

# IGU REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN KYOTO (AUGUST 4–9, 2013)

In the period between International Geographical Congresses in Cologne (2012) and Beijing (2016) Regional Conferences are held each year. They are destined, firstly, to integrate geographical communities of different macro-regions of the world and, second, to strengthen the contacts between IGU sub-disciplinary and problem commissions. The Regional Conference in Kyoto was the first of this series. It was the major and rather successful event in IGU activity this year. The Conference gathered 1431 participants from 61 countries – more than the organizers originally expected. About 600 participants represented Japan – the country which hosted the conference, and the others came from different parts of the world. A great number of them were from the Asian-Pacific region, which justifies the very idea of regional conferences. The days spent by the participants in the ancient Japanese capital were filled with an intense and rich dialogue – between geographical sub-disciplines, human and physical geography, geography and other sciences, between researchers and practitioners, between different generations of geographers, East and West, North and South.

The Conference's motto was "*Traditional Wisdom and Modern Knowledge*". The scientific program included the sessions organized by 39 of the 40 IGU Commissions as well as meetings held on the initiative of separate groups, key lectures and special sessions devoted to the perspectives of our Union and to the main IGU interdisciplinary projects (*International Year of Global Understanding* and *Our Sustainable Cities*). In particular, the audience enjoyed the key lectures by Professors Sarah Radcliffe from the University of Cambridge (UK) entitled "Plural Knowledges and Modernity: Social Difference and Geographical Explanations",

Paul Robbins from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (USA) on the political ethics in environmental issues and Jean-Robert Pitte from the University of Paris-IV (France) on the role of human geography in global forecasts. Professors Kenji Satake, Itsuki Nakabayashi and Mikiko Ishikawa (Japan) offered three key lectures at the special plenary session devoted to the reasons, the consequences and the lessons of the 2011 East Japan earthquake disaster. They stopped also on spatial planning issue and the restoration of the regions which suffered from this disaster.

The Conference proved again how important it is to build joint projects and to develop cooperation within and between IGU Commissions. As Claude Bernard once said, "Art means "I", Science means "We". So, in coming together at such large conferences, the global geographical community becomes stronger, and realizes how important and influential it can and should be.

The Conference showed that IGU, facing new challenges, was able to find new directions and forms of activity. I refer to new ideas approved at the meeting of Commissions' Chairs and the IGU Executive, the initiatives concerning a broader involvement of young scholars, particularly through the contacts with the association of Young Earth Scientists (YES), the preparation of the extraordinary International Geographical Congress on the occasion of the IGU centennial in 2022, the relations with ICSU, ISSC and other global scientific organizations. New national geographical communities which have recently applied for membership in IGU or updated it were welcome.

The Conference marked a step in the promotion of geographical education in both secondary schools and universities. In

many countries we observe an attempt to replace geography by “synthetic” courses of natural or social disciplines or simply to remove it from school curricula altogether. The declaration signed by IGU, Eugeo and Eurogeo in early September in Rome is a direct result of our meetings in Kyoto.

I particularly appreciated the special session on the status of geographical journals, the issues of their ranking and open access. There is a pressing need to improve the ways in which the output of scientific research is evaluated by funding agencies, academic institutions, and other parties. The presentation by Professors Christian Vandermotten, Mike Meadows and Ton Dietz at this session demonstrated that the abuse of citation indices and of journals impact factor those who evaluate our activity is a serious threat to the future of geographical departments and can undermine the personal careers of many scholars. Using calculation based on the geographical journals' data bases compiled by IGU and by the journal *Belgŭo*, the authors showed that this index strongly discriminated publications in national languages (non-English), in the field of geography as a whole and particularly in human geography, and on regional issues. It was agreed that IGU should endorse the *San Francisco*

*Declaration on Research Assessment* ([www.homeofgeography.org/news2013/June](http://www.homeofgeography.org/news2013/June)) and that IGU should develop recommendations on the matter to national research and education governmental institutions.

IGU and the Local Organizing Committee paid special attention to supporting young researchers: they set for them a low registration fee and distributed a number of travel grants. The authors of the best poster presentations by young researchers were awarded during the closing ceremony. The special exhibition “Traditional Wisdom and Modern Knowledge presented in Maps” was held in honor of the IGU Kyoto Regional Conference at the Kyoto University famous for its excellent collection of old maps. Tea masters from *Urasenke*, the largest traditional tea ceremony school, presided over authentic tea ceremonies.

Finally, the Conference in Kyoto was so successful due to the exemplary work of its Local Organizing Committee. We all noticed the rapid and efficient registration facilities, the tireless work of volunteers, always active and helpful, a user friendly program handbook, a memorable opening ceremony and many more highlights.

**Vladimir A. Kolossov**

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS CONTRIBUTING TO “GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY”

## AIMS AND SCOPE OF THE JOURNAL

The scientific English language journal “GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY” aims at informing and covering the results of research and global achievements in the sphere of geography, environmental conservation and sustainable development in the changing world. Publications of the journal are aimed at foreign and Russian scientists – geographers, ecologists, specialists in environmental conservation, natural resource use, education for sustainable development, GIS technology, cartography, social and political geography etc. Publications that are interdisciplinary, theoretical and methodological are particularly welcome, as well as those dealing with field studies in the sphere of environmental science.

Among the main thematic sections of the journal there are basics of geography and environmental science; fundamentals of sustainable development; environmental management; environment and natural resources; human (economic and social) geography; global and regional environmental and climate change; environmental regional planning; sustainable regional development; applied geographical and environmental studies; geoinformatics and environmental mapping; oil and gas exploration and environmental problems; nature conservation and biodiversity; environment and health; education for sustainable development.

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2. Papers are accepted in English. Either British or American English spelling and punctuation may be used. Papers in French are accepted under the decision of the Editorial Board.
3. All authors of an article are asked to indicate their **names** (with one forename in full for each author, other forenames being given as initials followed by the surname) and the name and full postal address (including postal code) of the **establishment(s)** where the work was done. If there is more than one institution involved in the work, authors' names should be linked to the appropriate institutions by the use of 1, 2, 3 etc superscript. **Telephone and fax numbers and e-mail addresses** of the authors could be published as well. One author should be identified as a **Corresponding Author**. The e-mail address of the corresponding author will be published, unless requested otherwise.
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3. The **main body** of the paper should be divided into: (a) **introduction**; (b) **materials and methods**; (c) **results**; (d) **discussion**; (e) **conclusion**; (f) **acknowledgements**; (g) **numbered references**. It is often an advantage to combine (c) and (d) with gains of conciseness and clarity. The next-level subdivisions are possible for (c) and (d) sections or their combination.
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## MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

Authors are encouraged to submit their manuscripts electronically. Electronic submissions should be sent as e-mail attachments to [GESJournal@yandex.ru](mailto:GESJournal@yandex.ru)

ISSN 2071-9388

# SOCIALLY SCIENTIFIC MAGAZINE "GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY"

No. 04(v. 06) 2013

**FOUNDERS OF THE MAGAZINE:** Faculty of Geography, Lomonosov Moscow State University and Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences

The magazine is published with financial support of the Russian Geographical Society.

The magazine is registered in Federal service on supervision of observance of the legislation in sphere of mass communications and protection of a cultural heritage. The certificate of registration: ПИ МФС77-29285, 2007, August 30.

## EDITORIAL OFFICE

Lomonosov Moscow State University  
Moscow 119991 Russia  
Leninskie Gory,  
Faculty of Geography, 2108a  
Phone 7-495-9392923  
Fax 7-495-9328836  
E-mail: GESJournal@yandex.ru

## DESIGN & PRINTING

Advertising and Publishing Agency "Advanced Solutions"  
Moscow 119071 Russia  
Leninskiy prospekt, 19, 1  
Phone 7-495-7703659  
Fax 7-495-7703660  
E-mail: om@aov.ru

## DISTRIBUTION

East View Information Services  
10601 Wayzata Blvd, Minneapolis, MN 55305-1526 USA  
Phone +1.952.252.1201 Fax +1.952.252.1202  
E-mail: periodicals@eastview.com  
www.eastview.com

Sent into print 16.12.2013  
Order N gi413

Format 70 × 100 cm/16  
8.78 p. sh.  
Digital print  
Circulation 600 ex.