



## EGU awards and medals

Awardees were honored at the 2012 General Assembly

EGU awards and medals are presented annually in recognition of scientific excellence in the Earth, space and planetary sciences, or service to the community. This year's awardees, listed below, were honored at the EGU Medal Ceremony on Tuesday 24 April.

### Union Awards

#### Arthur Holmes Medal & Honorary Membership

Awarded to [Vincent Courtillot](#) for seminal contributions to geomagnetism and the geodynamics of mantle hotspots.

#### Alfred Wegener Medal & Honorary Membership

Awarded to [Michael Ghil](#) for his leading contributions to theoretical climate dynamics; his innovative observational studies involving model assimilation of satellite data in meteorology, oceanography and space physics; the breadth of his interdisciplinary studies, including macroeconomics; and also for his extensive supervision and mentoring of scores of graduate and postdoctoral students.

#### Jean Dominique Cassini Medal & Honorary Membership

Awarded (posthumously) to [Angioletta Coradini](#) in recognition of her important and wide range of work in planetary sciences and Solar System formation, and her leading role in the development of space infrared instrumentation for planetary exploration.

#### Alexander von Humboldt Medal

Awarded to [Robin T. Clarke](#) for fundamental contributions in statistical analysis and modeling of hydrological processes.

#### Arne Richter Award for Outstanding Young Scientists

Awarded to [Aikaterini Radioti](#) for her remarkable work in the field of auroral dynamics of Jupiter and Saturn, to which she contributed with original ideas based on combined studies of remote auroral and *in situ* magnetospheric data. Also awarded to [Encarnación Ruiz-Agudo](#) for her ground-breaking work on the structure of mineral surfaces, on fluid-mineral interaction and on the influence of organic and inorganic additives on the growth of crystals in multicomponent aqueous solutions. To [Lieven Clarisse](#) for his outstanding contribution to exploiting remote atmospheric sensing techniques to improve our understanding of emission and transport processes of ash and gases in relation to various natural hazardous processes. And to [Stephanie Henson](#) for her fundamental contribution to the study of marine ecosystems.

#### Union Service Award

Awarded to [Bruce D. Malamud](#) in recognition of his innovative and organized service for the Union as Chair of the Programme Committee, and his exceptional dedication as President of the Division on Natural Hazards.

### Division Outstanding Young Scientists Award

#### Atmospheric Sciences

To [Diana Rose](#) for outstanding contributions to the elucidation of the influence of atmospheric aerosol particles on the formation of clouds.

#### Climate: Past, Present & Future

To [Didier M. Roche](#) for his innovative development of forward models of isotopic proxies and his contribution to the understanding of past climate changes.

#### Cryospheric Sciences

To [Gaël Durand](#) for his contributions in the understanding of polar ice dynamics from micro-scale to macro-scale.

#### Energy, Resources, and the Environment

To [Suzanne Hangx](#) for her outstanding contribution to understanding the mechanical and chemical effects of CO<sub>2</sub> on rock materials, in the context of geological storage of CO<sub>2</sub>.

#### Geodesy

To [Xavier Collilieux](#) for his significant contributions towards improved methods and procedures in computing global terrestrial reference frames and for his studies of surface loading effects therein.

#### Geodynamics

To [Richard Foa Katz](#) for his outstanding contributions to the understanding of the mechanics of Earth's fluid-solid systems.

#### Geomorphology

To [Veerle Vanacker](#) for her novel approach to distinguish between natural benchmark and accelerated erosion rates in mountain environments under pressure of land use change.

#### Hydrological Sciences

To [Giuliano Di Baldassarre](#) for his remarkable contribution to understanding and communicating the impact of global changes on flood risk.

#### Nonlinear Processes in Geosciences

To [Claudia Cherubini](#) for valuable contributions to the hydrogeological modeling of groundwater applied to resource management, with specific approaches for coastal fractured aquifers, and for applying advanced geo-statistical techniques to model environmental and anthropogenic variables.

#### Soil System Sciences

To [Claudio Zaccone](#) for his contribution to understanding the role of humification processes in ombrotrophic bog profiles and the



Union awardees, their nominators, and EGU president (far left) and vice-president (far right) at the Medal Ceremony at the 2012 General Assembly.

interactions between humic substances and organic/inorganic pollutants.

#### Solar-Terrestrial Sciences

To [Alejandro Luque](#) for his outstanding contribution to the understanding of the electrodynamics of plasma streamers found in Transient Luminous Events occurring in the mesosphere of the Earth.

#### Tectonics and Structural Geology

To [André R. Niemeijer](#) for his exceptional work on the effects of fluid-rock interactions and fabric development on rock and fault mechanical properties.

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### Division Medals

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#### Vilhelm Bjerknes Medal – Atmospheric Sciences

To [Adrian Simmons](#) in recognition of his outstanding and diverse scientific contributions to dynamic meteorology and numerical weather prediction over the past four decades.

#### Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky Medal – Biogeosciences

To [Jean-Pierre Gattuso](#) for creative and scholarly contributions to biogeosciences at the interface between microbial ecology, coral ecology, biogeochemistry and chemical oceanography.

#### Milutin Milankovic Medal – Climate: Past, Present & Future

To [Wolfgang Berger](#) for his pioneering contributions to understanding the imprint of orbital forcing on the marine carbonate system and its interaction with atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration and for his ground-breaking studies on isotope geochemistry.

#### Hans Oeschger Medal – Climate: Past, Present & Future

To [Michael Mann](#) for his significant contributions to understanding decadal-centennial scale climate change over the last two millennia and for pioneering techniques to synthesize patterns and northern hemispheric time series of past climate using proxy data reconstructions.

#### Louis Agassiz Medal – Cryospheric Sciences

To [Ian Joughin](#) for outstanding contributions to the study of the dynamics and mass balance of polar ice sheets using differential SAR interferometry and other techniques that he has helped to pioneer.

#### Ian McHarg Medal – Earth and Space Science Informatics

To [Peter Fox](#) for his contribution to recognising the fundamental importance of establishing informatics as a genuine discipline within the Earth sciences.

#### Robert Wilhelm Bunsen Medal – Geochemistry, Mineralogy, Petrology & Volcanology

To [William F. McDonough](#) for his outstanding contribution to our understanding of the geochemical composition and evolution of the solid Earth. His ground-breaking research in defining the major and trace element composition of primitive mantle and of modern mantle reservoirs has become a cornerstone of geochemical investigation of the Earth's interior and will form the basis for further investigations by generations of geochemists.

#### Vening Meinesz Medal – Geodesy

To [Che-Kwan 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.

#### Augustus Love Medal – Geodynamics

To [Yanick Ricard](#) for fundamental contributions to geodynamics through studies of how geoid, true polar wander, topography, seismic tomography and plate motions can be used to probe the mantle viscosity structure, mantle mixing and convective flow.

#### Ralph Alger Bagnold Medal – Geomorphology

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 as well as for providing new insights on the importance of the temporal variability of the driving forces of geomorphic systems.

#### John Dalton Medal – Hydrological Sciences

To [Kurt Roth](#) for his extraordinary creativity and pioneering contributions to flow and transport processes in the vadose zone, and its interactions with the saturated zone and with the atmosphere.

#### Petrus Peregrinus Medal – Earth Magnetism & Rock Physics

To [Frank J. Lowes](#) for innovative research in geomagnetism, notably the first experimental geodynamo model, the spatial geomagnetic power spectrum, error analysis of satellite data, and leadership in the community developing the International Geomagnetic Research Field.

#### Plinius Medal – Natural Hazards

To [Timothy Sullivan](#) for his outstanding research achievements in seismic engineering design, seismic assessment, seismic retrofit and mitigation of seismic risk.

#### Lewis Fry Richardson Medal – Nonlinear Geosciences

To [Harry Swinney](#) for his pioneering experiments on deterministic chaos and highly original laboratory models of geophysical flows.

#### Fridtjof Nansen Medal – Ocean Sciences

To [Pierre-Yves Le Traon](#) for his excellent contributions to and leadership in establishing satellite altimetry as a quantitative observational technique for research on mesoscale ocean variability, ocean circulation and sea level.

#### David Bates Medal – Planetary & Solar System Sciences

To [Hans Rickman](#) for his fundamental contributions to cometary physics and the analysis of non-gravitational forces in comets.

#### Louis Néel Medal – Earth Magnetism & Rock Physics

To [James R. Rice](#) for his seminal contributions to our fundamental understanding of strain localization, poromechanics and friction and his elegant and systematic studies have elucidated fault mechanics and the coupling with hydrologic and thermal processes during all phases of the earthquake cycle.

#### Beno Gutenberg Medal – Seismology

To [Michel Campillo](#) in recognition of the outstanding contributions he has made to the study of earth structure and seismic sources using novel methods.

#### Philippe Duchaufour Medal – Soil System Sciences

To [José Torrent](#) for his contribution on the mineralogy of iron oxides and the iron and phosphorus biogeochemical cycle in the soil-plant system.

#### Julius Bartels Medal – Solar-Terrestrial Sciences

To [Michael Lockwood](#) for his outstanding contributions to the understanding of the dynamics of the terrestrial magnetosphere and the coupling between solar variability, magnetospheric and ionospheric processes, and the terrestrial climate.

#### Jean Baptiste Lamarck Medal – Stratigraphy, Sedimentology & Palaeontology

To [Emiliano Mutti](#) for his internationally acclaimed research in clastic sedimentology, especially his ground-breaking detailed field-based models of turbidite systems, their petroleum reservoir characterization, and their relationship to fluvio-deltaic systems.

#### Stephan Mueller Medal – Tectonics & Structural Geology

To [Jacques Malavieille](#) in recognition of his fundamental contributions to the integration of field-based studies with analog modeling to study lithospheric deformation.

#### Henry Darcy Medal – Hydrological Sciences

To [Tissa H. Illangasekare](#) for fundamental contributions to engineering hydrology and exceptional support to the hydrological community.

*An earlier version of this article was published on the EGU website*

## Research on Flood Resilience and Europe: achievements and future

Report from the conveners of the EG4 Union session at this year's General Assembly

Vienna, 26 April 2012 – The extent and consequences of recent flood events in Europe and worldwide showed that the existing flood-defence structures do not guarantee a sufficient protection level for people and properties. Considering the uncertainty of future conditions shaped by the main drivers of urban development such as climate change and rapid urbanization, the situation is getting even more severe. Where defences exist, the residual risk will increase as the probability will increase that they fail or be overtopped by severe floods. In this unfavourably changing environment, a substantial rethinking of the existing strategies and paradigm shift from the traditional approaches is required in order to cope with future flooding in an adequate way.



During the EGU General Assembly (Vienna, 22–27 April, 2012), the session [Research on Flood Resilience and Europe](#) (EG4) broadly covered the current research on Flood Resilience in Europe and worldwide. The follow-up splinter meeting ‘Future of European Research on Flood Resilience’ issued the resulting recommendations for future research.

The EG4 session was called and organized by the SMARTeST project in the framework of the programme group Europe and Geoscience of the EGU General Assembly. Other 7<sup>th</sup> Framework projects such as FloodProbe, and CORFU were represented, as well as the Interreg project RainGain, the projects BlueGreenDream (pending), CAPHAZ-NET, FREEMAN, MPRINTS, WATER2ADAPT and the UNESCO-IHE/TU Delft Resilience Group.

Leading speakers from research and industry around Europe broadly covered the current research on Flood Resilience in Europe and worldwide by presenting the findings of these projects obtained through joint investigation, implementation, and dissemination of short to medium term strategies.

The session was followed by the splinter meeting [Future of European Research on Flood Resilience](#) that called for further research in flood resilience technology, systems and tools to protect

vulnerable urban areas. It emphasized that there is a need for demonstration projects that can show the findings presented during the session. Furthermore, the development of standards for technology and tools should be the focus of further research, with unified test standards for flood resilience technology being a matter of increasing urgency. Relevant flood resilience tools and models should see the development of standards for data management and presentation of results and uncertainty to decision makers.

*Stephen L Garvin, SMARTeST Coordinator,  
Building Research Establishment, UK  
Daniel Schertzer and Ioulia Tchiguirinskaia,  
ENPC, Paris, SMARTeST Partner  
Conveners of Seminar Session, Flood  
Resilience and Europe at EGU 2012.*

SMARTeST is holding an [international conference and flood resilience technology exhibition](#), in Athens in September 2012, and further national events are being held in the seven partner countries.

*This article was originally published on the EGU website*

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## Short report on 2012 General Assembly Press Centre activities

This year’s General Assembly, with over 13,500 presentations and more than 11,200 participating scientists, was one of the most successful to date. In addition to its scientific achievements, the conference also saw keen media participation and reporting.

The Press Centre, run for the first time by EGU’s Media and Communications Officer Bárbara Ferreira, welcomed over 40 [media participants](#), including journalists, press officers, science writers, and EGU guest bloggers. The Centre hosted 12 [press conferences](#) on topics ranging from flood disasters and sea-level rise to mitigation of tsunami risk and space weather. The conferences were not only well attended by the journalists at the Assembly, but also had hundreds of live views via a [webstreaming](#) link.

Media participants attended press conferences and scientific sessions, interviewed scientists, and reported extensively on the General Assembly. The conference has featured in over 100 online, print and radio articles published by the BBC, Bloomberg News, Spiegel, to name a few. News agencies such as Agence France-Presse, Austria Presse Agentur, and the Spanish Agencia EFE also extensively covered research presented at the General Assembly.



The EGU is grateful to all those who worked at the Press Centre, in particular Tim Middleton, Julia Wöger, Celso Gomes, and Suzanne Voice, as well as for everyone at the conference-organizer Copernicus, especially Katja Gänger. Thank you also to the scientists who participated in this year’s press conferences and, of course, to the hard-working journalists the EGU had the pleasure to host.

*This article was originally published on the EGU website*

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# EGU 2012 Photo Competition winners

All images are available from EGU's Open Access image repository, [Imaggeo](#)

The selection committee received close to 300 photos for this year's EGU Photo Competition, in most areas covered by Union's activities. From these, ten finalist photographs were exhibited at the 2012 General Assembly, where conference participants voted on their favourites. The three most-voted photographs, and winning entries, are:

## Melt stream



1<sup>st</sup> prize (214 votes): Melt stream, Greeland by Ian Joughin, distributed by EGU under a Creative Commons licence.

Supraglacial lakes are created when water forms in depressions on top of a glacier, remaining there until it dissipates by seeping through crevasses, or cracks in the ice sheet. Despite their sometimes impressive size, supraglacial lakes may drain in a matter of hours under the right conditions, when the pressure they exert on the ice causes it to crack creating a [sometimes spectacular](#) lake draining event.

Draining of supraglacial lakes may have important environmental consequences and may even, as warming temperatures further increase meltwater volumes, affect rates of sea-level rise by accelerating the rate by which [ice sheets slide into the ocean](#).

Ian Joughin, from the University of Washington Polar Science Center, took this breathtaking photo under freezing conditions, earning him the 1<sup>st</sup> Prize at the 2012 General Assembly Photo Competition.

"This image was taken as part of a project investigating the rapid drainage of supraglacial lakes in Greenland," he explains. "Each year, these lakes, which often are a few kilometres across and 10 or more metres deep, fill with melt water. If the water can find an open crack, it fills the crack and the greater density of water relative to ice allows it to hydro-fracture through the full thickness (~1km) of the ice sheet, causing the entire lake to drain rapidly (< 2hours). This picture shows a large melt stream that we encountered as we

were out exploring the lake basin, and it is only one of many streams feeding the lake."

Additional images from this trip can be viewed [here](#).

## Burst



2<sup>nd</sup> prize (142 votes): Burst by Melissa Bukovsky, distributed by EGU under a Creative Commons licence.

This photo won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize at the 2012 General Assembly Photo Competition and, according to the photographer, Melissa S. Bukovsky, epitomizes the idea that an expensive camera is not a necessity for taking great photos. "You just need to know how to use what you have. I travel with a point and shoot that fits in my back pocket," she explains.

Currently a Project Scientist at the US National Center for Atmospheric Research, Bukovsky snapped this shot on one of her many work related trips. "This picture of a bursting mud bubble in a boiling pool of mud was taken just outside of the Wai-O-Tapu geothermal area near Rotorua, New Zealand. The area is part of New Zealand's Taupo volcanic zone. I stayed in this area for a few days of holiday before traveling back to the US after working in Melbourne for the summer. Aside from all of the fantastic geothermal phenomena to see in that area, there are numerous hot springs that are great for relaxing in."

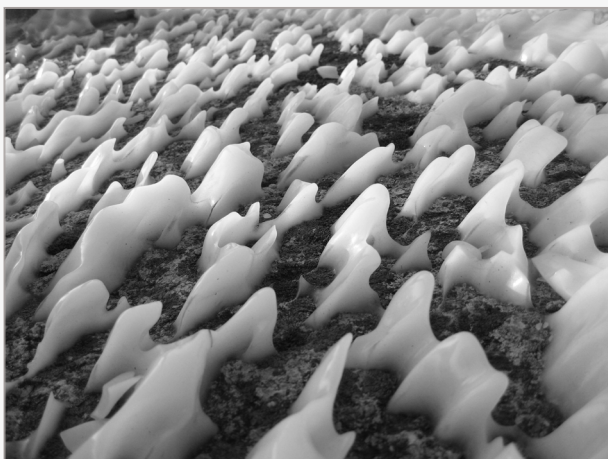
Mud pools, hot springs of bubbling mud, form in high-temperature geothermal areas where water is in short supply. The little water that is available rises to the surface at a spot where the soil is rich in volcanic ash, clay, and other fine particulates. The viscosity of the mud varies, from fluid during the rainy season to viscous in drier months.

The Wai-O-Tapu geothermal complex has been protected as a scenic reserve since 1931 and it remains a major tourist attraction.

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## Icy landscape

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3<sup>rd</sup> prize (135 votes): Icy landscape by Lucien von Gunten, distributed by EGU under a Creative Commons licence.

Ice is a hazardous beauty, ephemeral in nature and, under the right conditions, capable of dominating landscapes. Earlier this year, while North America enjoyed an unusually mild winter, central and eastern Europe experienced brutal cold spells. The continent witnessed widespread freezing as cold air swept south from Siberia, claiming hundreds of lives, knocking out power supplies, and disrupting transport services. In Poland and the Ukraine, [temperatures dropped as low as -33C](#) and in Italy over 80,000 citizens were left without electricity after power lines were felled by trees.

This year's icy spell brought Switzerland its coldest weather since 1987, the year it experienced its lowest ever recorded temperature. Lucien von Gunten, Science Officer at [PAGES \(Past Global Changes\)](#), explains the exceptional circumstances behind this captivating shot, taken earlier this year. "In Versoix, near the Lake of Geneva, the combination of low temperatures and strong easterly winds led to an unusual natural spectacle as the lake shores were partly covered with ice. Images of cars and boats under a thick ice shell were shown in the international press. Next to these popular eye-catchers one could also admire smaller scale ice structure, such as those depicted on this photograph, which covers an area of 30x30cm." This photo won 3rd Prize at the 2012 General Assembly photo competition.

Exceptional weather events, such as extreme temperatures, drought, or tropical storms and hurricanes, have increased in frequency over the past 50 years, partly as a result of human-induced climate change.

More pictures of Switzerland during this year's freeze can be seen [here](#).

*After the General Assembly, the three photos were highlighted on [GeoLog](#), the EGU Blog. The texts were originally published on the blog's weekly *Imaggeo* on Mondays series.*

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## Join the EGU Blog Network!

To complement our official blog, we are launching a blog network related to the Earth, planetary, and space sciences. If you are a scientist who likes blogging about your research, or about geosciences in general, we would like to hear from you.

In a few months, the EGU blog will migrate from WordPress to the EGU website, and we would like to have other bloggers joining us within an EGU Blog Network. The aim of this project is to foster a diverse community of geoscientist bloggers and to offer them a place to interact with each other and with the Union.

The network would be similar to [Nature Network](#) or [Scientific American Blog Network](#), with all blogs having a unified design and general theme – Earth, space and planetary sciences – but with each blogger being responsible for the content of their own blog.

Apart from your site gaining exposure by having its name and a short introduction listed on the EGU website, we will also share highlights of your work on our social media channels, and may ask you to contribute original content on our official blog.

**If you'd like your blog to be considered for our network, fill out [this form](#). Please note that only blogs in English will be considered.**

Feel free to contact the EGU Media and Communications Officer [Bárbara Ferreira](#) if you have any questions.

Happy blogging!

*This article was originally published on the EGU blog*

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# International Innovation interview: EGU Executive Secretary

## Philippe Courtial details the work of the Union in assisting scientists and improving the availability of accurate scientific data

Could you outline the main intention and mission of the European Geosciences Union?

The European Geosciences Union (EGU) is Europe's premier geosciences organization, and is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in the geosciences, planetary, and space sciences for the benefit of humanity worldwide. It was established in September 2002 as a merger of the European Geophysical Society (EGS) and the European Union of Geosciences (EUG), and has headquarters in Munich, Germany. The EGU is a non-profit, international, and interdisciplinary learned association of scientists, with over 11,000 members from all over the world.

The objectives of the Union are to promote cooperation and discussion in Europe among scientists (including students, post-docs and senior scientists) concerned with studies of the Earth and its environment and of planetary and space sciences, and to promote and encourage the development of any or all of the relevant sciences, within and outside Europe.

Moreover, what gaps has the organization filled?

EGU provides a platform to its members and to the scientific community. It hosts and organizes the largest and most prominent event in geosciences held in Europe, the EGU General Assembly, attracting over 10,000 scientists from all over the world each year. The conference includes over 700 different scientific sessions. Furthermore, EGU has a number of travel awards to financially assist young scientists and others who wish to attend its General Assembly each year (e.g. the Young Scientist's Travel Award for Europeans, the Adrian Gill Travel Award for a young scientist from Great Britain to take part in a session of the Atmospheric Sciences or Ocean Sciences programme, and the Keith Runcorn Travel Award for Non-Europeans). Furthermore, EGU provides support to scientists in the organization of conference series, topical meetings, training schools and short courses.

In addition, EGU has a current portfolio of 14 scientific journals, which use an innovative 'open access' format. As signatory of the Berlin Open Access Initiative (Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in Sciences and Humanities), EGU has contributed to Europe's global leadership in providing open-access publications. EGU's open-access portfolio also includes an online geosciences image repository ([Imaggeo](#)).

EGU also runs a Geosciences Information for Teachers (GIFT) programme that offers teachers from elementary to high school the opportunity to extend their knowledge in geo-scientific topics.

The Union further fosters communication between scientists through a mentoring scheme (the Women in Geosciences

Mentoring Programme was recently launched) and by means of a quarterly newsletter distributed to all its members.

EGU also plays a role in identifying and drawing attention to societal problems which could be addressed by the scientific work of its members, and in fostering its communication to the non-scientific public.

Dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in the geosciences and the planetary and space sciences, what benefits does the EGU bring to humanity?

Some of the EGU Divisions cover topics that are of great societal importance, such as energy, natural hazards and climate change. Furthermore, many of the EGU General Assembly sessions, sponsored or co-sponsored conference series, topical meetings, training schools and short courses, as well as papers published in EGU journals, tackle such issues, which have significant public impact.

Would you talk us through the main challenges that geosciences tackle and that your researchers face? Are the issues that some of the EGU Divisions investigate being affected by human behaviour or are they just part of the Earth's cycles?

Geoscientists face scientific challenges that can be, to a certain degree, of great interest for the citizens of Europe. I would like to highlight two of the challenges that have been reported in previous issues of this [*International Innovation*] publication: Climate studies have investigated numerous mechanisms and processes for the best knowledge of present changes. While understanding the present realities is one important point, understanding how they relate to past climate variability is the necessary condition to apprehend the future possibilities correctly. The demand on resources and the impact mankind has on the environment today is enormous. The massive input of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere is responsible not only for global warming, but also for an increase in acidity of the oceans. This so-called ocean acidification is probably affecting marine life, but how, and to what extent, is still largely unknown. Moreover, the impact of global warming on ecosystems and possible relationships between vegetation and greenhouse gases are still not fully understood.

Statements made by the EGU are quoted in the media. How are these conclusions reached?

The EGU has issued a few position statements that can be found on the EGU homepage. The aim of these statements is to provide state-of-the-art research regarding a specific topic (at the time the position statement is issued). They can be accompanied by a policy briefing – a short document which provides more information on the topic in question, including possible policy implications.

How does the EGU ensure that science is at the heart of all it does?

The EGU is a bottom-up Union devoted to the promotion of geosciences and to encouraging discussion between scientists. The EGU achieves this through its General Assembly, and by organising, sponsoring or co-sponsoring conference series, topical meetings, training schools and short courses. The Union's core activities also include the publication of a newsletter and several open-access scientific journals, in addition to the previously mentioned outreach activities.

Many institutions are struggling to keep up with the pace of science communication – an essential part of any environment organization today – how vital is it to engage not only the general public but policy makers unfamiliar with the vocabulary researchers use? What activities are you involved in facilitating an increased dialogue between scientists and decision makers?

We are actively working to increase recognition of the EGU, not only among the scientific community, but also among decision makers, the media, and the wider public as an authoritative source of information in the Union's disciplines. For this reason, the EGU has hired a Media and Communications Officer, Bárbara T. Ferreira, to join the EGU Executive Office in Munich. Providing independent scientific expertise to politicians and decision makers is an important part of our communications strategy, one that our media officer will seek to implement in the short term.

Regarding the dissemination of your activities, the EGU is actively engaged in a wide range of undertakings. What other activities, other than those mentioned, is the EGU busy with?

Bárbara T. Ferreira has been actively coordinating media-related scientific communications between the EGU and its membership, the working media, and the public at large. Aside from preparing press releases and taking over the editorship of the EGU newsletter, she increased the activity of EGU on social media platforms such as Twitter ([@EuroGeosciences](#)), Facebook, and Google+. Continuing the work of EGU's first Science Communications Postdoctoral Fellow, Jennifer Holden, Bárbara has also been actively blogging for EGU at [GeoLog](#).

Do the EGU Divisions collaborate internally? What results has this led to?

Yes, since some scientific topics are not specific to one division and may be relevant to several. EGU encourages collaboration between its divisions, as illustrated by the presence of inter-division sessions (sessions co-organized by several EGU divisions) at our General Assembly. Over 170 inter-division sessions have been scheduled at the EGU General Assembly in 2011.

What impact, if any, has the global economic downturn had on the progression of the EGU?

The global economic downturn has had wide-reaching impacts, but EGU activities have not suffered a great deal so far. Annual membership numbers have been relatively constant over the past two



EGU staff ready for a *Weißwurst Frühstück* on Carnival day. From left to right: Edvard Glücksman (Science Communications Fellow), Karen Resenberger (Secretary), Philippe Courtial (Executive Secretary), Robert Barsch (Webmaster & System Admin), and Bárbara Ferreira (Media and Communications Officer).

years (EGU has had about 12,000 and 11,200 members for 2010 and 2011 respectively), and our annual meetings have not demonstrated a decrease in participation (10,463 and 10,725 attendees in 2010 and 2011 respectively). Furthermore, EGU offers free online access to its publications, which is a great deal when budget cuts are affecting some institution libraries.

To what extent does the EGU cooperate internationally? What challenges has this posed, and how has the EGU overcome these?

In addition to the activities mentioned previously, EGU also aims to establish liaisons with other scientific organizations, both within and outside Europe, to mutual benefits. Currently, we have a cooperation with the American Geophysical Union (AGU), the Geological Society of America (GSA), the Asia Oceania Geosciences Society (AOGS), the Japan Geosciences Union (JpGU) and the European Association of Geoscientists & Engineers (EAGE). In 2011, EGU signed a Memorandum of Understanding with AGU and AOGS for further cooperation with these organizations.

Would you like to draw our attention to any other aspect of the EGU's work?

The bottom-up approach of EGU encourages the participation of young scientists in the affairs of the Union, including its General Assembly. For example, EGU actively seeks for young scientists interested in organising sessions during its General Assembly. Merit awards for young scientists at Division and Union levels have also been created (eg. the Arne Richter Outstanding Young Scientists, the Outstanding Young Scientists, the Plinius and the Outstanding Student Poster awards). EGU has also established links with communities of young scientists.

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