International Consortium on Landslides (ICL)— The Proposing Organization of the ISDR-ICL Sendai Partnerships 2015–2025

Kyoji Sassa, Yueping Yin, and Paolo Canuti

Abstract

The International Consortium on Landslides (ICL) was founded in January 2002 during the UNESCO-Kyoto University Joint IGCP symposium “Landslide Risk Mitigation and Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage”. It proposed and adopted the Letter of Intent in 2005 during the 2nd UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Kobe, Japan, adopted the Tokyo Action Plan in 2006, and the ISDR-ICL Sendai Partnerships 2015–2025 in 2015. This paper describes the history of ICL from preparation to present in a table of the chronology of events since 1987-present including the organization of ICL until 2020 when the Fifth World Landslide Forum will be held in Kyoto, Japan.

Keywords

Landslides • International consortium on landslides (ICL) • International strategy for disaster risk reduction (ISDR) • World conference on disaster risk reduction (WCDRR) • Varnes medal

Introduction

The International Consortium on Landslides (ICL) is an international non-governmental and non-profit scientific organization promoting landslide research and capacity building for the benefit of society and the environment. The ICL was founded in January 2002 in Kyoto, Japan. It was registered as a legal body (No. 1300-05-005237) under Japanese law in Kyoto Prefectural government in August 2002. In March 2007 the ICL was approved as a scientific research organization (No. 94307) which can receive the

scientific grants of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), Japan.

ICL, Kyoto University and UNESCO established the UNITWIN (University Twinning and Networking) Cooperation Programme on Landslide risk mitigation for society and the environment in March 2003 and expanded its activity area to Landslide and water-related disaster risk management for society and the environment in November 2010. The ICL has been approved as an NGO having operational relations with UNESCO in April 2007, and reclassified as an NGO with a consultative partnership with UNESCO in March 2012.

ICL exchanged Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with each of five UN organizations (UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNISDR, UNU) and two global stakeholders in Science and Technology (ICSU and WFEO) to promote the 2006 Tokyo Action Plan “Strengthening Research and Learning on Landslides and Related Earth System Disasters for Global Risk Preparedness”. It is the follow-up to the “2005 Letter of Intent”, an outcome of the session titled “New international Initiatives for Research and Risk Mitigation of Foods (IFI) and Landslides” (IPL: International

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Programme on Landslides) organized in the 2005 United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, 2005.

Landslides are studied in many fields of science, technology and disaster reduction, and understandings of landslides differ in various fields. To create a common understanding of landslides as a distinct science, an international journal is absolutely necessary. The first project of ICL was to found an international journal “Landslides”: IPL C100. There are many different terminologies used in landslides in different fields. However, one information source these fields have in common are full color photos of landslides. The most important condition was that the new journal should be printed in full color. The first full color scientific journal “Landslides: Journal of International Consortium on Landslides” was inaugurated in 2004. It is not easy to launch a new journal and it was developed based on the past 15 years of publication of the three-color printed International Newsletter “Landslide News” from 1987 to 2003 by the Japan Landslide Society. The journal “Landslides” has a latest impact factor 3.049 and is published bimonthly, with 300 pages per issue from 2017.

ICL has organized World Landslide Forums together with IPL Partners in 2008, 2011, 2014, and will organize it in 2017 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and in 2020 in Kyoto, Japan. The current greatest mission is to implement “ISDR-ICL Sendai Partnerships 2015–2025 for global promotion of understanding and reducing landslide disaster risk”, proposed, accepted and signed during the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, 2015. The history of ICL was compiled in this article as the basic information for the High-Level Panel Discussion “Strengthening Intergovernmental Network and the International Programme on Landslides (IPL) for “ISDR-ICL Sendai Partnerships 2015–2025 for global promotion of understanding and reducing landslide disaster risk”.

Objectives of ICL

The objectives of ICL are written in its statutes. The principal objectives are to:

- (a) promote landslide research for the benefit of society and the environment, and capacity building, including education, notably in developing countries;
- (b) integrate geosciences and technology within the appropriate cultural and social contexts in order to evaluate landslide risk in urban, rural and developing areas including cultural and natural heritage sites, as well as to contribute to the protection of the natural environment and sites of high societal value;

- (c) combine and coordinate international expertise in landslide risk assessment and mitigation studies, thereby resulting in an effective international organization which will act as a partner in various international and national projects; and
- (d) promote a global, multidisciplinary Programme on landslides, the International Programme on Landslides.

ICL Members

Members are those organizations that support the objectives of ICL intellectually, practically and financially. Membership is for a minimum period of two years. Members will come from one of four categories:

- (a) Intergovernmental organizations
- (b) Non-governmental organizations
- (c) Governmental organizations and public organizations
- (d) Other organizations and entities.

Management of ICL

All matters of management are examined and decided by the Board of Representatives (BOR). Members of BOR are the representatives of each ICL member organization.

- Full power for the management of the affairs of the Consortium is vested in the Board of Representatives, which will meet at least annually. The quorum and internal regulations are defined by the bylaws.
- The Board of Representatives shall be composed of representatives of the Member organizations. Each Member organization shall designate one Representative and one Alternative Representative.
- In the absence of a Member’s Representative from any meeting of the Board of Representatives, the alternative representative may attend the meeting and exercise all the rights, powers and privileges of the absent Representative. Alternatively, the Representative may delegate his rights, powers and privileges to another Member of ICL for that particular meeting, or authorize him/her to act and vote on his behalf.
- The Board of Representatives shall:
 - (a) determine general policy;
 - (b) initiate scientific programmes and decide on future priorities for the activities of ICL;
 - (c) approve or change, if necessary, the budget and accounts;

- (d) examine and decide on each application for Member, Associate or Supporter status;
- (e) elect the Officers of ICL in accordance with the Bylaws;
- (f) terminate the status of any Member, Supporter of ICL which has failed to fulfill any of its obligations or when the association is no longer considered appropriate, in accordance with the Bylaws
- (g) change the Statutes and Bylaws;
- (h) deal with other items which may be referred to it.
- Voting will be decided on a simple majority. Each Member shall have one vote. Normally the President of ICL will not vote but in the event of a tie, the President may have the casting vote.

One of the characteristic of ICL management is the direct democracy. All matters are decided by the BOR. The number of ICL members increased from 33 to 64 in 2002–2016. The number is small enough to discuss in one room, in a round-table discussion style.

History of ICL to Propose the Partnerships

The history of ICL was compiled and chronologically presented from the preparatory stage (from June 1987, the publication of the first issue of the international Newsletter “Landslide News”, to January 2001). The 2001 Tokyo Declaration “Geoscientists tame landslides” proposed an International Consortium on Landslides, so the interim stage was from the foundation of ICL in January 2002 by adoption of Statutes and selection of an interim President to the organization of the first session of the Board of Representatives at UNESCO Headquarters, in Paris. The first period was from 1st January 2003 to 31 December 2005, the second period from 1st January 2006 to 31 December 2008, the third period from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011, the fourth period from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2014, and the fifth period from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2017.

ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
<i>Preparatory stage</i>	
June 1987	The First issue of the International Newsletter “Landslide News” was published by the Japan Landslide Society. It was a newsletter with three-color (red, blue and black) printing and a three-column layout. The newsletter was planned based on discussions at the 4th

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ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
	International Conference and Field Workshop on Landslides held in 1985. No.1-No.15 were published from 1987 to 2003. 5000 copies were printed and 2000 copies were distributed to the world free of charge, funded by Japanese companies and agencies supporting this initiative. UNESCO, U.S. National Council, United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) contributed Prefaces. It was a timely contribution to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR). The International Editor was Robert Schuster. Chair of the publication committee was Toshio Taniguchi, Masami Fukuoka, then Kyoji Sassa. This newsletter was moved to “Recent Landslides” within the full-color quarterly (bimonthly from Vol. 10, 2013) Journal “Landslides: Journal of the International Consortium on Landslides”
1991–1998	Japan-China Joint Research on Assessment of Landslide Hazard in Lishan, Xian, China was proposed by Kyoji Sassa and funded by Japanese Ministry (MEXT) as a part of IDNDR from 1991 for 8 years. Lishan is a steep mountain slope (fault scarp) behind the Royal Resort Palace of the Tang Dynasty (618–907), China. It is at risk of a possible landslide disaster, though no landslide has occurred at the royal resort palace
July 1997	The Japan-China Joint Project group organized the International Symposium on Landslide Hazard Assessment, Xian, China, in July 1997 as a concluding meeting of the joint research. It was organized as the Committee for Prediction of Rapid Landslide Motion of the IUGS Working Group on Landslides (WGL/RLM). A representative from UNESCO-Cultural Heritage, the leader of IGCP programme and others attended and were impressed by the research results, which assessed the landslide hazard with convincingly detailed monitoring of slope deformation and undrained ring shear testing results for the site, which has lasted more than 1000 years. The group was invited to apply for an IGCP project because the project is very much suitable for the new policy of IGCP “Geoscience for the Society”
February 1998	An IGCP project proposed by Kyoji Sassa was approved by the IGCP Board in February 1998. The UNESCO-IUGS joint project, International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP) No. 425, Landslide Hazard Assessment and Mitigation for Cultural Heritage Sites and Other Locations of High Societal Value began. IGCP is currently renamed as the Geoscience Programme

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ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
November–December 1998	The UNESCO-IUGS-IGCP Joint Symposium on Natural Hazards and Cultural Heritage was held at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo from 31 November to 1 December 1998
September 1999	IGCP-425 group and UNESCO organized The International Conference “Cultural Heritage at Risk” at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France. Leader: Kyoji Sassa, Japan, Deputy leaders: Paolo Canuti, Italy and Raul Carreno, Peru
November–December 1999	Following the IGCP-425 activities, the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and DPRI, Kyoto University, Japan concerning “Cooperation in Research for Landslide Risk Mitigation and Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage as a Key Contribution to Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development in the First Quarter of the Twenty-First Century” was signed by Koichiro Matsuura on 26 November and by Shuichi Ikebuchi on 3 December 1999
Mach 2000	Sassa et al. investigated the Machu Picchu Citadel site from the ground and also from a chartered helicopter with special permission to fly over Machu Picchu from the Instituto Nacional de Cultura (INC) as a part of IGCP subproject “Protection of Cultural Heritage on Landslide Zones at Cusco. They deduced possible geomorphic processes from observation and made a hypothesis that the Inca people constructed the citadel on the sliding surface after the mass of a large-scale landslide slid down, with another landslide in a deeper shear band parallel to the current ground surface/previous sliding surface
January 2001	The UNESCO/IGCP Symposium on Landslide Risk Mitigation and Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage was organized at the headquarters of the Science Council of Japan, Tokyo. The initial monitoring result (November to December 2000) of extensometers installed in Machu Picchu site were reported. The result was widely reported by Japanese newspapers and the British magazine “New Scientists” and others
January 2001	2001 Tokyo Declaration “Geoscientists tame landslides” was adopted by the participants in the UNESCO/IGCP Symposium on Landslide Risk Mitigation and Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage. The Tokyo Declaration proposed the establishment of the International Consortium on Landslides (ICL)
<i>Foundation of the International Consortium on Landslide and its Interim Stage</i>	
Interim President: Kyoji Sassa	
January 2002	The UNESCO-Kyoto University joint symposium “Landslide Risk Mitigation and Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage”

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ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
	was organized in Kyoto, Japan. It was attended by six directors from Earth Science, Water Sciences, Cultural Heritage, Engineering Science of UNESCO, and deputy Secretary General of WMO, a representative from UNISDR, and also from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), as well as IGCP-425 members from around the world
January 2002	ICL was established by adopting the 2002 Kyoto Appeal “Establishment of a New International Consortium on Landslides” and the statutes of ICL and deciding the Interim President on 21 January 2002 during the above symposium. The main objectives of ICL foundation is to establish a new International Programme on Landslides (IPL) after the IGCP-425. Most of 31 subproject leaders of IGCP-425 received promotional benefits of their landslide research from authorization as the subproject leaders of the UNESCO/IUGS joint programme and wished to establish a new International Programme on Landslides (IPL)
August 2002	ICL was registered as a legal body under Japanese law in the Kyoto Prefectural Government, Japan in August 2002
November 2002	The First Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at UNESCO Headquarters on 19–21 November 2002. The initial 33 ICL member organizations, mostly from IGCP-425 subproject leaders, attended, as well as the officers for the first three years. They decided to found an international journal “ <i>Landslides</i> ” as the initial IPL project Coordinating Project C100 as a core activity of ICL. ICL is basically a bottom up self-supporting organization with supports from UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNISDR, Government of Japan and others
<i>The First Period: 1 January 2003–31 December 2005</i>	
President: Kyoji Sassa	
Vice Presidents: Peter Bobrowsky, Paolo Canuti, Romulo Mucho, Peter Lytle	
Executive Director: Kaoru Takara Treasurer: Claudio Margottini	
Number of ICL Member organizations: 33	
March 2003	ICL, Kyoto University and UNESCO established the UNITWIN (University Twining and Networking) Cooperation Programme on Landslide Risk Mitigation for Society and the Environment in March 2003. The establishment of UNITWIN Cooperation Programme was initially suggested by participants from UNESCO to authorize the International Programme on Landslides (IPL) as a UNESCO network activity

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ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
May 2003	The First ICL Steering Committee Meeting was organized at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome, Italy. The steering committee meetings were organized annually or at necessary times later on
October 2003	The 2nd Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at Simon Fraser University Harbour Centre, Vancouver, Canada on 28 October–1 November 2003
September 2004	UNITWIN Headquarters Building was constructed by ICL and Kyoto University at the Kyoto University Uji Campus in September 2004
October 2004	The 3rd Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at Druzba Hotel, Bratislava, Slovakia on 19–22 October 2004
April 2004	ICL founded a new full color quarterly Journal “ <i>Landslides: Journal of the International Consortium on Landslides</i> ” in 2004, in cooperation with Springer after negotiating with several international publishers
January 2005	The World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) was held on 18–22 January 2005 in Kobe, Japan
January–June, 2005	ICL proposed and organized a session titled “New international Initiatives for Research and Risk Mitigation of Floods (IFI) and Landslides (IPL)” in cooperation with Flood group. ICL was well prepared for the session and proposed a “ <i>Letter of Intent</i> ” aiming to provide a platform for a holistic approach in research and learning on “Integrated Earth System Risk Analysis and Sustainable Disaster Management”. A Letter of Intent is much lighter than agreements and Memorandums of Understanding, and was suggested by Hans van Ginkel (Rector of United Nations University). It was agreed and signed by heads of seven global stakeholders of UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNISDR, UNU, ICSU and WFEO from January to June 2005
October 2005	The First General Assembly of ICL, together with the 4th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL, was organized at Keck Center of the National Academy of Sciences, Washington D.D., USA on 12–14 October 2005

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ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
<i>The Second Period: 1 January 2006–31 December 2008</i>	
President: Kyoji Sassa	
Vice Presidents: Peter Bobrowsky, Paolo Canuti, Oddvar Kjekstad, Peter Lyttle	
Executive Director: Kaoru Takara Treasurer: Hiroshi Fukuoka	
Number of ICL Member organizations: 48	
January 2006	The Round Table Discussion “Strengthening Research and Learning on Earth System Risk Analysis and Sustainable Disaster Management within UN-ISDR as Regards “Landslides” was co-organized by ICL, UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNISDR, UNEP, UNU and Kyoto University at United Nations University, Tokyo, Japan on 18–20 January 2006. This discussion aimed to implement the 2005 Letter of Intent
January 2006	The 2006 Tokyo Action Plan Strengthening Research and Learning on Landslides and Related Earth System Disasters for Global Risk Preparedness was adopted by the participants of the Round Table Discussion on 20 January 2006. The Tokyo Action Plan prosed a new stage of <i>International Programme on Landslides (IPL)</i> , a programme of ICL for ISDR, which is managed by the IPL Global Promotion Committee consisting of all ICL member organizations and 7 global stakeholders (UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNISDR, UNU, ICSU, and WFEO). New IPL activities include IPL projects, the World Landslide Forum (WLF) every three years, and the World Centres of Excellence on Landslide Risk Reduction (WCoEs) to be identified at each WLF. The First WLF succeeded the First General Assembly of ICL in 2005
April–December 2006	ICL exchanged Memorandums of Understanding to promote IPL with UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNISDR, UNU, ICSU, WFEO within 2006
November 2006	The 5th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at UNESCO Headquarters on 23–24 November 2006
March 2007	ICL was approved as a scientific research organization (No. 94307) which can receive the scientific grant of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), Japan in March 2007. Thereafter, ICL can apply for Scientific Grants and other Scientific programmes

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ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
April 2007	ICL was approved to be an NGO having operational relations with UNESCO in April 2007
November 2007	The 6th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at UNESCO Headquarters on 14–16 November 2007
May 2008	ICL was registered in the cross-ministerial research and development management system (e-Rad) of all ministries of Japan in May 2008
November 2008	The 7th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at the United Nations University, Tokyo, Japan on 17 November 2008
November 2008	The First World Landslide Forum (WLF1) was organized by ICL, IPL and Partners at the United Nations University, Tokyo, 18–21 November 2008. (The Second General Assembly of ICL to disseminate ICL-IPL activities was organized as the First World Landslide Forum from 2008.)
<i>The Third Period: 1 January 2009–31 December 2011</i>	
President: Paolo Canuti	
Vice Presidents: Oddvar Kjekstad, Peter Lyttle, Kaoru Takara	
Executive Director: Kyoji Sassa Treasurer: Hiroshi Fukuoka	
Number of ICL Member organizations: 48	
November 2009	The 8th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at UNESCO Headquarters on 17–19 November 2009
November 2010	The UNITWIN programme was updated and developed to <i>Landslide and water-related disaster risk management for society and the environment</i> in a wider scope in November 2010
November 2010	The 9th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at UNESCO Headquarters on 16–19 November 2010
October 2011	The 10th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy on 3–5 October 2011
October 2011	The Second World Landslide Forum (WLF2) was organized by ICL, IPL and partners at the Food and Agriculture Organization Headquarters of the United Nations, Rome, 3–9 October 2011

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ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
<i>The Fourth Period: 1 January 2012–31 December 2014</i>	
President: Paolo Canuti	
Vice Presidents: Kaoru Takara, Yueping Yin, Claudio Margottini, Irasema Alcantara-Ayara	
Executive Director: Kyoji Sassa Treasurer: Hirotaka Ochiai	
Number of ICL Member organizations: 53	
January 2012	ICL organized 10th anniversary meeting, Kyoto, Japan in January 2012 and adopted the ICL Strategic Organization of Plan 2012–2021
March 2012	ICL was reclassified as an NGO with a consultative partnership with UNESCO in March 2012
November 2012	The 11th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France on 20–23 November 2012
2013	“Landslides” Journal became a bimonthly journal from Vol. 10 in 2013
November 2013	The 12th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at Yamanouchi Hall, Shiran Kaikan, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan on 19–22 November 2013
June 2014	The 13th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at China National Convention Center, Beijing, China on 2 June 2014
June 2014	The Third World Landslide Forum (WLF3) was organized by ICL, IPL and partners at the National Convention Center of China, Beijing, in June 2014. ICL adopted the 2014 Beijing Declaration “Landslide Risk Mitigation: Toward a Safer Geoenvironment” at the WLF3 in Beijing
<i>The Fifth Period: 1 January 2015–31 December 2017</i>	
President: Yueping Yin	
Vice Presidents: Claudio Margottini, Irasema Alcantara-Ayara, Matjaz Mikos, Dwikorita Karnawati	
Executive Director: Kyoji Sassa Treasurer: Kaoru Takara	
Number of ICL Member organizations: 57 (64 in 2016.10)	
March 2015	The 14th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at Tohoku Gakuin University, Sendai, Japan on 11–15 March 2015
March 2015	ICL proposed the <i>“ISDR-ICL Sendai Partnerships 2015-2025 for global promotion</i>

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ICL HISTORY—from preparation to present	
Date	Chronology of events
	<i>of understanding and reducing landslide disaster risk</i> in the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, 2015
June 2015	Landslides: Journal of International Consortium on Landslides reached a 2015 Impact Factor of 3.049
March 2016	The 15th Session of the Board of Representatives (BOR) of ICL was organized at Kyoto University Uji Campus, Kyoto, Japan on 7–11 March 2016
January 2017	The number of pages for one issue of Landslides: Journal of the International Consortium on Landslides will be increased from around 200 pages/issue in 2016 to around 300 pages/issue in 2017
May 2017	The Fourth World Landslide Forum (WLF4) will be organized by ICL, IPL and partners at the Cultural and Congress Centre in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 29 May to 2 June 2017
<i>The Sixth Period: 1 January 2018–31 December 2020</i>	
President: Peter Bobrowsky	
Vice Presidents: under nomination	
Executive Director: Kaoru Takara Treasurer: Kyoji Sassa	
November 2020	The Fifth World Landslide Forum (WLF5) will be organized in 2–6 November 2020 by ICL, IPL and the ISDR-ICL Sendai Partnerships partners at the Kyoto International Conference Center, Kyoto, Japan where “the Kyoto Protocol” to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change” was adopted at COP3 in 1979. The Forum is organized in the mid-term of the Sendai Partnerships 2015–2025. The mid-term review and planning for the latter half will be examined. The Kyoto 2020 Commitment will be examined during the forum to establish a stable global framework to implement further the ISDR-ICL Sendai Partnerships 2015–2025 and pursue and enhance thereafter efforts towards landslide disaster risk reduction

ICL Award “Varnes Medal”

ICL was founded to create a new International Programme on Landslides (IPL) to promote science and technology for landslide risk reduction by mobilizing funds and the efforts of active landslide researchers and their organizations. Dr. David Varnes (1919–2002) of U.S. Geological Survey studied many types of landslides and proposed his landslide classification. His classification was the base of the internationally agreed upon definition of landslides during the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

(IDNDR) from 1990 to 2000 (Landslide Dynamics: ISDR-ICL Landslide Interactive Teaching Tools (LITT) by Sassa et al. in this volume). It is the base of the international journal “Landslides: Journal of the International Consortium on Landslides”. David Varnes is the most respected researcher in the landslide community. ICL created the “Varnes Medal” as the highest award of the consortium. The current criteria of the Varnes Medal and the past recipients are introduced below.

Criteria of the Varnes Medal

The Varnes Medal is the highest award provided by the International Consortium on Landslides; it recognizes professional excellence in landslide research. Nominees for the Varnes Medal must meet at least two of the following criteria:

- Professional excellence in landslide research
- Professional excellence in landslide disaster risk reduction (new criteria)
- Significant contribution to the development of ICL and IPL (new criteria)
- Significant contribution to public education regarding landslide hazards
- International recognition for a professional career involving landslides
- Influential landslide research or development of methods or techniques
- Teacher of students who work on landslide issues.

Note: Two new criteria were added from 2016 to extend the scope to persons other than landslide researchers. From 2003 to 2016, recipients of the Varnes Medal were landslide researchers. The Varnes Medal for 2017 will be awarded to Badaoui Rouhban of UNESCO, as the first recipient other than landslide researchers, at Ljubljana, Slovenia on 30 May 2017.

Past Recipients of the Varnes Medal

- Robert Schuster (US Geological Survey, USA), 2nd Session of BOR/ICL at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada in October 2003
- John Hutchinson (Imperial College, UK), 3rd Session of BOR/ICL at Druzba Hotel, Bratislava, Slovakia in October 2004
- Masami Fukuoka (University of Tokyo, Japan), 4th Session of BOR/ICL at Keck Center of the National Academy of Science, Washington D.C., USA in October 2005

- Norbert R. Morgenstern (University of Alberta, Canada), 5th Session of BOR/ICL at Bonvin Building, UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France in November 2006
- Edward Derbyshire (University of Leicester, UK), 6th Session of BOR/ICL at Bonvin Building, UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France in November 2007
- David Cruden (University of Alberta, Canada), 7th Session of BOR/ICL at the United Nations University, Tokyo, Japan in November 2008
- Zaiguan Lin (Leader of China-Japan Joint research on Landslide hazard assessment at Cultural heritage sites in Xi'an. It developed into IGCP-425 "Landslide Hazard Assessment and Cultural Heritage" which was further developed at ICL and IPL), 9th Session of BOR/ICL at Bonvin Building, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France in November 2010
- Rajendra Kumar Bhandari (Central Building Research Institute, India), 11th Session of BOR/ICL at Bonvin Building, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France in November 2012

Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan, in March 2016

- Badaoui Rouhban (Special Advisor to the Assistant Director-General for Sciences, UNESCO as well as the Advisor to the International Programme on Landslides), decided at 16th Session of BOR/ICL, at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France, in November 2016 for 2017.

Until 2014, the Varnes medal was originally produced in Egypt and is a pure silver medal (200 g), in which the recipient's name is engraved on the back side. A set of new medals were ordered from a company in Kyoto, Japan in 2015. It is a 95% silver medal (200 g) for better maintenance. The recipient's name and the award place and date are printed in a plate in the left side of the award holder, and the medal is placed in the right side when it is open, as shown below.

The 2015, 2016 and 2017 Varnes medals will be awarded to three recipients on 30 May 2017 during the Fourth World Landslide Forum in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

- Luciano Picarelli (Seconda Università di Napoli), 13th Session of BOR/ICL at National Convention Center, Beijing, China, in June 2014

The new version of the Varnes Medal for Jordi Corominas of Spain.

A group photo of participants at the ICL foundation meeting is presented at the end of this article.

- Oldrich Hungr (University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada), 14th Session of BOR/ICL at Tohoku Gakuin University, Sendai, Japan, in March 2015
- Jordi Corominas (Technical University of Catalonia-UPC, Spain), 15th Session of BOR/ICL at

Group photo commemorating the establishment of the International Consortium on Landslides on 23 January 2005 during the UNESCO-Kyoto University joint symposium "Landslide Risk Mitigation and Protection of Cultural and

Natural Heritage” at the Kyoto Campus Plaza in Kyoto, Japan. Participants included those from ICL supporting organizations, Andras Szollosi-Nagy (Director of Water Sciences, UNESCO), Wolfgang Eder (Director of Earth Sciences, UNESCO), Badaoui Rouhban (Chief of Engineering Sciences and Technology, UNESCO), Michel Jarraud (Deputy Secretary-General of WMO), Pedro Basabe (UN/ISDR), three members of the Division of Cultural Heritage of UNESCO (Laurent Levi-Strauss, Galia Saouma-Forero and Christian Manhart), three representatives of the Government of Japan from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Multilateral Cultural Cooperation Division) and MEXT (Offices of the Disaster Prevention Research and the Director-General for International Affairs). Robert Schuster of the U.S. Geological Survey, Paolo Canuti and ICL founding members, and other landslide colleagues from the world also participated.

Acknowledgements and Call for Cooperation

ICL was established in 2002 based on the membership fund from ICL members. ICL also has been supported by various organizations and leaders from outside of the landslide community. UNESCO has supported ICL from IGCP-425 (1998–2003) from its foundation in 2002 and during its development until today, intellectually, practically and financially. The strong support from UNESCO is very much appreciated.

ICL developed its global supporting network through the “Letter of Intent” aiming to provide a platform for a holistic approach in research and learning on “Integrated Earth System Risk Analysis and Sustainable Disaster Management”, which was adopted at a thematic session of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR in Kobe, Japan in 2005) and signed by UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNISDR, UNU, ICSU, WFEO. The letter was inspired by Han van Ginkel (Rector of the United Nations University). UNESCO-DG (Koïchiro Matsuura) and UNISDR-Director (Salvano Briceno) and WMO Secretary General (Michel Jarraud) presented the opening remarks to this session, and signed the Letter of Intent soon after the session. Other invited organizations also agreed and signed within a few months. Hans van Ginkel and Salvano Briceno greatly contributed to the 2006 Tokyo Action Plan to found a new stage of IPL (International Programme on Landslides). Salvano Briceno served as the chair of the IPL-Global Promotion

Committee (2006–2014). Both are very much appreciated for their contribution to ICL and IPL development.

The foundation of ICL is based on the international activities of the Japan Landslide Society. A major activity of ICL has been the publication over 15 years (1987–2003) of a three-color printed international newsletter: “Landslide News” by the Japan Landslide Society. 5000 copies were annually printed and 2000 copies were distributed to landslide researchers abroad free of charge. Robert Schuster of USGS worked as an international chief editor of this newsletter and supported the Landslide News Publication Committee (Kyoji Sassa: Chair). Schuster’s contribution was highly valued, and he was then nominated to be the first recipient of the Varnes Medal.

ICL applied for and obtained major research funding from the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan (MEXT) and from the IDNDR special budget of the Japan-China Joint Research on the Assessment of Landslide Hazards in Lishan, Xian (1991–1998). ICL obtained considerable funding through UNISDR from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan in 2007 to prepare and organize the first World Landslide Forum in 2008 and also the second World Landslide Forum in 2011. Those budgets played a critical role in the success of the foundation of the series of World Landslide Forums. At this opportunity, 15 years after its foundation, ICL extends sincere thanks to ICL supporting organizations (UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNISDR, UNU, ICSU, WFEO and IUGS), the government of Japan, and also private companies in Japan which have supported ICL, most of them from the publication of Landslide News in 1987.

The basic funding of ICL comes from the ICL membership fee. However, in-kind service, cooperation and periodical financial support for activities have contributed to ICL management and development. Without cooperation from ICL’s supporting organizations, ICL could not have developed through this 15 years. We proposed the ISDR-ICL Sendai Partnerships 2015–2025 which was agreed on and signed by 17 global stakeholders. ICL has made its greatest efforts since March 2015, and strongly wishes to further develop this Partnerships toward its midterm 2020 conference. ICL calls for cooperation and participation in this initiative as a voluntary commitment to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

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