

Newsletter



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Status of Geoscience Information in Africa Workshop



The International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) Executive Committee (EC) held their 2024 EC meeting in February 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya, as part of IUGS efforts to ensure

awareness of and alignment with exciting geoscience leadership and innovation in Africa. Following the EC meeting, a two-day Geoscience in Africa workshop was held, featuring informative and inspiring presentations on African geoscience. The workshop outcome was distilled as the IUGS Ten-point Action Plan for Africa (TAP for Africa).



To fulfil the geoscience information aspects of the plan, Prof Jennifer McKinley, Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and IUGS Executive Committee Councilor from 2020-2024, arranged for a

workshop to occur, in collaboration with the Geological Society of Africa (GSAf), partnered with Queen's University Belfast, and cohosted by CGI. The result was the hybrid 'Status of Geoscience Information in Africa' workshop, 11-13th February 2025 in Riddel Hall, Queen's University Belfast, UK.

In collaboration with Prof Olugbenga Okunlola, President of the Geological Society of Africa (GSAf), the workshop was convened on behalf of the IUGS Geodata working group by Mrs Anna



Nguno, Vice-President Geological Society of Africa (GSAf), for Southern Africa, IUGS Nomination Committee (2020-2024), and past CGI Councilor; Dr Lesego Ramaabya, Botswana

Geoscience Institute (BGI), Lobatse, Botswana and CGI Councilor; Mr Data Gabriel, Geological Survey of Uganda; Prof Jennifer McKinley, Queen's University Belfast, IUGS Councilor Executive Committee (2020-2024); Mr Patrick Moss, QUB; Prof Harvey Thorleifson, CGI Chair; and Ms Kombada Mhopjeni, National Programme Officer Windhoek, Natural sciences, UNESCO and past CGI Co-Secretary General.



The aim of the workshop was to synthesize our current understanding of this field, to support coming actions by Africa-based colleagues. The workshop over 3 days included 31

presentations, starting with welcomes by Prof John Ludden, IUGS President 2020-2024, on behalf of Prof Hassina Mouri, IUGS President 2024-2028; Prof Olugbenga Okunlola, GSAf President; and Dr Rokhaya Samba and Mr Gabriel Data, Organization of the African Geological Surveys (OAGS).

Presentations highlighting the priorities for African Geological Surveys were presented for Nigeria, Namibia, Senegal, Cape Verde, Gambia, Zambia, Uganda, Botswana, and Kenya.



Collaborative international activities were presented by UNESCO in Africa and Global Geoparks, British Geological Survey (BGS), BGRM, Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI), the IUGS Initiative on Forensic Geology (IFG), the International Medical Geology Association (IMGA), PanAfGeo, and Amira Global.



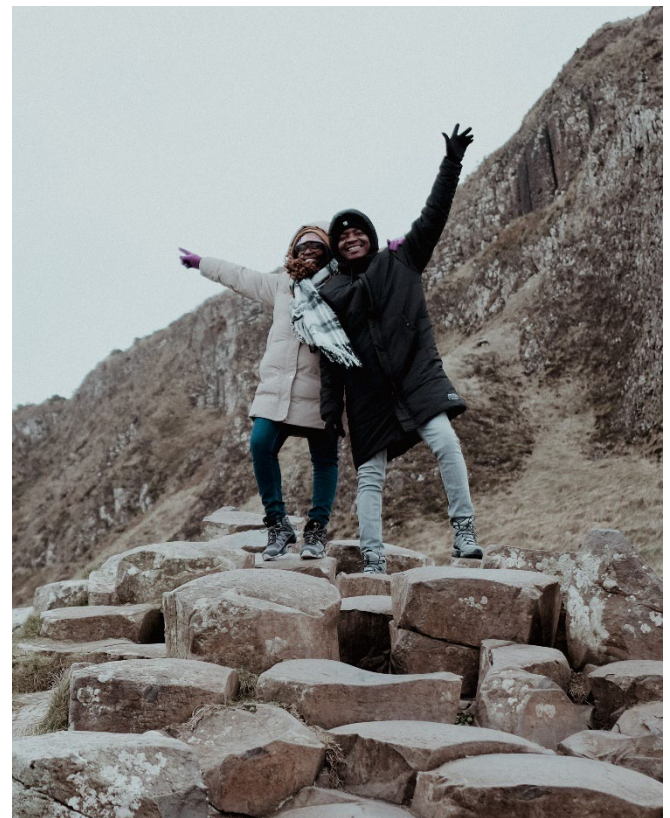
The objectives of the activity include:

- Synthesize the status of geoscience information and current understanding of this field supporting the IUGS Ten Action Plan for Africa (TAP for Africa)
- Develop a framework for collaboration to assess Geoscience Information in Africa with key stakeholders like Geological Surveys, GSAf, and OAGS
- Advance Pan-African collaboration to optimize



geoscientific information, FAIR data, aligned with African priorities, existing platforms and sustainable resource use

- Facilitate Pan-African dialogue on integrated geoinformation to address environmental challenges and support the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Promote open Pan-African dialogue on accessible geoscience data to support education, outreach in social economic transformation, decarbonization and energy resources and sustainable mineral resources.



The benefits and impacts include:

- A co-designed online platform to optimize geoscientific information, FAIR data, aligned to African priorities and existing platforms with a focus on sustainability of African resources. Work is ongoing
- Discussion on the need for up-to-date, integrated geodata to help address environmental challenges
- Discussion on geoscience information as a driver for education, socio-economic transformation, decarbonization, and sustainable mineral resources

- Resilience building of energy systems in Africa
- Increased collaboration between geoscientists across Africa



The workshop was funded by the QUB International Strategic Partnerships Fund Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) Funding, and by CGI.

In addition to continuing discussions, key outcomes from the workshop include workshop proceedings, and presentations at the May 2025 Geoscience Information Consortium (GIC) meetings in Denmark, and at the Colloquium of African Geology (CAG30), September 2025, Nairobi, Kenya. A synthesis paper is in preparation, as is a thematic article collection for the new open access Taylor and Francis Journal, Critical Insights in Climate Change.

Discussions between CGI, DDE, and the EU Project PanAfGeo are focused on using the Status of Geoscience Information Workshop and associated collaboration as an exemplar for future collaborative activity.

This has been a great success!

2025 Ian McHarg Medalist, Lesley Wyborn



Our friend and colleague Lesley Wyborn has received the 2025 EGU McHarg Medal for leadership through many roles in international earth science data infrastructure. She is respected, admired, and appreciated by all for her immense contributions to Australian geoscience and to international geoinformatics and geoscience research. In geoinformatics, she has focused on improving online access to earth and environmental data sets, and in building them into syntheses that facilitate their use. She also has contributed immensely to rescuing legacy data that extend the factual record of longitudinal data collections. She received her Bachelor's degree in geology from University of Sydney in 1971, her Diploma in Education from University of Canberra in 1972, and her PhD in geochemistry from Australian National University in 1977. She has served professionally in the Australian public geoscience sector since 1972.

Congratulations, Lesley!