

New project of societal relevance join the International Geoscience Programme

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The geological record holds key answers to current global challenges such as climate change, reducing risks from natural hazards or better understanding our natural resources. Each year, the Council of the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP) selects research projects of societal relevance that will be supported by the programme.

By making connections between events throughout the Earth's history, the research projects supported by IGCP aim to address the challenges we must overcome to preserve our environment and develop sustainably. Each project has an average lifespan of five years. Progress is assessed annually through a rigorous peer review process conducted by the IGCP Council of the evaluation reports submitted by members of the Scientific Board during the first half of February.

This year's IGCP Council Meeting took place on 18-21 February 2019 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France. The Council reviewed 21 new project proposals and assessed the progress of the 27 ongoing IGCP projects. Of these, eight new projects were approved for 2019, 18 will continue to receive funding, and four were extended for their fifth year without funding. There are now 30 active IGCP projects.

The IGCP, a joint initiative of UNESCO and the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), has supported over 650 projects in 150 countries since its creation in 1972, to mobilize global cooperation in the Earth Sciences in the service of society. The following new IGCP project will integrate the programme:

IGCP 675: Sandstone-Type Uranium Deposits

This project aims to develop the responsible extraction and production of uranium for nuclear energy. Uranium occurs in deposits of the Mesozoic-Cenozoic sandstone basins within 20~50° North and South of the equator. The project will focus on training young geologists from developing countries, in particular, through an analysis of mineralization and global sandstone-type uranium deposits, and on developing new mining technologies for ore exploration.

Project leaders:

1. Ruoshi Jin

Address: No.4 Dazhigu 8th Road, Hedong District, Tianjin 300170, P.R. China

Tel.: +86 22 84112999

Fax: +86 22 84112988

Email: ruosj2003@aliyun.com

2. Michel Cuney

Address: BP 70 239 - F54 506 VANDOEUVRE les NANCY Cedex, France

Tel.: 33-(0)3 83 64 55 22

Fax: 33-(0)3 83 68 47 01

Email: michel.cuney@univ-lorraine.fr

3. Vladislav A. Petrov

Address: IGEM RAS, Staromonetny per., 35 Moscow 119017, Russia
Tel.: (007-499)230-8255
Fax: (007-495)951-1587
Email: vlad243@igem.ru

4. Mark John Mihalasky

Address: 18702 North Sands Road, Colbert, WA, United States
Tel.: +1 609 661 4158, +1 509 368 3118
Email: mjm@usgs.gov

5. Gary Delaney

Address: 1000-2103 11TH AVENUE, REGINA, SK, Canada S4P 3Z8
Tel.: (306) 787-1160
Fax: (306) 787-1284
Email: gary.delaney@gov.sk.ca

6. Guoxiang Chi

Address: University of Regina, Regina, SK, Canada S4S 0A2
Tel.: (306) 585-4583
Fax: (306) 585-5433
Email: guoxiang.chi@uregina.ca

7. Baohong Hou

Address: 12th Floor, 11 Waymouth Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000, Australia.
Tel.: 61-8-8429 2492 (W)
Fax: (08) 8226 3200 (W)
Email: baohong.hou@sa.gov.au

8. Osbert N. Sikazwe

Tel.: +260 977 767204
Fax: +260 211 253952
Email: osikazwe@unza.zm

The principal locations of field investigations planned in this project include:

Ore districts in Ordos Basin, Songliao Basin, Erlian Basin and Qadam Basin, China

Ore districts in Colorado, Wyoming and South Texas, America

Vitim uranium ore district, Khiagdinsky ore field, Russian Federation, the North-Eastern Transbaikalia, the Republic of Buryatia, Bauntovsky District

Sandstone-type Uranium ore districts in Kazakhstan

Athabasca Basin, Canada

Olympic Dam and Lake Frome uranium ore districts, Australia

Siavonga District of Southern Province, Lumwana of Northwestetrn Province, and Kitwe of Copperbelt Province of Zambia