

Successful South Asian Bid for holding IGC-2020 – Dr. D.M. Banerjee, Chair: INSA National Committee for IUGS and Ashok Singhvi Chair: IGC2020 Bid Committee

The Indian National Committee on IUGS proposed that India makes a bid to bring the 36th International Congress to the sub continent in 2020 (IGC-2020). In addition, it was considered appropriate that this bid was made jointly with the neighbouring countries such that the main scientific congress is held in Delhi and that there will be option of field trips with in India and in the partner countries, viz. Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. The theme of the Congress was chosen as **Geosciences: the Basic Science for a Sustainable Future**.

A fifteen member team from the Ministry of Mines and GSI led by Secretary (Mines) Dr. Vishwa Pati Trivedi and a four member team of the Ministry of Earth Sciences led by its Secretary, Dr. Shailesh Nayak, participated in the International Geological Congress in Australia from 4th

to 11th August 2012. These two Ministerial teams formed part of the Indian delegation lead by Prof D.M. Banerjee, (Chair INSA IUGS Committee). The Ministry of Earth Sciences additionally provided funds for the participation of 20 carefully selected scientists from all over the country for presentation of their research papers in various sessions of the Congress.

The first presentation of the bid was made to the International Geological Congress Committee on the 4th August, 2012 by Dr. Shailesh Nayak which was preceded by brief introductory remarks by Prof. D.M. Banerjee. This was followed by the pitch film. The second presentation to the IUGS Council comprising representatives of over 120 countries was made by Prof. A.K. Singhvi on August 9th, 2012. This was preceded by a brief introduction and statement on the commitment of the

Government of India by Dr. Vishwa Pati Trivedi. The voting for the bid took place on 9th August, 2012 immediately after the presentations by the Indian and the Canadian delegations. The South Asian bid received an overwhelming response with 128 votes in its favor as against 51 votes for Canada.

This mandate implies that the 36th International Geological Congress (IGC) will be held in Delhi in 2020. The event will be organized by the Geological Survey of India under the aegis of Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Earth Sciences. The Indian National Science Academy will be the nodal contact point with the IGCC and IUGS and will help develop the Scientific Programs. The venue of the Congress will be the India Expo Centre and Mart located in Greater NOIDA in the NCR.

National Seminar on Geospatial and Ecological Mapping of Biodiversity: Tools and Techniques – B. Deepika and K.S. Jayappa, Department of Marine Geology, Mangalore University

A two-day National Seminar on ‘Geospatial and Ecological Mapping of Biodiversity’ was organized under the Institution of Excellence (IOE) by the Dept. of Studies in Earth Science, University of Mysore, Mysore during 30-31 May, 2012. Prof. S. M. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor, Gandhigram Rural University, Tamil Nadu explained in his inaugural address about the theory of plate tectonics, migration of river channels, how flora and fauna are different in upliftment areas when compared to subsidence areas, paleo-environments and paleo-climates etc. He felt that correlation between geodiversity and biodiversity is very much necessary and narrated the same with examples. Dr. V. Prakash, former Director, CFTRI, Mysore, the chief guest of the inaugural function, addressed the impacts of climate change on food production, economy of the country, health and living condition of the people especially village and tribal people. He also stressed upon the social responsibility of scientists. Prof. V.G. Talawar, Vice-Chancellor,

University of Mysore, who presided over the function mentioned about the activities of the IOE and utilisation of grant sanctioned by MHRD-UGC, New Delhi to the University of Mysore, under IOE program. Dr. P. Madesh, Convener of the Seminar explained about the seminar theme. Prof. B. Basavalingu, Chairman, Dept. of Earth Science welcomed the gathering and Dr. Niranjana, Co-ordinator, IOE proposed vote of thanks.

The major themes of the seminar were: (1) suitability of satellite products for biodiversity analysis, (2) biodiversity characterization using remote sensing in mountainous terrain, (3) leaf area index in biodiversity mapping, (4) identification of herbal resources in densely forested regions, (5) floral species classification using remote sensing data, (6) land use/land cover mapping, (7) analysis of fragmentation and anthropogenic disturbances in the Western Ghats using remote sensing and GIS, and (8) application of hyper spectral image, interpretation in mapping of medicinal and

other plant resources. Three invited talks and about twenty research papers were presented in the seminar. An invited talk on medicinal plants of Western Ghats and their importance was delivered by Prof. V. Krishna, Dept. of Biotechnology, Kuvempu University. Dr. B. K. Ranganath, Scientist, ISRO, Bangalore highlighted the Geoinformatics applications for bio-diversity, forestry and environment. Remote Sensing applications in forestry and agriculture are addressed by Dr. H. Gangadhara Bhat of Mangalore University. The other research papers exposed the suitability of satellite products for biodiversity analysis, biodiversity characterization, identification of herbal resources in densely forested regions, land use/land cover changes and analysis of fragmentation and anthropogenic disturbances in the Western Ghats. About 100 participants including teaching faculty, research scholars and students from various universities, institutions/organizations across the state attended the seminar.