

IAS

NEWSLETTER

N°154 February 1998

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HEIDELBERG IMPRESSIONS

REPORT ON THE 18TH IAS REGIONAL EUROPEAN MEETING

In early September 1997, Heidelberg hosted the 18th IAS Regional European Meeting of Sedimentology. The meeting was really a big one: as Thilo Bechstädt, the Chief Organizer, noted, with about 550 participants it was the biggest IAS regional meeting so far. I have the pleasure here to accept André Strasser's invitation to write a "personal, informal account" of the meeting. Therefore, the following paragraphs are far from a balanced, objective summary of the meeting: it is a mixture of observations, impressions, and, I hope, inspirations for other meetings.

Firstly, Heidelberg was a good meeting. It is difficult to list all the ingredients which contributed to its success. Aside from the organization which was close to perfection, and the diverse scientific programme, it was the beautiful city which at the same time is ancient and youthful (more than 20 % of its population are students), situated in a spectacular landscape of the Rhinegraben rift flank, and the campus which offered a very suitable environment in terms of lecture halls and all other facilities close together and highly practical.

Among the 20 technical sessions there were three special symposia: "Pangea", organized in conjunction with GSGP Pangea programme, South Atlantic Mesozoic correlations

(a meeting of IGCP Project 381), and the 2nd European Meeting on the Paleontology and Stratigraphy of South America. Although I heard comments that pure paleontology and biostratigraphy shouldn't have been included in a sedimentology meeting, I think the possibility of informal interaction was useful for both sides (actually, some paleontologists were doing well at the Sequence stratigraphy short course...). The number of participants from South America contributed to the flavour of the meeting which far exceeded European regional dimensions. The selection of field trips was very wide, as well as their regional focus.

There was one thing which I think didn't work as perfectly as it could. It was the large number of parallel sessions, with a high degree of topical overlap: many contributions could actually have belonged equally to either the Tectonics and Eustasy session, the Clastic Sequence Stratigraphy and Basin History, or the Computer Modelling sessions. Similar overlaps existed among some of the carbonate-oriented sessions. This, of course, is always a question of balance: the number of interesting abstracts dealing with deep marine clastics actually necessitated the opening of a topical session that was not included in the original plans.

The meeting offered a feast of carbonate sedimentology: there were five different sessions dealing especially with carbonates. The rift between the clastic and carbonate worlds seems to be still widening, and Heidelberg is not the only meeting at which this became apparent. No matter how natural this is, I believe that at some of the future meetings it would be worth trying to put, say, the carbonate and clastic sequence stratigraphers together in one session. And I am sure it will be worthwhile to systematically include the computer modellers into "non-modelling" sessions, to prevent establishing even more gaps among specialized fields.

Clearly, with the number of participants as large as in Heidelberg, some parallel sessions were inevitable. However, a welcome reduction of the number of sessions can be achieved if their themes are clearly defined, without much overlap, and, most importantly, if the invited organizers of the sessions get much more rigorous about which contribution is actually suitable as a talk, and which could adequately spread its message as a poster.

Another thing which I recall as very positive was the financial support by the DFG (German Research Foundation), and by the industry (Shell, Heidelberger Zement), which helped to reduce fees for scientists from the post-Communist countries of Eastern Europe. This support, focused mostly on established scien-

tists, was highly appreciated. As someone well familiar with the situation in that part of Europe, I would suggest that at future European Regional Meetings, even more emphasis be put on the support for East European students - for instance, a significant reduction of the short course fees for them would greatly boost the educational side of the IAS mission. Indeed, each of the few students from Eastern Europe who attended the short courses in Heidelberg (even with the student fees, it wasn't easy for them to afford), told me that the courses were equally important as the meeting itself - to many their courses were the best part of the meeting.

Last, but not least - the social events. They are so important for the personal impression of the spirit of any meeting - and to many participants, myself included, the icebreaker was one of the best they have ever attended. Apart from excellent food, wine, music, and, yes, beer which received high marks even from the picky Czechs, the recipe was probably rather simple: let just people sit down at tables and chat. Compared to those icebreakers where you get lost among chaotic masses of people standing or wandering around, with conversation regularly interrupted by removing your salad from someone else's jacket, and from which you don't remember much more than your sore feet, the one in Heidelberg was just a beautiful, relaxed evening which everyone enjoyed. The same applies for the

conference dinner at the end of the meeting. And, of course, then there was the romantical old Heidelberg itself.

What else to say in closing, than many thanks to Thilo Bechstädt and his team for a great meeting!

*David Ulicny,
Prague.*

E *Environmental*
S *Sedimentology*
 IAS · SEPM

MEETING on 
ENVIRONMENTAL
SEDIMENTOLOGY

Venice, Italy · 27-29 October, 1997

ENVIRONMENTAL SEDIMENTOLOGY IN THE COASTAL ZONE:

FLUVIAL PROCESSES, SEA-LEVEL CHANGES, COASTAL EROSION, SEA-FLOOR INSTABILITY, AND POLLUTION

The First IAS / SEPM Meeting on Environmental Sedimentology was held in Venice, Italy, on October 27 to 29, 1997. It was co-sponsored by the Italian Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR). The Meeting focused on the coastal zone which is influenced by fluvial processes, relative sea-level changes, coastal erosion, sea-floor instability, and pollution. In five specialized workshops and in plenary sessions the state-of-the-art in research and implementation were presented, and future needs were discussed. Although each workshop defined specific research needs for its own field, many objectives revealed to be in common. Furthermore, these objectives not only concern the coastal zone, but Environmental Sedimentology (and Geology) in general. As the human pressure on the

natural environment increases and natural hazards become more frequent, Environmental Sedimentology plays an ever more important role in the evaluation and mitigation of environmental problems and conflicts.

Key points of agreement were:

Education: Students must be prepared for research and jobs in Environmental Sedimentology. Their curriculum must of course include basic science and basic geology, but should also be relevant to actual environmental problems where sedimentological research can find an answer. On the other hand, Sedimentology should be taught to engineers, land planners, and other professionals concerned with environmental issues.

Research: There is a great need for more detailed data in a narrower framework of space and time. High-resolution monitoring of sedimentological and geochemical processes is necessary in order to quantify and model future developments, and in order to recommend the correct measures to be taken. Interdisciplinary research is important to make the best use of the existing technology and methodology, and in order to develop new research directions. Good research can greatly improve the quality of the natural environment and human life, and, in many cases, also save money on the longer term.

Communication with related environmental sciences, planners and managers, members of industry, policy and decision makers, and the general public must be improved.

Funding will increasingly be related to remediation projects and impact studies. Remediation of Venice Lagoon is a good example of a multidisciplinary project that involves sedimentologists and sedimentary geologists.

Promotion: Environmental Sedimentology offers much expertise,

but is not yet well known as an important sub-discipline of Geology which deals with man-induced processes and their impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Scientists, policy makers, and the general public must be better informed of the extent to which Environmental Sedimentology is relevant.

Outlook: IAS and SEPM will establish a Committee on Environmental Sedimentology which will define priorities and strategies concerning the above-mentioned issues. Follow-up meetings on Environmental Sedimentology will be organized.

A detailed report on the Meeting is being prepared by André Strasser, Paolo Billi, Albina Colella, Brent Miyazaki, Ken Pye, Fabio Trincardi, and Maurizio Bonardi. It will be distributed with the next issue of *Sedimentology* in April 1998.

*André Strasser,
General Secretary.*

SECOND MEETING OF AUSTRIAN SEDIMENTOLOGISTS

On November 8, 1997, Austrian sedimentologists held their second national meeting in Seewalchen near Lake Attersee. Organized by Reinhard F. Sachsenhofer and Hans-Jürgen Gawlick (Mining University of Leoben) the meeting attracted some 30 attendants from Geosciences Departments at the Universities of Vienna, Leoben, Graz and Innsbruck plus a few representatives from the Austrian Geological Survey. It was particularly good to see a high percentage of graduate and Ph.D. students presenting their work. A total of 19 talks including four presentations of future research projects were given during the one-day session. Talks focused on recent and ongoing research in various sedimentary basins of Austria, Italy, Slovenia and Turkey. The abundance of detailed facies and paleobiological studies of Tertiary sediments relative to studies devoted to Mesozoic and older rocks (e.g., of the Northern Calcareous Alps) reflects one of the current trends in Austria's geoscience research. Topics also discussed at the meeting included preliminary plans to re-examine and revise lithostratigraphic reference sections, particularly for the Mesozoic of the

Austrian Alps in the frame of a concerted initiative.

The idea for such an annual meeting was born in early 1996 by a group of IAS members. The philosophy of the meeting is threefold: (a) provide an informal, workshop-type forum to discuss recent advances in sedimentary research in Austria with special emphasis on research conducted by students, (b) meet at a non-academic rural location geographically central within Austria so that the meeting requires no overnight stays, and (c) keep the organizational load and costs at an absolute minimum. The past two meetings demonstrated that this is a successful concept and it was generally agreed among the participants that these meetings have already improved communication and stimulated collaboration within the sedimentary community here in Austria.

Seewalchen will also be the location for the next annual meeting to be held in November 1998. Michael Wagreich (University of Vienna) will be the main organizer.

*Christoph Spötl,
Univ. of Innsbruck,
Austria.*

THANK YOU DONORS

The announcement of Czech universities in need of sedimentological literature, in the "Second-hand Bookshop" in the IAS Newsletter early in 1996, attracted offers of books and journals from much more colleagues than expected. I would like to express our sincere thanks to all those who donated (or offered) sedimentological literature to university libraries in the Czech Republic:

Martin Kühn,
Gérard Fries,
Robert Rosé,
Hermann Homann,
Earle F. McBride.

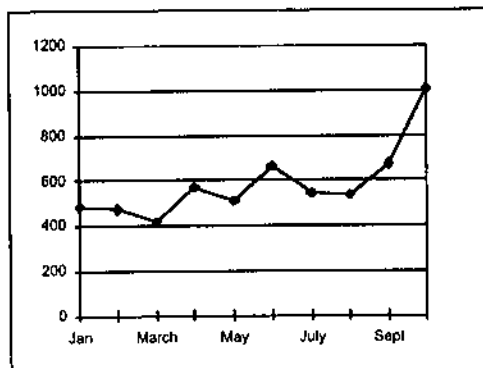
We took almost all of the offers, except for one case when our libraries already were in possession of most of the titles. The books and journals significantly helped to fill gaps in the geology libraries of the Charles University, Prague, and the Masaryk University, Brno.

We thank also the sponsors of the IAS Friendship Scheme for supporting two new Friendship Scheme recipients, students Jiri Laurin and Petr Spacek, in 1996.

*David Ulicny,
IAS Nat. Correspondent,
Czech Republic.*

IAS WEB REPORT TO END OCTOBER 1997

<http://www.blackwell-science.com/uk/society/ias>



This graph shows the number of accesses overall during the period January to end October. Previously, statistics have been based on the top 100 pages accessed on the BSL server. The new statistics include all hits.

The site underwent a dramatic change in October which is emphasized by the increased number of accesses during this month. The new look should hopefully encourage more users as it is aesthetically more pleasing and easier to navigate.

Below is a breakdown of the statistics for the months of September and October 1997. These statistics are meant only as a guide. No accurate data can be drawn from them as they are based on how a user navigates the site. The only guaranteed way of collating useful statistics would be to set up a registration form which may be something worth considering in the future.

The "various" category includes newsletter articles and the special and forthcoming publications pages.

September		
File Ref	Page	Hits
default	Main	180
various	Newsletter Articles	128
meetias	Meetings	103
books	Books	74
links	Links to other sites	45
membias	Member Info	36
nwsletter	Main newsletter	33
journals	Journals	30
iasdo	IAS General Info	24
bureauia	Bureau	19
Total		672

October		
File Ref	Page	Hits
default/map	Main	384
various	Newsletter Articles	156
meetias	Meetings	124
books	Books	79
links	Links to other sites	60
membias	Member Info	57
journals	Journals	48
iasdo	IAS General Info	38
nwsletter	Main newsletter	30
bureauia	Bureau	30
Total		1006

*Trina Tincello,
Blackwell, Oxford, U.K.*

STRATA AND SEQUENCES ON SHELVES AND SLOPES

An SEPM-IAS Research Conference is being convened to bring together leading sedimentologists, oceanographers and modelers from North America, Europe and elsewhere. The objective of the conference is to foster the exchange of emerging scientific findings on the origin of marine stratification and the evolution of strata into sequences that record changing sea levels and sediment sources. The group will address measurement of sedimentation on continental shelves and slopes at seasonal to decadal scales, and the longer term (century to millennia) evolution of landscape morphology, sediment failures, unconformities, and sediment sequences.

Over the past ten years a number of research conferences and symposia have addressed the concepts and application of sequence stratigraphy. Likewise, a number of separate sessions have been held to discuss the mechanics of sediment transport and resulting facies in the coastal ocean. This proposed research conference is unique in that it will bring together researchers investigating how strata are formed by storms, floods, slope failure, and bioturbation, with those examining how strata are packaged through time to form diagnostic sequences. The goal is improved understanding of how sediment sequences - from high stand through low-stand to

transgressive - develop their characteristic geometry, bedding, internal and bounding surfaces, and other parameters which are widely recognized to be indicative of environmental conditions during formation. Additionally, recent advances in numerical modeling of sediment transport, storm bed formation and preservation, river plume fall-out, sea-level fluctuations, and subsidence are all providing critical new information to ongoing studies. This research conference will provide one of the first opportunities for exchange of ideas between scientists from North America, Europe, and elsewhere on the over-arching concepts that guide our understanding of complete shelf and slope evolution from events to sequences. The conference will also provide for important and timely discussions of field sedimentologists and marine geologists with the growing number of colleagues involved in computer simulations.

The primary focus will be ten provocative key-note presentations by selected experts on state-of-the-art concepts and results, followed by presentations of active research in a poster format, with time provided for brief (5 minutes each) oral summaries of poster highlights. At least one day is scheduled in the field to examine and discuss illustrative exposures of Neogene-Quaternary shelf-to-slope facies.

The key note presentations and posters will address the latest findings on high-resolution sequence stratigraphy, fifth-order cycles, and quantitative measurements of the formation of lamina and strata by stream discharge, wave resuspension events, slope failure, and other active processes on Quaternary continental shelves and slopes. The emphasis of the research conference is on siliciclastic deposition on modern temperate shelves and slopes. We will also encourage researchers to attend who wish to present broad discussions of the key issues of formation of strata and their evolution into sequences from high- and low-latitude, carbonate, and ancient margins.

The conference will be held at the Hotel Torre Normanna, Sicily, September 15 to 19, 1998.

Abstracts of 250 words in length should be submitted by February 20, 1998 via e-mail to: stratcon@octopus.wr.usgs.gov

Notification of acceptance will be in early March, and registration in April.

Convenors:

Michael E. Field, U.S.G.S., Menlo Park CA, U.S.A.
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Serge Berne, IFREMER, Brest, France.
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Charles A. Nittrouer, SUNY, Stonybrook, U.S.A.
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Fabio Trincardi, I.G.M., Bologna, Italy.
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Albina Colella, University of Catania, Catania, Italy.
(al.colella@agora.stm.it)

*Serge Berne,
IFREMER, Plouzane,
France.*

CALENDAR

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COAL SEAM GAS AND OIL

March 24-26, 1998

AUSTRALIA (Brisbane)

Contact: The International Conference on
Coal Seam Gas and Oil, Intermedia
Convention and Event Management,
PO Box 1280, Milton QLD 4064, Australia.
Tel: +617 3369 0477
Fax: +617 3369 1512
E-mail: csgo98@im.com.au

SECOND INTERNATIONAL BIOEROSION WORKSHOP

March 30 - April 3, 1998.

U.S.A. (Fort Pierce, Florida)

Contact: Dr. Debra Krumm, Harbor Branch
Oceanographic Museum, 5600 U.S. 1
North, Fort Pierce, FL 34946, U.S.A.
Tel: +1 561 465 2400, Ext: 428
Fax: +1 561 465 5743
E-mail: krumm@hboi.edu

15TH INTERNATIONAL SEDIMENTOLOGICAL CONGRESS

April 13-17, 1998

SPAIN (Alicante)

Contact: 15th ISC, Dep. de Ciencias de la
Tierra y Medio Ambiente, Facultad de
Ciencias, Universidad de Alicante, Ap. 99,
03080 Alicante, Spain.
Tel: +34 65 90 35 52
Fax: +34 65 90 35 52 / 3727
E-mail: ctierra@vm.cpd.ua.es
or ana.martinez@ua.es

PRE-VARISCAN TERRANE ANALYSIS OF GONDWANAN EUROPE

April 29 - May 4, 1998

GERMANY (Dresden)

Contact: Bernd D. Erdtmann, TU Berlin,
Institut für Angewandte Geologie II, Ernst-
Reuther-Platz 1, Sekr. EB 10, D-10587
Berlin, Germany.
Tel: +49 30 314 23582
Fax: +49 30 314 21107
E-mail: erdt0936@mailszrz.zrz.tu-berlin.de

or

Ulf Linnemann, Staatliches Museum für
Mineralogie und Geologie Dresden,
Augustusstr. 2, D-01067 Dresden,
Germany.

Tel: +49 351 4952446

Fax: +49 351 4952468

E-mail mmg@sik.de

LEARNING FROM THE PAST: GLOBAL PALEOCLIMATIC CHANGES

May 18-21, 1998

JORDAN (Irbid)

Contact: Ali Jawad Ali, Faculty of Science,
Yarmouk University, Irbid, Hashemite
Kingdom of Jordan.

Tel: +962 2 27 11 00

Fax: +962 2 24 79 83 or +962 2 27 47 25

E-mail: ajawad@yucc.yu.edu.jo

PROGRESSIVE PALAEOONTOLOGY '98

May 27, 1998

UNITED KINGDOM (Plymouth)

Contact: Gary Aillud or Mark Hylton
Dept. of Geological Sciences, University
of Plymouth, Drakes Circus, Plymouth,
PL4 8AA, U.K.

Tel: +44 1 752 23 31 10

Fax: +44 1 752 23 31 17

E-mail: gailud@plymouth.ac.uk
or mhylton@plymouth.ac.uk

**RECOGNITION OF ABRUPT
CLIMATE CHANGE IN CLASTIC
SEDIMENTARY ENVIRONMENTS:
METHODS, LIMITATIONS AND
POTENTIAL**

June 8-10, 1998

SWEDEN (Stockholm)

Contact: Bertil Ringberg or Amir Mokhtari
Fard

Tel: +46 8 164 886

Fax: +46 8 674 78 95

E-mail: amfard@geo.su.se

FLOODPLAINS '98

June 25-26, 1998

UNITED KINGDOM (Norwich)

Contact: Dr. Jan Alexander, School of
Environmental Sciences, The University of
East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ, U.K.

or Sue Marriott, School of Environmental
Management and Geography, University of
the West of England, Coldharbour Lane,
Bristol, BS16 1QY, U.K.

E-mail: j.alexander@uea.ac.uk

or s-marrio@uwe.ac.uk

**PALAEODIVERSIFICATIONS
LAND AND SEA COMPARED**

July 6-8, 1998

FRANCE (Lyon)

Contact: Mireille Gayet, UFR des Sciences
de la terre, Université Claude Bernard, Lyon
I, 27-43 bd du 11 novembre 1918, 69622
Villeurbanne cedex, France.

Tel: +33 4 72 44 83 98

Fax: +33 4 72 44 84 36

E-mail: gayet@univ-lyon1.fr

lysiane.thevenod@univ-lyon1.fr

GEOCONGRESS '98

Geological Society of South Africa

July 8-10, 1998

SOUTH AFRICA (Pretoria)

Contact: The Secretary: Sedimentology
Division, c/o M.J. Schweitzer, P.O. Box
91230, Auckland Park 2006, South Africa.

Tel: +27 11 358 0174

Fax: +27 11 482 1214

E-mail: jschweit@csir.co.za

**SEDIMENT TRANSPORT AND
DEPOSITION BY PARTICULATE
GRAVITY CURRENTS**

September 7-9, 1998

U.K. (Leeds)

Contact: Ben Kneller, Earth Sciences
Department, University of Leeds, Leeds
LS2 9JT, U.K.

Tel: +44 113 233 6625

Fax: +44 113 233 5259

E-mail: ben@earth.leeds.ac.uk.

Web: [http://earth.leeds.ac.uk/turbidites/
conference.htm](http://earth.leeds.ac.uk/turbidites/conference.htm)

**STRATA AND SEQUENCES ON
SHELVES AND SLOPES**

September 15-19, 1998

ITALY (Sicily)

Contact: Judy Tarpely at SEPM

E-mail: cemeet@galaxy.galstar.com

or

E-mail: stratcon@octopus.wr.usgs.gov

**INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
ON THE EPICONTINENTAL
TRIASSIC**

September 21-23, 1998

GERMANY (Halle / Saale)

Contact: G.H. Bachmann, G. Beutler, H.
Haubold, Inst. of Geosciences and Geiseltal
Museum, Martin Luther University,
Domstrasse 5, D - 06099 Halle / Saale,
Germany.

Tel: +49 345 55 26070 / 71

Fax: +49 345 55 27178

**COASTAL AND ESTUARINE
ENVIRONMENTS:
SEDIMENTOLOGY,
GEOMORPHOLOGY AND
GEOARCHAEOLOGY**

November 9-10, 1998

U.K. (London)

Contact: Prof. K. Pye and Prof. J.R.L.

Allen, University of Reading,
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Tel: +44 (0)118 93 18 499

Fax: +44 (0)118 93 10 279

E-mail: k.pye@reading.ac.uk

THE BATHURST MEETING

July 12-15, 1999

UNITED KINGDOM (Cambridge)

Contact: Dr. J.A.D. Dickson, Dept. of Earth
Sciences, University of Cambridge,
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