EC-2 Session for IGU Publications (Mike Meadows)

The IGU publishes regular e-newsletters, an annual report and an annual or biennial volume of the IGU Bulletin. Historically, IGU has also published other items such as proceedings of its conferences, congresses and other meetings as well as edited books and monographs. There has, however, never been a specific IGU academic scholarly 'journal'. There are significant trends in academic publishing, including a rapid rise in the online platform, and the Executive Committee has been engaged in discussions with several prominent Geographers about the advantages and disadvantages, challenges and opportunities of publishing its own journal, in online format, print format, or both. We invite input to this discussion from anyone interested in academic publishing in our discipline. All are welcome to participate this session, but those delegates who have experience of managing the academic publishing process (for example members of editorial boards etc.) are especially encouraged to attend.

EC-3 Session for 'OurSus' Project (Ton Dietz)

In 2012 at the IGU Congress in Cologne, Germany, the OurSus team presented the ourSus website and the results so far. OurSus stands for 'Our Sustainability' and has been designed to support global innovations for sustainable cities. It uses a holistic, 'rainbow' approach to all aspects of urban environmental sustainability and is very geographical in its outlook. It is meant to be the world geographers' contribution to urban-based 'green thinking'. The ourSus team has developed a pilot approach in China, based on the work of an energetic team based in Changsha (at Hunan University). Its work is one of the general projects of the Board of the International Geographical Union. In 2012/2013 the team has developed a variety of examples on both its Chinese and English websites (see www.oursus.org). In Kyoto the ourSus team will report about its recent activities and will try to encourage geographers in other cities (in Japan, in other parts of Asia and in the world as a whole) to follow their example and to make use of the same approach.

EC-4 Session for Academic Teaching in Geography (Joos Droogleever Fortuijn)

Stimulating young academic geographers to engage in IGU activities is a priority of the IGU Executive Committee in 2012-2016. Many young academic geographers are employed mainly or exclusively in teaching geography and educating new generations of bachelor, master and PhD students in geography.

The aim of this session is to discuss the role of IGU in academic *teaching of geography*.

New initiatives might be:

During IGU conferences:

Key note lectures and sessions during IGU congresses and conferences with presentations, discussions and exchange of good practices;

Workshops on early career development

In between IGU conferences:

- Coaching young academic geographers' especially in countries that develop geography courses and help each other with curriculum development & joint courses;
- Organizing site-visits to graduate schools/colleges with programmes in geography and forming groups of experts who advise academic institutions with developing new geography programmes or renewing existing ones;
- facilitating twinnings between individual academic geographers teaching in the same field or specialisation or between departments of geography.

Specials:

- initiating MA or Ph.D. research projects on academic teachers or teaching in geography;
- establishing a 'teaching award' for innovative teaching.

In this meeting we will discuss potential initiatives, generate new ideas, set priorities and see how to get started.