



International Year of Planet Earth Second Meeting of the Board

Condensed Minutes

At UNESCO, Bonvin Bldg, 6th Floor, Room B6.19
1, Rue Miollis, 75015 Paris (France)
20 & 21 June 2007

Present: Woodfork Larry (Chair); de Mulder, Eduardo (for van Bracht, Martin and IYPE Secretariat); Hess, Jack (for Wells, Stephen G); Zhang Hongren (21 June); Zhijian Li; Nortcliff, Stephen; Cadet, Jean- Paul; Rubio, Eduardo; Leahy, Patrick; Missotten, Robert; Eder, Wolfgang; Derbyshire, Edward; Toteu, Félix; Dent, David; Nield, Ted; Erdelen, Walter (UNESCO, guest of honour), Patzak, Margarete (UNESCO staff); Hoffmann, Carolyn (UNESCO staff) and Habimana, Cyrien (IYPE Secretariat).

Apologies from absence: van Bracht, Martin; Wells, Stephen G; Zhang Hongren (20 June), Nickless, Edmund; van Impe, William F; Cloetingh, Sierd; Clague, John; Shamir, Uri; and Buttimer, Anne.

1. Welcome

The Chair extended a warm welcome to Board members and observers. He extended special thanks to Robert Missotten and to UNESCO for hosting the meeting, and after a brief tour de table, asked him to introduce the guest of honour Dr. Walter R. Erdelen, the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences.

2. Opening address by Dr. Walter R. Erdelen

On behalf of UNESCO, Dr. Walter R. Erdelen welcomed the participants to the second Board Meeting. In his Opening remarks, Dr. Erdelen reported that the IYPE had worldwide support as shown by IYPE related events already celebrated in India, the U.K. and Japan, events being planned in Africa, Australia and Latin America, and the fact that many countries have created national committees.

He expressed his satisfaction that UN IYPE is celebrated in the context of a series of other international Years: the International Year of Mountains, the International Year of Physics; the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, the International Year of Astronomy, the International Polar Year and the International Geophysical and Heliophysical Years; UNESCO is very happy with the co-ordination and co-operation efforts of these initiatives.

As the IYPE is going to address the main issues faced by our modern society, he expressed his confidence that political momentum is such that the message of the IYPE – science is the key element for development – will be clearly heard and understood and should lead internationally to a reinforcement of interest in the investment in Earth sciences, thus strengthening the resources and scientific personnel addressing the Earth system and its various components.

He concluded by underlining the keen interest and strong support of UNESCO for IYPE and promised full cooperation to make IYPE an outstanding success. He thanked IYPE for having chosen UNESCO as the venue for the opening of the UN IYPE on 12 and 13 February 2008.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The Chair thanked Dr Walter Erdelen for his kind remarks. He reminded Board members that BM2 was an extraordinary meeting resulting from the Board decision in the electronic ballot of March 2007.

4. Implementation Actions BM1

The IYPE Executive Director reported on the completed BM1 and BOY1 actions, and gave an update on pending actions.

5. Corporation and composition of the Board

a. Chair election

EdM reported on concerns within the Board of Officers of the IYPE (BOYs) on the inconvenience caused by the fact that that IYPE Board did not yet have an appointed Chairman. Board members supported the urgency of having the two positions filled before the Launch Event, at least the position of Chairman. It was suggested that a list of names be established during the meeting for later contact.

Zhang Hongren will approach the IUGS community on the existing list of candidates and report back to the Secretariat with the names of other possible candidates.

b. Vice Chair election

Eduardo Rubio was proposed as a candidate for the position of Vice Chair, pending Zhang Hongren's arrival at the meeting. The Secretariat was asked to circulate an electronic ballot to Board members for their confirmation of Eduardo Rubio as IYPE Vice Chair.

c. Other vacancies: Chair of the Development Committee (DC)

The DC Chair is a most important position for the IYPE. The DC needs a person who has good entry and a good network within industry for fundraising objectives.

d. Procedure for appointing candidates for shared seats

EdM raised the case of representation of regional entities and international organisations that share seats on the IYPE Board and that have no guidelines as to how they must select their representatives before the Launch Event in February 2008. EdM will draft guidelines on procedures on how regional entities and international organisations should be selected for shared seats.

e. Evaluation of electronic ballot, mid March

Two electronic ballots will be needed before the next Board meeting. JPC observed that electronic ballots will help run business efficiently given few planned Board meetings and so assist in resolving many urgent decisions that cannot wait for a regular meeting. RM suggested that issues to vote on should be tabled and that Board members should be given choices between electronic ballots or decision by teleconferences.

f. Statutes & Byelaws

i. Statutes

EdM referred to two new sections in the draft amended statutes regarding ceremonial positions of Honorary Chairs. The amendment was approved.

ii: Byelaws

The amendments and text adjustments suggested by EDM were approved. Concerning Article II section A (9) the Board requested another amendment on the length of tenure by the Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected and appointed for the full life of the IYPE.

6. Secretariat

Evaluation period January 1st – June 2007

The IYPE Secretariat is hosted by the Geological Survey of Norway and it functions well despite budgetary problems. EdM informed Board members that the Secretariat's operating budget would be approximately one million euros for the full period 2007-2010, including the 6 months needed to wrap up and to write the UN report. He informed the Board on his efforts to invite Norway based organisations to cover the costs of the Secretariat. Accompanied by the Chair of the Norwegian National IYPE Committee, he had visited both the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Statoil.

7. Fund raising

a. Financial condition of the Corporation and (b) Implementation budget 2007

IYPE had an original ambition to raise 20 million dollars in the triennium. That ambition included the income generated on national levels. The 45 NCs are raising funds mainly from governmental resources but also from industry.

c. Evaluation fund raising Strategy

Fundraising activities are hindered by the absence of the Chair of the Development Committee. EdM reported that the Boston and Hannah Company has been invited to draft a proposal to advertise IYPE through the TV media. EdM informed the Board that four professional fundraisers have been identified.

d. New initiatives

EdM observed that it was important for IYPE to explore new fundraising avenues. Board members suggested that the following fields are worth a try: (1) Mining industry (ICMM Group), (2) Banking industry, (3) Insurance industry, (4) Hydrocarbon extraction industry, (5) Fertilizers industry and (6) Foundations.

8. Outreach programme

a. Composition of OPC and appointment of Vice Chair

Ted Nield gave an update on activities in the Outreach Programme and commented particularly on the following issues:

i. The appointment of an OPC Vice Chair. The Chair moved a motion of approval of the OPC recommendation that Dr. Phillip Manning be appointed to the position of OPC Vice Chair.

ii. The composition of OPC working committees. The OPC is not yet functioning as a committee because the chairman does everything from strategy to preliminary evaluations of EoIs. The Committee requires 10 members chosen according to their background, their networks, their access to media, etc. All Board members were requested to propose relevant candidates fitting OPC requirements to complete the composition of the OPC.

iii. Availability for IYPE activities: In 2007, TN will have only very limited time to devote to IYPE activities.

iv. Expressions of Interest (EoIs): 34 EoIs have been received so far.

b. OPC project Guidelines (examined with item 6a)

c. Evaluation of the Expressions of Interest

34 EoIs had been received by the time of the meeting. The first impression was that some people may not be receiving adequate information from guidelines published on the website. It was suggested that the information available on the Website needed to be improved.

d. IYPE Publications

IYPE had received a grant of 5 000 dollars to reprint one publication that has run out. In addition, 10,000 copies of a new flyer were produced recently. IYPE has already negotiated a contract with Boston & Hannah for the production of the IYPE Book of which 40 000 copies would be available at the Launch Event. **The Board approved EdM's request to sign the negotiated contract with Boston & Hannah.**

e. Launch Event in Paris 12-13 February 2007

EdM informed the Board that, apart from guests, a special invitation will be extended to approximately 350 students (5 per country) and aged 18-22 years from all around the world, based on results of competitions (articles, essays or poems) on "Earth Sciences and Society" to be organized and evaluated by IYPE NCs. Countries that cannot sponsor their students may apply for sponsorship from countries like France which is already committed to support 22 students from developing countries.

f. Other international launch events

EdM informed the meeting that an IYPE launch event for Africa will take place in Arusha (Tanzania) on 22- 23 May 2008. WE reported that according to S. Muhongo, the event intends also to highlight African Geoparks. EdM reported that the Brazil NC is working on a launch event for Latin America, and that he hoped for a comparable event in Asia. EdM invited China to explore the possibility of arranging it. For the USA, JH reported that the USA NC was considering a similar event more likely in the coming northern autumn.

g. Website Portal

EdM reported that the IYPE website has grown over time, and that Canada had withdrawn its financial support to develop the Website Portal. He further reported that the Boston & Hannah Company had offered to develop a Portal with a commercial link. Concerns were raised concerning the possibility that the commercial parts of the website might become too dominant such that they may overshadow the IYPE's material and interests. RM remarked that UNESCO favours a clear divide between the IYPE and the commercial links in the planned Portal, and that any negotiation should take UNESCO's concerns and disclaimer seriously into account.

h. Evaluation of IYPE participation in exhibitions

EdM presented a summary report of past exhibitions featuring IYPE objectives and proposed a list of exhibitions planned for 2007 (IUGG General Assembly in Perugia, UNESCO General Conference in Paris, GSA Annual Meeting in Denver, and AGU Fall Meeting in San Francisco) and those planned in 2008. The Board thanked Werner Janoschek for his contribution.

9. Advisory Groups

a. Senior Advisers & Goodwill Ambassadors and b. Patrons

EdM reported no new name on the list and invited Board members to send in comments and suggestions concerning "head hunting" of reputable people to be added to the list. ER suggested to Board members that interesting candidates be

identified and that their names be forwarded to the Secretariat with a copy to the Chair, but that no commitment should be made to the identified candidates prior to the Board's formal approval.

10. National & Regional Committees

a. State of the Art

EdM gave an update on National and Regional Committees (NC/RC) as per 15 June 2007 and invited Board members to update on newest developments in their respective NCs.

JH reported that the USA had just held its first NC meeting and that another is planned during the GSA Annual Meeting.

ER commented on the establishment of NCs in Peru Brazil, Argentina and Mexico. Most of countries in the region, such as **Cuba**, have enthusiasm but the establishment of national committees is still only under consideration because of lack of funding.

For Africa, FT reported that things have been moving fast. Tanzania, Namibia, Mozambique, and Morocco have operational NCs. Cameroon might sign the MoU within one month and Nigeria, Egypt and Ethiopia are working on establishing NCs. A IYPE launch event is planned for May 2008 in Arusha, Tanzania. The IGU (Africa) conference in Tunis (2008) will also be a good opportunity to raise awareness.

For China, Li Zhijian reported that the China NC has been organized but waits for formal inauguration. The action plan for outreach activities is already in place. Li Zhijian informed that there would certainly be activities related to the Olympic games.

In France, JPC reported that the French NC has the full support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Education. An action plan involving 140 different activities has been prepared and a professional fundraiser has been recruited.

b. Vienna meeting

WE reported on the second Meeting of the IYPE National Committees in Vienna (17 April 2007). He summarized on the situation of NCs in Lithuania, Italy, Korea, The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, Norway, USA, UK, Estonia, Mongolia, Romania, Poland and Latvia. The Board thanked Werner Janoschek for the work done.

EdM informed the meeting that there is a strong need for an NC meeting during the GSA Annual Meeting in Denver (October 2007) probably involving teleconferencing in an attempt to reach as many NCs as possible.

ED, in his capacity as the Chair for the UK NC, informed the Board of his intention to resign from the position of SCP Chair effective no later than 14th Feb 2008 after completion of the UN Global Launch Event at UNESCO in Paris (12-13 Feb.2008).

c. Representation on the Board

d. Strategy for further expansion

EdM suggested that the letter addressed to Secretaries-General of National Commissions for UNESCO by the UNESCO Assistant DG for External Relations and Cooperation be sent to Board members and also posted on the Website.

11. Science programme

a. Composition of Science Implementation Teams

ED reported that the SPC deputy Chair was appointed with the approval of the Board. SITs use electronic communication among themselves and between the respective SIT leaders and the Chair. A motion empowering the SCP Chair to take every appropriate step to accomplish the SCP objectives was approved.

b. SPC project Guidelines

The SPC Chair will draft a form of words for addition to the Expressions of Interest guiding statement on the website indicating that, henceforth, applicants must inform their National Committees of their intention to submit an EoI.

c. Evaluation of the Expressions of Interest

The SCP Chair reported that, by the date of the meeting, he had received 35 EoIs, about half of which were considered as good while 10% were rejected for various reasons. He reported further that the current SPC allocated budget could not sustain all the good projects even at the 'seed money' level. He remarked that quite a few EoIs could be good proposals for collaboration with the IGCP.

d. Project funding

The SPC Chair reported that IYPE had no money to sponsor even the most attractive EoIs, and suggested that UNESCO would consider opening the doors of the IGCP funding mechanism for such projects. RM suggested that when communicating with the science community like IGCP, ICDP, ILP, One Geology, etc., the SPC Chair could present such projects or ask about the possibility of labelling (badging) some of these projects under the IYPE.

A motion to allocate 13 500 dollars of the SPC allocated budget to organize a meeting for all SIT leaders in September 2007 was approved.

e. Involvement in IGC33 (pre-circulated DOC BM2-21)

EdM reported that IGC33 had approved in principle a MoU on the participation of IYPE in the IGC33. RM remarked that the MoU was an important step for the IYPE's visibility during IGC33. The SCP Chair reported that the IGC33 scientific programme is already linked with the IYPE.

f. Involvement in GSA, IUGG, IGU and other congresses

GSA: Geological mapping sessions at the GSA in Denver are planned. JH informed the meeting that the three next GSA Annual meetings will address all ten IYPE themes, and no MoU is needed for that.

IUGG: EdM reported that the IYPE has taken steps to present an exhibition at the forthcoming IUGG General Assembly (jointly with IUGS, CGMW and IGC) in Perugia (Italy) in July 2007.

IGU: EdM said that the IGU Congress in Tunis in 2008 scheduled just before IGC33 might not permit full IYPE involvement in the former meeting. IYPE was invited to perform during the IGU Tunis event. IYPE will develop a strategy on how to be as visible as possible.

12. Relation with concurrent initiatives

a. International Polar Year (IPY)

EdM and RM attended the official launch of the IPY on 1st March 2007. IPY will reciprocate during the IYPE Global Launch Event.

b. International Heliophysical Year (IHY)

Goodwill Ambassador Werner Janoschek and EdM attended the IHY opening in Vienna, in February.

c. electronic Geophysical Year (eGY)

eGY is an IUGG initiative and will be highlighted in Perugia (Italy). EdM presented a paper at a joint meeting at AGU in Accapulco (Mexico) responding to an invitation extended through the IYPE Mexico NC. RM reported that he sensed that Thomas Rosswall (ICSU) was doubtful about the success of any collaborative relationship between IGBP and IYPE.

d. Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS)

EdM reported that he had initiated, together with ED, a process by which to connect with GEOSS. GEOSS will be invited to attend the IYPE launch event. RM drew attention to the GEOSS planned Ministerial Summit of the Earth Observation for Sustainable Growth and Development in November 2007 in Cape Town, South Africa, and asked if IYPE might consider planning an exhibition. He also mentioned a GEO/GEOSS planned meeting on geohazards in Frascati (Italy) on 7th November 2007. GEOSS will sponsor participants from developing countries.

13. Legacy of the IYPE

EdM observed that the IYPE is already half way into the first year of its triennium, and that it is about time to think about what the IYPE will leave behind on an international level. He hoped that the IYPE legacy would include 10 IYPE books on the science themes but not all of these will be ready by the end of the IYPE triennium in 2010. These books might also be used for the IUGS 50th Anniversary in 2011.

Activities such as the production of a subterranean digital geological map of the world at a scale of 1:1 000 000 by OneGeology, the Paris Declaration (to be signed by the UNESCO DG during the launch event) on how decision-makers should use geosciences, the IYPE Report to UN General Assembly, etc. will also be credited to the IYPE.

RM reported that the UNESCO General Conference in 2009 will also demand a report on IYPE implementation. WE suggested that the IYPE should collaborate with other geoscientific organisations in order to increase outreach to students, trainers of trainers, thereby learning from the Norwegian NC experience.

RM remarked that the UN had a Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2006-2015) and that the Geoparks programme can also be used as vehicles to enhance the IYPE legacy.

Board members will suggest ideas and Secretariat to compile a list of items on IYPE legacy and circulate it among all Board members for additional suggestions.

14. Any Other Business.

a. Letters of Appointment to the Board

Appropriate modifications were suggested and approved.

b. Next Board meeting

The next Board meeting (BM3) will take place on 14-15 February 2008 at UNESCO in Paris, after the IYPE launch event. A meeting of National Committees is also scheduled around that period.

c. AGI Role during IYPE launch event

The AGI Chair is expected to play a role, and all AGI associated members are encouraged to attend the event.

15. Closure

The Chair thanked UNESCO and the staff for hosting the meeting; he extended thanks to Board members for their lively participation and discussions that helped to push the IYPE agenda forward. The meeting was closed at 17:40 GMT.

Cyprien Habimana
25 July 2007