



Letter from the General Assembly Programme Committee Chair

Gert-Jan Reichart reflects on this year's meeting

It was a very energetic General Assembly for me this year – the first as programme chair. Fortunately, I benefited from the great organizational infrastructure developed over the years by conference-organiser Copernicus and previous chairs. The result was a very successful meeting with over 11,000 participants, 4,436 oral presentations and 9,092 posters. I very much enjoyed the lively scientific discussions in some of the sessions, as well as the meetings with colleagues from all over the world. For me, this is what makes the EGU General Assembly the most important meeting of the year.

The newly introduced smartphone app helped me navigate the conference, not only by showing me the scientific programme, but also by providing maps with the location of the different rooms. But while the app worked perfectly, there were some complaints concerning the accessibility of the Internet. This is, of course, essential as the meeting tries to be visible on social media and we promote blogging, tweeting and so on. Although we invested considerably this year in the accessibility of the Internet at the conference centre, somehow we were confronted with the limit of what was technically possible. Next year we will have to do our very best again to try to optimize the wireless network.

The high quality of the sessions, both in the different divisions and at Union level, was a feature of the meeting. In addition to our core business, the scientific presentations, we organized several geofocused side events. The photo exhibition showing the devastation left behind by last year's earthquake and tsunami in Japan impressed me. There was also an elegant presentation of silica with all kinds of different minerals and shapes. And the Geocinema featured films on a wide variety of subjects.

The success of the General Assembly is, at the same time, our greatest pitfall. Rooms were overfull at times, something difficult to avoid with the large number of parallel sessions we have. Should we reconsider the concept of the General Assembly? This summer we will start a working group to try and come up with new ideas,

without changing the general concept of the meeting. After all, the large number of participants is indicative of our community's satisfaction with the Assembly.

The organization of the next General Assembly is underway, with our first planning meeting scheduled already. I will do my best for the 2013 Assembly to be a similar success. At the same time, I realize that the success of the meeting mainly depends on you, conveners, participants, and audience. Please use the EGU and its Assembly as it is intended: as a platform to present your newest scientific results, to communicate with fellow scientists, and to inform decision makers on the geosciences. I hope to see you all again in Vienna in 2013!

*Gert-Jan Reichart
2012 Programme Committee Chair*



Gert-Jan Reichart, a researcher at the Department of Earth Sciences, Utrecht University, is also the president of the EGU Biogeosciences Division.



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Division reports

News brought to you by six of EGU's division presidents

In each edition of GeoQ, we select several division presidents to contribute a report updating members with news from their division. Issue 2 gives voice to Stefano Nativi of Earth and Space Science Informatics (ESSI), Markku Poutanen of Geodesy (G), Huw Davies of Geodynamics (GD), Walter Schmidt of Geosciences Instrumentation and Data Systems (GI), Andreas Lang of Geomorphology (GM), and Nick Arndt of Geochemistry, Mineralogy, Petrology & Volcanology (GMPV).

Earth and Space Science Informatics

2012 GA meeting in Vienna: The 2012 General Assembly meeting was a great success for the ESSI Division. Our sessions went well, in many cases doubling the number of attendees compared to previous years.

2012 Ian McHarg Division Medal: The 2012 Ian McHarg Medal is awarded to [Peter Fox](#) for his contribution to recognising the fundamental importance of establishing informatics as a genuine discipline within the Earth sciences. Peter was born in Tasmania, has been working in the US for many years, and has an Irish passport. In Vienna, Peter gave an inspiring and visionary lecture in an overcrowded room. After the lecture, ESSI offered a lunch to honor Peter.

2013 Division programme: For 2013, the ESSI Division is going to consider three programme strands: (a) Community-driven challenges and solutions dealing with informatics (Committee: Kerstin Lenhart, Giuseppe Manzella); (b) Multi-disciplinary challenges and solutions across the Earth and space sciences (Committee: Horst Schwichtenberg, Wim Som de Cerff, Paolo Mazzetti); (c) Visualize and discover (Committee: John Blower, Mohan Ramamurthy).

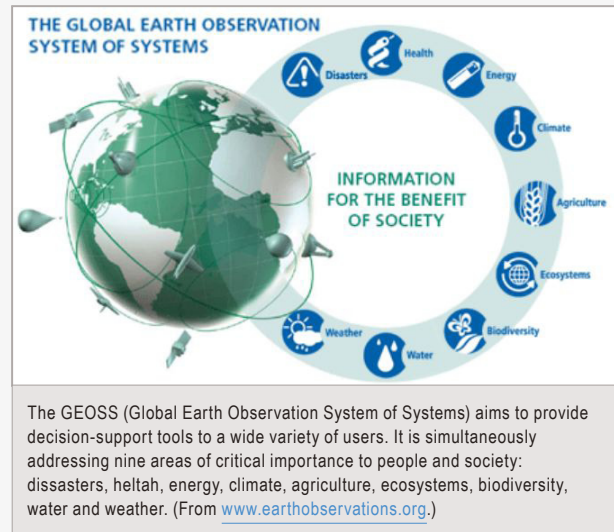
Looking for a new division president: ESSI is looking for a new president. If you are interested, please submit your application through the EGU website once the call for applications opens over the summer.

Contribution to international programmes: In the field of informatics applied to Earth and Space disciplines, the ESSI Division confirmed its commitment to inform, contribute, and reach out to the EGU community about important initiatives and programmes that are ongoing at the European and international levels. They include: the European [INSPIRE](#) directive, the [GEOSS](#) and [Eye On Earth](#) initiatives, and the US [EarthCube](#) programme, among others.

*Stefano Nativi
ESSI Division President*

Geodesy

2012 GA meeting in Vienna: The 2012 General Assembly in Vienna was very good; the sessions were well attended and, with



one exception, lecture rooms were sufficiently large for the audience. Number of sessions and submitted abstracts were slightly smaller than last year, but not significantly compared to the average during the last five years. Most popular sessions (by number of abstracts and by number of participants in oral sessions) were related to gravity satellites. A gravity change on a global scale is under intensive investigation because it is related to the fate of glaciers and sea level rise.

2012 Vening Meinesz Medal: The 2012 Geodesy Division Vening Meinesz Medal was awarded to [C.-K. Shum](#) for his pioneering work on the recent developments in geodetic techniques that have made profound contributions to the Earth sciences through the precise measurement of mass transports within the Earth system.

Geodesy Division officers and committees: Division officers were confirmed and approved in the Geodesy Business Meeting:

- President Markku Poutanen, Vice-Presidents Michael Schmidt and Johannes Bouman. A new president will be elected in November; candidates are sought for in due time before the autumn nomination.
- Vening Meinesz Medal committee: four past medallists and an *ex officio* Geodesy division president and EGU Award Committee chair (both non-voting). Second-year medallist chairing the committee. 2013 committee: C.-K. Schum, Harald Schuh (chair), Philip Woodworth, Susanna Zerbini (in addition to Markku Poutanen and Alberto Montanari).
- Outstanding Young Scientist Award committee: division president, vice-presidents, and past medallist.
- Outstanding Student Poster Award committee: division president and vice-presidents.
- Programme committee for 2013 GA program: division president, vice presidents, and one or two others to cover the whole field of geodesy.

*Markku Poutanen
G Division President*

Geodynamics

The Geodynamics Programme at EGU 2012 was very exciting with sessions on topics ranging from the planets, to the core, through mantle, and lithosphere/asthenosphere to the crust. Other sessions focussed on processes such as subduction, ridges, localization, anisotropy, basins, plate tectonics; and others discussed the geodynamics of regions like the Atlantic, Laurasia craton and Arctic. There were also very successful sessions on specialized topics such as computational geodynamic methods, new methods to observe deformation, and heat flow and hydrothermal circulation. The oral and poster components of all sessions were very vibrant. The GD Division continued its tradition of having a strong co-organized programme with relevant cognate divisions – including sessions on such topics as the Alpine-Himalayan collision, analogue modelling, mantle mineralogy, glacial isostatic adjustment and surface processes. In total there were 17 division-led sessions, and 36 in total including co-organized sessions. This involved over 400 presentations in division-led sessions, and over 1,000 presentations in total. There were nearly exactly two poster presentations for every one oral presentation.

The highlight of the division programme was the excellent Love Medal lecture of [Yanick Ricard](#) (Universite de Lyon 1) on mantle dynamics on the Wednesday evening. The Division Outstanding Young Scientist [Richard Katz](#) (University of Oxford) gave an exciting lecture on two-phase flow related to ridges on the Monday. The Division Business Meeting saw the presentation of the Outstanding Student Poster prize to [Robert Myhill](#) (University of Cambridge) – collected in his absence by Tim Middleton, – and there was also a very useful discussion of future improvements for the General Assembly.

*Huw Davies
GD Division President*

Geosciences Instrumentation and Data Systems

2012 GA meeting in Vienna: With 14 sessions and a 24% increase of submitted abstracts compared to 2011, the 2012 General Assembly was a great success for the GI division. The co-organization and co-listing with other divisions' sessions supported well the interdisciplinary role of the division for Geosciences Instrumentation & Data Systems. The division programme was this time divided into the groups Data Networks and Analysis, Atmosphere and Ocean Monitoring and Space Instrumentation, and Earth Surface Investigation Methods, providing a better focus for the very wide range of topics covered by the GI division.

Highlights from the 2012 GA presentations: New trends for integrating access to data with refereed scientific publications were presented from research institutes, libraries and publishing companies. The miniaturization of instruments and their cross-disciplinary application were the subject of many presentations like miniaturized automatic infrared spectrometers for *in situ* analysis of planetary dust grains on Mars, or for monitoring atmospheric trace gases from small unmanned airplanes, providing real-time information for weather-related catastrophe management. Earth penetrating radars, developed for geoscience research, were used to locate

trapped and buried people. None-destructive monitoring means to find and analyse archeological artifacts are used to restore damaged buildings or detect possibly dangerous damages in bridges.

Division program 2012/13: The session topics developed during the past year will be maintained for 2013 with possibly joined session according to submitted contributions:

- Data Networks and Analysis: from general system design to large-scale European research infrastructures and data publishing;
 - Atmosphere/Ocean Monitoring and Space Instrumentation;
 - Earth Surface Investigation: instrumentation for sub-surface, surface structure and historical artifact monitoring and investigations.
- These areas are supported by dedicated science officers arranging activities in their field during the year.

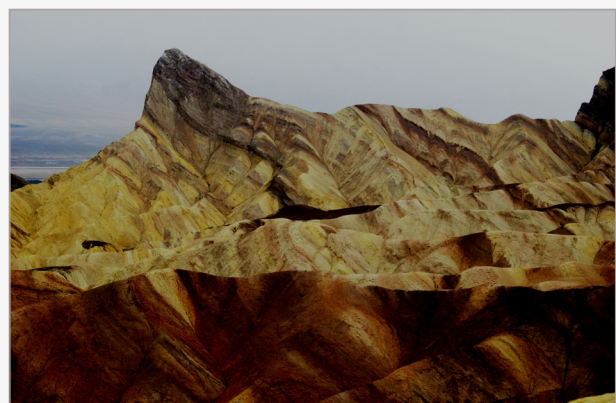
Recently launched GI journal: The EGU Open Access journal was launched in autumn 2011. A well-attended inauguration party was held during the 2012 General Assembly. By now about 15 articles have been submitted, the first four passed the referee process and are published in their final form. The first special issue related to the instrumentation on board a major European space mission is under preparation. Contributions from all fields covered by the GI division are welcome.

*Walter Schmidt
GI Division President*

Geomorphology

The Geomorphology programme at the 2012 General Assembly continued the success of past years and saw a further increase in abstract numbers by 9% (compared to 2011), confirming the Assembly's place as a leading annual event for the GM Division. A total of 576 abstracts (896 including co-organized sessions) were presented filling Room 21 all week, two full days in Room 22, and several other locations across the conference centre.

The 2012 Bagnold Medal has been awarded to [Gregory E. Tucker](#) for his innovative modeling and field studies leading to fundamental advances in our understanding of the way processes and landscape elements interact in the genesis of landforms, and for providing new insights on the importance of temporal variability of the driving



Patterns in the landform by Basudev Biswal, distributed by EGU under a Creative Commons licence.

forces of geomorphic systems. The Medal Lecture was preceded by a reception sponsored by the British Society for Geomorphology and the *Journal of Earth Surface Processes and Landforms*.

The 2012 Outstanding Young Scientists Award was awarded to [Veerle Vanacker](#) for her novel approach to distinguish between natural benchmarks and accelerated erosion rates in mountain environments under pressure of land use change. She also gave the 2012 Penck Lecture.

[Pauline Dieras](#) received the 2011 Outstanding Student Poster award for her poster 'Controls on initial oxbow sedimentation as observed within recently cut-off channels of the Ain River, France'.

The workshops for young researchers were further highlights of the 2012 programme. They focused on 'writing papers and research proposals in geomorphology' and 'pitfalls, statistical and otherwise, in analysis of environmental data'. Thanks go to Stuart Lane, Mike Ellis, and James Kirchner. The great success and excellent feedback received stimulates us to continue workshops for young researchers as part of the Assembly programme in future years.

One focus of the division activities this year was enhancing ties with other geomorphology organizations for improving information exchange between associations. The aims of this initiative are to strengthen the visibility of geomorphology as scientific discipline of relevance to societies, to join forces in supporting the next generation of geomorphologists, and to help shape the agenda in research programmes. Besides a round table discussion on 'Geomorphology in Europe' to establish the dialog between associations in Europe, also a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) was signed between the Division and the International Association of Geomorphologists.

For further details please consult the presentation from the [Division Business Meeting](#) on the EGU website.

*Andreas Lang
GM Division President*

Geochemistry, Mineralogy, Petrology & Volcanology

At EGU 2012, four GMPV sessions were co-sponsored by the Volcanology-Geochemistry-Petrology (VGP) Division of AGU and by other organizations (European Association of Geochemistry, Society of Economic Geologists, Society for Geology Applied to Mineral Deposits). This collaboration emerged from an initiative taken by the presidents of the two divisions, myself for GMPV and Steve Sparks for VGP. Plans for future collaboration, as agreed during discussions with Catherine McCammon, president elect of VGP who was at EGU2012, are outlined below.

GMPV-VGP will co-sponsor sessions at the AGU Fall Meeting:

four proposed sessions have been identified and we will contact the conveners to establish whether they are interested in having GMPV-VGP co-sponsorship. It is also planned to organize four GMPV-VGP sessions at EGU2013. To assure this activity, we plan to appoint an 'interactional secretary' within GMPV. If VGP agrees, the same person would also serve on the VGP committee. A further link at the division level with AOGS will also be explored.

Kuno award lecture at EGU 2013: The Kuno Award is given by VGP but no Medal Lecture is given at AGU. Katie Kelly, the 2011 recipient, gave a lecture in a GMPV session. We agreed to continue this practice in 2013 – the Kuno medalist would be invited to EGU 2013 and if he/she accepts, would give a talk in an appropriate session. We will explore the possibility of obtaining travel support from an organization such as EAG or EMU.

Committee membership: We discussed appointment of GMPV members to VGP award committees and vice versa. The composition of the 2012 medal committees has been voted on so any cross appointments will start in early 2013 for VGP, and in April for GMPV.

Reciprocal agreement regarding newsletters: We will also explore whether GMPV members could have access to VGP mailings and vice versa, and will investigate means of assuring that news of GMVP activities are given in the existing VGP newsletter and website. In the future VGP news will be added to the GMPV page on the EGU website and in other appropriate EGU newsletters.

In addition to these actions, we are also opening discussions with representatives of the MRP (Mineral Rock Physics) Division at AGU. This interaction will also include the EMRP (Earth Magnetism and Rock Physics) Division of EGU.

*Nicholas Arndt
GMPV Division President*

