



**INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL UNION – UNION GÉOGRAPHIQUE
INTERNATIONALE (IGU / UGI)
COMMISSION ON LAND DEGRADATION AND DESERTIFICATION (COMLAND)**



REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES: 2004-2008

Submitted to the IGU / UGI Executive Committee

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1. OVERVIEW OF COMLAND

Many environments are affected by factors that influence land degradation and desertification processes. The two primary groups of factors responsible for land degradation and desertification are climate change and human induced land use and land cover change. Because of the associated suite of landscape processes and societal dependence, it is critical that scientists and policy makers attain a better practical and theoretical understanding of land degradation and desertification processes. The mission of COMLAND is to examine these processes under the following framework:

- Promote and coordinate interdisciplinary research on land degradation and desertification within a changing global environment;
- Study the effects of environmental change, both natural and human induced, and their implications for land degradation and desertification;
- Conduct regional case studies under different climatic regimes and environmental risks (forest fires, floods, river channel changes, soil-erosion, water depletion, water quality);
- Study the planning and design of conservation measures and the potential conflict between ecological sustainability and economic viability;
- Alert authorities as to the importance of adequate surveillance of land degradation processes;
- Develop and communicate the best techniques for monitoring changes and collecting data, and to sponsor and support activities leading to exchange of information regarding land degradation and desertification.

As an international scholarly organization COMLAND maintains diversity in nationality, gender, and in its location of activities. The organizational framework includes a chair, secretary

(and web master), and a steering committee of eleven scientists. For more details about COMLAND consult the web site at: <https://webspace.utexas.edu/hudsonpf/comland>

2. SUMMARY OF COMLAND: 2004 – 2008 IGU / UGI

The four years since the IGU – Glasgow Congress were marked by several significant accomplishments. COMLAND has remained internationally relevant and visible by publishing and holding symposia and sessions on crucial topics concerning land degradation and desertification in a diverse array of settings. These efforts have resulted in thirty one publications, with thirteen being edited special issues of major international peer reviewed journals or books. During the past four years COMLAND has formally organized or co-organized eleven symposia and special sessions at international meetings. Many of these meetings have been held in lesser developed countries, which has increased the broader contribution of COMLAND. The meetings were held in coordination and cooperation with over sixty complementary scientific organizations, government agencies, and/or academic institutions. A hallmark of COMLAND meetings are field trips, and each meeting has included field excursions that have included local inputs of expertise, usually in coordination with complementary government agencies. Additionally, the field excursions serve as a vehicle for linking local applied topics (problems) with a theoretical framework provided by international scholars. COMLAND membership has remained healthy, and is now at 240. COMLAND members are provided information via an e-mail list and a (recently revised) web page. COMLAND has granted fourteen awards to individuals with significant scholarly contributions and achievements concerning land degradation and desertification.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

A strength of COMLAND is the scholars comprising the organizational structure, which includes a diverse mix of scientists from Europe, Middle East, Asia, Africa, Australia, South America, and North America. The organizational structure includes thirteen scholars in full time academic positions, including eight full professors, two associate professors, one assistant professor, one research scientist, and one policy analyst. The organizational structure includes: Arthur Conacher (Australia); Guðrun Gísladóttir – Chair (Iceland), Paul Hudson – Secretary (USA), Moshe Inbar (Israel); Mike Meadows (South Africa); Takashi Oguchi (Japan); Gregor Ollesch (Germany); Silvio Rodrigues (Brazil); Maria Sala (Spain); Steffanie Scott (Canada); Michael Stocking (United Kingdom); Anna Tengberg (Thailand); Xiaoping Yang (China). The members of COMLAND are primarily geographers, but also include complementary disciplines such as development, geology, and soils. The 2004 – 2008 period also saw a change in the Chair and Secretary of COMLAND in 2006. The Chair changed from Dr. Moshe Inbar (University of Haifa, Israel) to Dr. Guðrun Gísladóttir (University of Iceland), while the position of Secretary changed from Dr. Arthur Conacher (University of Western Australia) to Dr. Paul Hudson (University of Texas, USA) in 2006. COMLAND intends to retain its global scholarly diversity for the 2008-2012 IGU / UGI.

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4. PUBLICATIONS: 2004-2008 (* special issue of peer reviewed international journal)

1. *Xiaoping Yang and Louis Scuderi (Eds.), 2009 (forthcoming). Special issue of *Quaternary Research*. Papers to be published from the COMLAND meeting held in Left Banner, Inner Mongolia, China, September 10 – 13, 2007.
2. *Arthur Conacher and Xiaoping Yang (Eds.) 2009 (forthcoming). Special issue of *Geographical Research* 47 (1). Papers to be published from the COMLAND meeting held in Left Banner, Inner Mongolia, China, 2007.
3. *Steffanie Scott and Arthur Conacher (Eds.), 2008. Land Degradation and Poverty, *Geographical Research*, 46 (1), Published papers presented at the COMLAND meeting in Nghe An Province, Vietnam, in February 17 – 27, 2006.
4. Tsuyoshi Hattanji, Takashi Oguchi, Chiaki T. Oguchi, Yuichi S., Hayakawa, Wonsuh Song, and Ronald De Rose (Eds.), 2008. Field Trip Guide of the COMLAND Pre-symposium Field Trip in Japan: Land Degradation Processes, Dynamics of Land Degradation (June 5-7, 2008), 22 pp.
5. Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND) - International Geographical Union, 2008. Abstract volume (June 8-13). Taipei, Taiwan. 56 pp. For the COMLAND meeting on Land Degradation Processes, Dynamics of Land Degradation.

6. Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND) - International Geographical Union, 2008. Field Trip Guide (June 10-12, 2008). Taipei, Taiwan, 127 pp. For the COMLAND meeting on Land Degradation Processes, Dynamics of Land Degradation.
7. *Xiaoping Yang and Arthur Conacher, 2007. International Workshop on Environmental Change and Sustainable Development in Arid and Semi-arid Regions Inner Mongolia, China. Episodes 30 (4), 297-298.
8. Xiaoping Yang, 2007. Pre-symposium Field Trip Guide (Inner Mongolia north and west of Beijing, September 7 – 9, 2007), 6 pp. For the COMLAND – IGU International Workshop on Environmental Change and Sustainable Development in Arid and Semi-arid Regions Inner Mongolia, China, September 10-17, 2007.
9. Xiaoping Yang, 2007. Post-symposium Field Trip Guide (Gobi desert from Alashan Left Banner to Badain Jaran Desert, September 14 – 17, 2007), 7 pp. For the COMLAND – IGU International Workshop on Environmental Change and Sustainable Development in Arid and Semi-arid Regions Inner Mongolia, China, September 10-17, 2007.
10. Xiaoping Yang, 2007. Abstract volume. COMLAND – IGU International Workshop on Environmental Change and Sustainable Development in Arid and Semi-arid Regions Inner Mongolia, China, September 10-17, 2007.

11. Arthur Conacher and Guðrun Gísladóttir, 2006: UN year of deserts and desertification: policy implications, *Quaternary Sciences (Chinese Academy of Sciences)*, 26 (6), 1030. Also published in *Landabrefid (Iceland)*, 22 (1), 109-111.

12. *Maria Sala and Moshe Inbar (Eds.), 2006. Land Degradation, *Zeitschrift für Geomorphologie*, Supplementbände, Band 143. Published papers in honour of Prof. Arthur Conacher, presented at the COMLAND meeting in Brisbane, Australia, 2006.

13. Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND) - International Geographical Union, 2006. Field Trip Guide Book, SE Queensland June 29 - July 2. Prepared for the COMLAND field trip organized by Dr Robin Thwaites and Dr Brian Finlayson in Brisbane, Australia, 2006.

14. *Arthur Conacher (Ed.), 2006. *Land Degradation in Changing Environments*. Land Degradation and Development 17 (4). Published papers presented at the IGU/UGI in Glasgow, Scotland, 2004.

15. *Paul F. Hudson and Irasema Alcántara-Ayala (Eds.), 2006. Geomorphology and Land Degradation, *Catena*, Volume 65 (2). Published papers presented at the IAG Regional meeting in Mexico City, October, 2003.

16. Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND) - International Geographical Union, 2006. Abstract volume (Feb. 17-27, 2006). Nghe An Province, Vietnam. For the COMLAND Vietnam Study Tour organized by Dr. Steffanie Scott.
17. Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND) - International Geographical Union, 2006. Field Trip Guide Book, Nghe An Province, Vietnam (Feb. 17-27, 2006), 4 pp. For the COMLAND Vietnam Study Tour organized by Dr. Steffanie Scott.
18. Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND) – International Geographical Union, 2006. Summary of Workshop and Field Trip: Forest management, land degradation and poverty in Nghe An Province, February 17-27, 2006, 8 pp.
19. Rodrigues, S.C., dos Santos, D.G. and Campos, T.N., 2005. Serra da Canastra Field Trip Book, May 21-23, 2005. For the COMLAND meeting in Uberlandia - Minas Gerais, Brazil.
20. International Symposium on Land Degradation and Desertification: Abstracts, 133 pp. For papers presented for Commission on Land Degradation and Desertification (COMLAND) IGU / UGI meeting held in Uberlandia - Minas Gerais, Brazil.

21. * Guðrun Gísladóttir and Michael Stocking (Eds.), 2005. Land Degradation and Mitigation, *Land Degradation and Development*, Volume 16, Issue 2. Published papers presented at the COMLAND meeting held in Reykjavik, Iceland, 2003.

22. *Silvio Rodrigues (Eds.), 2005. *Revista Sociedade & Natureza*, Uberlândia, Brazil, Special Issue May 2005, ISSN 0103–1570, (CD). Published papers presented at the COMLAND meeting in Uberlandia, Brazil, 2005.

23. *Ramon J. Batalla and Celso Garcia (Eds.), 2005. Geomorphological Processes and Human Impacts in River Basins. *International Association of Hydrological Sciences*, Publ. 299, 244 pp. Published papers presented at COMLAND meeting in Solsona, Catalonia, Spain, 2003.

24. *Celso Garcia and Ramon J. Batalla (Eds.) 2005. Catchment Dynamics and River Processes. Mediterranean and other Climate Regions. Amsterdam, Elsevier, *Developments in Earth Surface Processes* 7, 226 p. Published papers presented at COMLAND meeting in Solsona, Catalonia, Spain, 2003.

25. *Susanne Schnabel and Alfredo Ferreira (Eds.), 2004. Sustainability of Agrosilvopastoral Systems. *Advances in GeoEcology*, 37, *Catena*. Published papers presented at meeting sponsored by European Society for Soil Conservation and COMLAND in Cáceres, Spain, 2003.

26. Batalla, R.J. (Ed.) 2004. Conference Programme and Abstracts. International Conference on River / Catchment Dynamics: Natural Processes and Human Impacts. Centre Tecnològic Forestal de Catalunya, Solsona. 77 pp. Papers presented at COMLAND meeting in Solsona, Catalonia, Spain, 2003.
27. Ramon J. Batalla, D. Vericat and J.C. Balasch (Eds.) 2004. Fieldtrip: The Ribera Salada River Basin. International Conference on River / Catchment Dynamics: Natural Processes and Human Impacts. Centre Tecnològic Forestal de Catalunya, Solsona. Organized for the COMLAND meeting in Solsona, Catalonia, Spain, 2003.
28. Ramon J. Bataala and Maria Sala (Eds.) 2004. Fieldtrip: The Tordera River Basin. International Conference on River / Catchment Dynamics: Natural Processes and Human Impacts. Centre Tecnològic Forestal de Catalunya, Solsona. Organized for the COMLAND meeting in Solsona, Catalonia, Spain, 2003.
29. J. Estrany and C. Garcia, 2004. Field Excursion Guide: Erosional and Fluvial Processes on the Island of Mallorca. International Conference on River / Catchment Dynamics: Natural Processes and Human Impacts. Centre, Universitat de les Illes Balears, Mallorca. 300 pp. Organized for the COMLAND meeting in Solsona, Catalonia, Spain, 2003.
30. Maria Sala (Ed.), 2004. La cuenca de la Tordera. Estudio geomorfológico. Editorial Milenio, Lleida, 157 pp. For the COMLAND meeting in Solsona, Catalonia, Spain, 2003.

31. *Mike Meadows (Ed.), 2004. *Land Degradation and Development*, 15(3). Published papers presented in the COMLAND sessions at the IGU/UGI Regional conference in Durban, South Africa, in 2002.

5. COMLAND SYMPOSIA AND ORGANIZED SESSIONS: 2004 – 2008 IGU / UGI

2008

Tunisia

Title: "Land Degradation and Environmental Change" and "Land degradation and desertification and climate change: Past, Present and Future", special sessions held at the 31st International Geographical Congress, Tunis

Dates: August 12-15

Organizers: IGU, Paul F. Hudson and Guðrún Gísladóttir

"Land Degradation and Environmental Change"

The International Geographical Union's (IGU) Commission on Land Degradation solicits papers for "special sessions" to be held at the 2008 International Geographical Congress in Tunis. We are interested in papers which concern the topic of "Land Degradation and Environmental Change" with a focus along one or several of the following interdisciplinary fronts: Historical Human Impacts, Land Degradation and Society, Management of Land Degradation, and Natural Drivers of Land Degradation. We welcome papers from a range of methodological approaches, as well as historical and process based studies.

"Land degradation and desertification and climate change: Past, Present and Future" co-organized with the IGU International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE) sessions on "Climate change from the geological eras to the 21st century: characteristics, impacts and governance"

Climate change occurs over different time scales, at different rates, and results in distinct types of land degradation. Climate change over Quaternary and historical time-scales was a dominant influence on geomorphic and hydrologic processes which drive land degradation, and continues to manifest itself on contemporary landscapes. Future climate change is expected to be of great consequence to land degradation processes, and thus has diverse implications to land management planning. One aspect receiving considerable attention includes the area of carbon sequestration in the terrestrial environment, including vegetation and soils. We invite papers related to the session theme from a range of disciplines and a range of approaches, including field based and modeling.

A pre-congress field trip was organized by the IGU / UGI Land Use Land Cover Change Commission.

Taiwan and Japan

Title: Land Use and Land Degradation: Land Degradation Processes, Dynamics of Land Degradation

Dates: Seminar (Taiwan): 8th-10th June 2008, Field Trip II (Taiwan): 11th-13th June 2008, Optional Japan Field Trip: 5th-7th June 2008

Organizers: Dr. Jiun-Chuan Lin, Dr. Takashi Oguchi, Arthur Conacher, Paul Hudson

Description:

The main theme of the symposium was land degradation and land use change in a dynamic environment. Land degradation in response to land cover and land use change are critical issues throughout the world. Japan and Taiwan are particularly appropriate venues since these countries lie in a region that is regularly subject to the threat of earthquakes and typhoons and have a high population density such that the problems of land use and land degradation are especially prevalent and dynamic. Regional differences give rise to a diverse array of impacts and scenarios, requiring different approaches for effective management. This symposium provided a platform for dissemination of research findings and will promote discussion of these topics. The paper sessions and an additional field trip were held in Taiwan, and a pre-symposium field trip was held in Japan.

Cooperating Organizations:

Japan: Science Council, National Committee for IAG; University of Tokyo

Taiwan: Geographical Society of China in Taipei, Dept. of Geography, National Taiwan University, National Science Council, Academia Sinica, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tourism Bureau- M.O.T.C., Construction and Planning Agency Ministry of The Interior, Office of International Affairs-NTU, Dept. of Geography, National Taiwan Normal University, Dept. of Geography, National Changhwa University of Education, Dept. of Geography, National Kaohsiung Normal University, Dept. of Geography, Chinese Culture University.

2007

China

Title: International Workshop on Environmental Change and Sustainable Development in Arid and Semi-arid Regions Inner Mongolia, China

Dates: Preconference field trip: September 7-9, 2007, Conference: September 10-13, 2007, Post-conference workshop September 14-17, 2007

Organizers: Professor Xiaoping Yang, Arthur Conacher, Guðrún Gísladóttir

Description:

The symposium included a comprehensive coverage of topics related to environmental change and sustainability in arid and semi-arid regions. Specific themes included:

- Case studies and theories relating to land degradation and sustainable development in arid and semi-arid as well as sub-humid regions of various continents
- Comparisons of regional-scale reconstruction of Late Quaternary changes in the deserts of various climate zones (monsoon regions, subtropics and westerlies)
- Natural and human impacts on the landscape in various climate zones
- Interactions amongst aeolian, fluvial and lacustrine processes in desert margins.

Cooperating Organizations:

National: National Natural Science Foundation of China, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Quaternary Association (CHIQUA), Geographical Society of China, PAGES (Past Global

Changes), and IGCP500 (International Geological Correlation Program 500 - Dryland Change: Past, Present and Future).

Regional / Local: Institute of Geology and Geophysics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Government of Alashan District, Inner Mongolia, and Government of Alashan Right Banner.

Iceland

Title: International Forum on Soils, Society and Global Change

Dates: 31 August – 4 September, 2007

Organizer: Soil Conservation Service in Iceland, and Agricultural University of Iceland

Description:

The forum explored the synergistic roles of soil conservation and vegetation restoration in meeting local, regional and global environmental and social challenges. The forum also facilitated the transfer of ideas between scientists, policy makers, land users and private sector representatives. COMLAND was one of eighteen international sponsors of the symposium.

2006

Vietnam

Title: Land Degradation and Poverty Workshop and Study Tour, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Dates: February 17-27

Organizers: Dr. Steffanie Scott and Dr. Tran Dac Dan

Description:

This event attracted geographers and others from related fields. The emphasis of papers and field trip excursions was the interaction of human and biophysical aspects of land degradation and environmental change, as they shape and are shaped by processes of poverty. This linked to a range of issues, including:

- sustainable livelihoods and protection of soil and water resources
- institutional change, property rights, resource conflicts, agricultural decollectivization, aquaculture
- development, environmental histories
- pressures of tourism and urban development affecting land degradation
- university, government, and community actions to address land degradation problems
- ethnic and gender dimensions of land use practices and land degradation
- environmental decision-making
- GIS applications in land degradation research

Cooperating Organization:

Vinh University and Nong Lam University (Ho Chi Minh City), Vietnam

Morocco

Title: International Soil Conservation Organization (ISCO) Sustainable Management of Soil and Water in Semi-arid Environments

Marrakech, Morocco

Dates: May 14-19, 2006 (papers), field excursion May 17, 2006

Organizer: Dr. Laouina Abdellah

Description:

The 14th Conference of the International Soil Conservation Organization (ISCO) was held in Marrakech, Morocco during May 14 – 19, 2006. The substantial disturbance of natural habitats during the 20th century reveals the extent of the challenge humanity faces during the new millennium. The conference was a common forum for international experts in various disciplines to present research presentations related to sustainable management of soil and water, particularly in semi-arid environments. The conference included a 1 day field excursion that examined aspects related to water, soil fertility, and watershed management and desertification in semi-arid environments.

Cooperating Organizations:

International: International Soil Conservation Organization (ISCO), UNESCO Chair in Sustainable Development

National: Moroccan Association of Geomorphology, Moroccan Network of Soil and Water Conservation, Moroccan Association of Soil Sciences, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fishery, Secretariat of State in Charge of Water, Secretariat of State in Charge of the Environment, National School of Forestry Engineers, National School of Agriculture, Meknès, National Institute for Agronomic Research, Rabat

Regional / Local: Salé Hassan II Institute of Agronomy and Veterinary Sciences, Rabat, Mohamed V University, Rabat Faculty of Sciences Semlalia, Marrakech, Faculty of Sciences and Techniques, Marrakech, The Cady Ayyad University, Marrakech

Australia

Title: Land Degradation: Causes, Implications and Management, IGU Regional Congress in Brisbane, Australia

Dates: July 3-7, with pre-conference field trip June 29 to July 2, 2006

Organizers: IGU / UGI, Dr. Arthur Conacher, Dr Robin Thwaites, Dr Bruce Carey, and Dr Brian Finlayson

Description:

The COMLAND pre-conference field trip included a four day excursion that examined land use and landscapes in South-East Queensland. The field excursion was followed by excellent sessions held at the Regional Meeting of the IGU / UGI in Brisbane, Australia. COMLAND was allocated six sessions, including a business meeting that included a presentation of a special issue of *Zeitschrift für Geomorphologie* dedicated to Dr. Arthur Conacher. The sessions were organized along the following themes:

- Land degradation: Causes, implications, and management
- Geomorphology and land degradation
- Scientific guidelines in environmental decision-making

Cooperating Organizations:

Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, University of Melbourne, Queensland
Government

2005

Brazil

Title: COMLAND International Symposium on Land Degradation and Desertification,
Uberlândia, Brazil

Dates: May 16-22

Organizers: Dr. Silvio Rodrigues

Description:

The Brazil symposium was the first COMLAND meeting held in South America, and was organized by Dr. Silvio Rodrigues of the Universidade Federal de Uberlândia. Situated along the upper reaches of São Francisco River within the agricultural region of Minas Gerais, the location of Uberlândia was an excellent venue for presentations and field excursions concerning land degradation. The symposium attracted an international interdisciplinary range of scholars, with presentations organized into the following themes:

- Soil erosion and possibilities of recovery;
- Rivers, Fluvial systems and Land Degradation;
- Deforestation and its consequences on the soil and landscape;
- Sustainable development and politics of management;
- Remote Sensing, GIS and their applications to the study of land degradation;
- Eco-tourism and Rural Tourism and their implications;

- Urbanization and Land Degradation;
- Desertification and Land Degradation in Dry lands.

The symposium included three different field trips, including:

- Serra da Canastra (São Francisco River's Headwater) (3 days)
- São Francisco River (High-Medium Course) - Pirapora-MG (3 or 4 days)
- Vazante-MG (3 days)

Cooperating Organizations:

Universidade Federal de Uberlândia, Brazilian Geomorphological Union

2004

Spain

Title: International Conference on Understanding River Catchment Dynamics - Natural Processes and Human Impacts, Solsona, Catalonia

Dates: May 15-20, 2004

Organizers: Dr. Ramon J. Batalla, Dr. Celso Garcia, Dr. Moshe Inbar

Description:

The International Conference on River Catchment Dynamics: Natural Processes and Human Impacts was held in Solsona, Spain, on 15-20 May 2004. The theme of the conference was river and catchment processes, focusing on human impacts on catchments and river dynamics as a

basis for environmental management. The conference was organized to mark the contributions to the discipline and impending retirement of Maria Sala, Professor of Physical Geography at the University of Barcelona and the founding Chair of COMLAND. The conference included field excursions to sites of geomorphological interest in Catalonia, where Maria Sala and her former students have been undertaking research during the last decade. The major themes of the conference included:

- sediment sources and transfer to the fluvial system
- fluvial processes and sediment transport
- erosion processes and land degradation in drainage basins
- human impacts on Mediterranean fluvial environments
- water and sediment management

Cooperating Organizations:

International: European Society for Soil Conservation, International Commission on Continental Erosion (ICCE)

Regional / Local: Forestry Institute of Catalonia, University of Lleida, University of Balearic Islands, University of Barcelona.

Scotland

Title: COMLAND sponsored sessions at IGU – Glasgow

Dates: August 15-20

Organizers: IGU, Dr. Donald Davidson and Dr. Arthur Conacher

Description:

Multiple sessions held at the IGU Congress in Glasgow, Scotland on the theme of “challenges to land management in cool temperate environments”. Specific topics included:

1. *Climatic issues:* Examples of topics: Changing patterns of rainfall and temperature, the incidence of extreme events including floods, weather and risk to economic activity
2. *Agricultural issues:* Examples of topics: evaluation of agri-environment schemes, agriculture and biodiversity, effect of land management on carbon sequestration
3. *Upland issues:* Examples of topics: sensitivity and protection of upland habitats, changes in soil carbon storage, the protection of species and the sustainability of rural communities
4. *Urban issues:* Examples of topics: changing patterns of biodiversity within urban areas, effects of urbanization on hydrology, soils and nutrient cycles, environmental planning of urban areas
5. *Contamination issues:* Examples of topics: land contamination in old industrial areas, risk assessment and remediation strategies, redevelopment of brownfield sites

A four day field trip was organized by Prof Donald Davidson, Stirling University. The aim of the field trip was to examine a range of issues related to the management of cool temperate upland environments. Field sites included visits to the Grampian Mountains, Deeside, Speyside, and Tayside.

6. FUTURE SYMPOSIA AND SESSIONS

6.1 With Final Approval

2009

Australia

Title: Adaptation to Global Change, Dates - COMLAND sessions at the 7th Meeting of the IAG /

AIG, Melbourne, Australia

Dates: July 7-12, 2009

Organizers: Arthur Conacher and Gregor Ollesch

Description:

Papers will be considered that focus on the ambiguity of the role of land degradation as both a cause and a consequence of global change in a broad sense. The question is to adapt to and prevent or avoid the adverse consequences of global change (although the title of the session only includes adaptation). A related topic may link to the questions of risk and resilience or vulnerability of landscapes and land use systems to land degradation, which is in turn linked to global change.

A wide range of field trips is planned by the IAG / AIG, as well as an intensive three-days course for young geomorphologists. Notice of publication of accepted papers in a leading journal will be announced in due time.

Cooperating Organizations:

International Association of Geomorphologists

Germany

Title: International Conference on Land and Water Degradation: Process and Management,
Magdeburg, Germany

Dates: September 6-9, 2009

Organizer: Dr. Gregor Ollesch

Description:

There is an urgent need to improve our practical and theoretical understanding of land and water degradation processes; in particular the physical, chemical and biological deterioration of soils and water bodies in various regions of the world. This conference will bridge the gap between land and water and will bring together scientists from various disciplines with different methodological backgrounds. Specific topics include:

- nutrient dynamics in the land-sediment-water system
- function of buffer strips and floodplains for catchment health
- physical, chemical and biological processes of soil degradation
- methodological approaches to estimate and regionalise nonpointsource pollution
- spatial heterogeneity, variation and prediction of land degradation
- methods to review outcomes of mitigation strategies and catchment management
- regional studies of land and water degradation, especially in industrialised and urbanised areas, cold climates and Mediterranean regions

The symposium includes keynote talks by Rattan Lal (Ohio State University, USA) and John Quinton (Lancaster University, UK), with a mid-symposium field trip focusing on land and water management issues within the surrounding locales of Magdeburg.

Cooperating Organizations:

German Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research – UFZ (Magdeburg, Germany)

Kuwait

Title: Conference on Land Degradation in Dry Environments

Dates: March 8 – 14, 2009

Organizers: Professor Jasem Al-Awadhi, Kuwait University (e-mail:

jawadhi@kuc01.kuniv.edu.kw), Professor Mohammed Al-Sarawi, Earth and Environmental

Dept., Prof. Mohammed Khozami – Geography Dept, Professor Jasem Al-Ali– Geography Dept.

Description:

Drylands cover about 41% of Earth's land surface and are home to more than 38% of the total global population of 6.5 billion. Some form of severe land degradation is present on 10 to 20% of these lands, the consequences of which are estimated to affect directly some 250 million people in the developing world, an estimate likely to expand substantially in the face of climate change and population growth. Population increases in semi-arid and arid regions and changes in regional climate have often led to degradation of the land, and sometimes to the collapse of

societies in these regions. The problem is as old as civilization. Nowadays Mongolia and China, parts of the middle east and the US Southwest face such problems. Showing these examples will be one of the goals of this coming Conference on Land Degradation.

- Topic 1: Earth Surface Processes
- Topic 2: Ecotourism, Urbanization, Sustainable Development, and Management Policy
- Topic 3: Provisional Tools and Methodologies for Land Degradation Assessment
- Topic 4: Climate Change and Land Degradation
- Topic 5: Rehabilitation and Soil Conservation
- A post-conference field trip is being organized to the United Arab Emirates (March 12-14, 2009)

Cooperating Organizations:

International: IAG- International Association of Geomorphologists (Prof. Andrew Goudie) (To be confirmed)

Regional / Local: Kuwait University, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (Professor Abdullah Al-Enezi: email;- aenezi@safat.kisr.edu.kw), and Professor Ali Al-Dousari: email: adousari@safat.kisr.edu.kw, UAE University - Professor Ahmed Murad, Head of Geology Department (email-Ahmed.Murad@uaeu.ac.ae)

6.2 Planned, but not finalized

2010

Israel:

Title: Land Degradation and Desertification (tentative)

Dates: summer 2010

Organizer: Professor Moshe Inbar

Description: COMLAND meeting in coordination with the IGU Regional meeting in Tel Aviv.

To include paper sessions and field excursions. Details and final theme to be finalized.

Tanzania:

Title: TBA

Dates: TBA

Organizers: Professor Michael Stocking

7. AWARDS: 2004 – 2008***7.1 Distinguished Research on Land Degradation***

COMLAND's premier award, presented during main and regional IGU Congresses

- 2008: Professor Rattan Lal (Ohio State University, Columbus OH, USA). The award will be formally announced at the IGU Congress in Tunis, and presented at the COMLAND conference in Magdeburg in September 2009 (where he will be a keynote speaker).
- 2006: Professor. Herman Verstappen (International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation, The Netherlands) (formally announced at the IGU Brisbane meeting, presented at the IGU in Tunis).
- 2004: Professor. Maria Sala (University of Barcelona, Spain)

7.2 COMLAND Award (alphabetically listed)

To acknowledge individuals or groups for contributions to COMLAND.

- Professor Ramon Batalla (University of Lleida, Spain)
- Dr. Bruce Carey (Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water, Australia)
- Professor Arthur Conacher (University of Western Australia, Australia)
- Professor Moshe Inbar (University of Haifa, Israel)
- Mr. Carsten Kremb (Winnweiler, Germany)
- Professor Tran Ngoc Lan (Vinh University, Vietnam)
- Professor Jiun-Chuan Lin (National Taiwan University)
- Professor Takashi Oguchi (University of Tokyo, Japan)
- Professor Silvio Rodrigues (University of Uberlandia, Brazil)
- Professor Maria Sala (University of Barcelona, Spain)
- Mr. Hoang van Son (Vinh University, Vietnam)
- Professor Steffanie Scott (University of Waterloo, Canada)
- Dr. Robin Thwaites (Queensland University of Technology, Australia)
- Professor Xiaoping Yang (Chinese Academy of Sciences)

8. WEB SITE

COMLAND has its own website, containing information on its structure, activities, past and future meetings. The website was revamped in 2007 and is maintained by Dr. Paul Hudson (Secretary of COMLAND) and hosted at the University of Texas at Austin. The address is:

<https://webpace.utexas.edu/hudsonpf/comland>

9. PROPOSED THEMES FOR CONTINUATION OF COMLAND: 2008 – 2012 IGU /

UGI

Our proposed themes for the IGU / UGI 2008 – 2012 build on the foundation of accomplishment that COMLAND has attained over the past twelve years, with a sharpened focus on several key themes.

1. Climate Change – Vulnerability Sensitivity of Landscape Processes

As a major driver of land degradation and desertification processes, it is essential that COMLAND be squarely engaged with the topic of climate change, particularly the vulnerability and sensitivity of landscape processes (geomorphic and pedogenic) to climate change. This is a more explicit (stronger) recognition of what COMLAND already does. While COMLAND should be seen at the leading edge of the topic, this should not occur at the expense of our traditional pursuits. Indeed, a strength of COMLAND in this regard is that its tradition of Quaternary and historical research provides perspective, scope, and insight for understanding the implications of modern and future climate change.

2. Global Environmental Change and Local Adaptation – Policy, Management, and Society

Land management and policy are locally implemented in different ways because of economic, political, and cultural differences. Thus, global environmental change potentially has diverse landscape consequences with variable societal implications. By

engaging with social scientists COMLAND is well poised to make substantial theoretical contributions that concern the relations of global environmental change with land management, with applied relevance to regional policy makers and local stakeholders.

3. Lesser Developed Nations

COMLAND has previously emphasized the importance of considering land degradation and desertification in lesser developed nations. This has been a successful formulae for our organization (meetings, representation, collaborations, publications...) and it is quite logical that this should continue to be a major thrust of COMLAND's efforts, particularly in the context of #s 1 and 2.

The themes outlined for the 2008-2012 IGU / UGI are distinctive and central to the mission of COMLAND, but provide sufficient overlap with several other IGU Commissions to pursue exciting synergistic research. Moreover, their importance is suggested by the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – 2007 Report*, which represents broader scientific and societal relevance for the COMLAND themes proposed for the 2008-2012 IGU / UGI. The existing status of COMLAND finds it well prepared to move forward with formal assessment of the proposed 2008-2012 themes, specifically with forthcoming COMLAND meetings and symposia in Kuwait (2009), Germany (2009), and Australia (2009), as well as planned meetings for Tanzania (2010) and Israel (2010). Additional COMLAND meetings for 2011 and 2012 would explicitly target one or more of the above themes. Further opportunities to highlight the proposed themes would be pursued by organizing COMLAND special sessions at major and regional meetings. Based on COMLANDs publication record during the 2004-2008 IGU / UGI,

it is very likely that all forthcoming COMLAND meetings will result in published papers in major peer reviewed outlets, ensuring the broader dissemination of COMLAND themes to an international scholarly audience of geographers and allied disciplines.