

COMMISSION FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND APPLICATION OF GEOSCIENCE INFORMATION (CGI)

Report to the International Union of Geological Sciences for 2004



An introduction to CGI

Information in general and digital information in particular, underpins all of the IUGS strategic objectives. CGI is helping to address a growing need to improve the quality and range of both information content and the applications that are used to acquire, analyse, process and disseminate geoscience data. It will do this by the exchange of knowledge and best practice and the support for standards. CGI is a new (strictly speaking, re-activated) Commission, founded by the IUGS in late 2002. Early tasks have been to establish its objectives, set up its structure and modus operandi, elect its Council and establish a web presence.

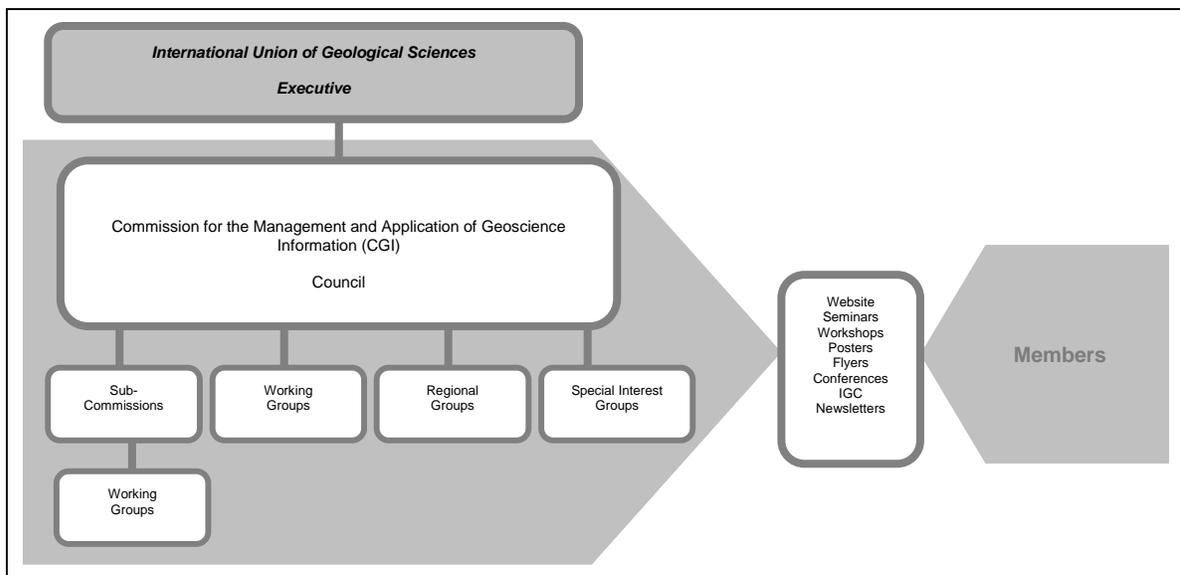
CGI aspires to:

- Help in exchanging knowledge on geoscience information and systems
- Support dissemination of best practice in geoscience information
- Encourage the development of geoscience information standards
- Play a full part in the international geoscience information community and represent IUGS on geoscience information matters
- Bring together individuals and organisations with an interest in the management and application of geoscience information

Membership and organisation

At the time of writing 104 people have registered to be members of CGI, representing over 37 countries. The major increase in membership came as a result of the publicity associated with the launch of CGI at the IGC, but we continue to grow steadily. CGI operates

through a Council of 10 people. Eight were elected at the IGC and we are in the process of filling the 2 vacant positions. The Chair, Secretary General and Treasurer of the Council form an Executive sub-committee. Jean-Paul Cadet is our contact on the IUGS Executive.



Highlights of the year

2004 was a busy year for CGI. The new Commission was formally ratified by the IUGS at the IGC in Florence and also held its first full Open Meeting there. A considerable amount of preparation was needed for this: new Statutes were produced and agreed; elections were held for the Council; the preliminary CGI web site was completely overhauled and refreshed; flyers were designed and distributed; and invitations to the Open Meeting were mailed to over 1500 people worldwide – the aim being to make sure that as many people as possible would be aware of our existence. Members of the new Council were also scientifically active at the IGC, convening and taking part in a number of special and topical symposia on the subject of geoinformation. In addition, our first 2 Working Groups continued to make progress on developing a geoscience data model and overhauling the Multi-lingual Thesaurus.

CGI Open Meeting, Florence, 25 August 2004



Some 75 people attended this meeting at the IGC. Presentations on the structure, aspirations and progress of CGI and its Working Groups were interspersed with discussion on the role of the Commission and its future plans.



After the meeting the attendees celebrated the launch of CGI and continued their discussions over a glass, or two, of Italian wine.

The Action Plan for 2004–2008

The CGI Council spent some time during the year considering what practical and achievable objectives could be set for the Commission during the next 4 years. These objectives were crystallized as a set of 6 actions and presented to the Open Meeting at the IGC.

Work on these actions is already underway. A first version of a database of existing geoscience information bodies has been produced; a number of possible venues for outreach workshops are being scrutinised and discussed with potential co-sponsors; and work on the Multi-lingual Thesaurus is well advanced.

A proposed CGI Action Plan for 2004-2008

- *Map (and communicate with) existing geoscience information bodies.*
- *Link information bodies with common needs.*
- *Facilitate relevant outreach workshops.*
- *Refine multi-lingual thesaurus.*
- *Develop a framework for ratifying and promoting geoscience information standards.*
- *Promote and encourage data exchange standards.*

Communication

The first CGI Open Meeting at the IGC entailed a significant communication initiative. An email containing introductory information and an invitation was sent to over 1500 potentially interested individuals. New pages were added to the website to supply enhanced information on CGI and how to join the Commission. A flyer was designed, printed and circulated. Posters were prepared and displayed across the IGC conference site. Additionally, throughout the year, every opportunity has been taken to give presentations or show posters on CGI at conferences and meetings. The website is a particularly prominent part of the CGI communication strategy: it is regularly updated and kept dynamic by the CGI Secretariat (our thanks to Kathryn Bull!). In addition to containing all the documentation about the Commission, it has news about related projects, events and web resources and it provides space for technical information posting and exchange.



Events at which CGI has been presented in 2004

- Bangkok – CCOP Workshop on the Asian Multilingual Thesaurus*
- Berlin – Brandenburg Geological Survey*
- Bonn – German IUGS National Committee*
- Denver – Geoscience Information Consortium*
- Florence – IGC*
- Leipzig – German Geological Society*
- Moscow – GIS in Geology conference*
- Nice – EUG*
- Orleans – Colloquium on African Geology*
- Warsaw – EC-GI and GIS Workshop*

Funding and expenditure

CGI receives funding from the IUGS but no direct financial support from other bodies. It does however receive considerable indirect support in terms of staff-time and meeting and infrastructure facilities from the parent organisations of its Council members and organisations such as CGMW.

A brief summary of the CGI accounts is included below. The planned budget and spending details for next year are still being finalised and have to be agreed by the Council, but are likely to include continued spend on the maintenance of the CGI web site and other communications items and preparation for an outreach workshop.

	\$ account		€ account	
	in	out	in	out
October 2002 kick off "new" CGI	2 172.81		1 113.59	
2002 allocation IUGS (3000\$) 2001/2002 grant ICSU (5000\$) Council meetings new web site CGI bank account costs	3 000.00 5 000.00	-2 512.32 -0.60		-10.00
Balance 2002	7 659.89		1103.59	
2003				
2003 allocation IUGS (5000\$) Council meetings MT working group CGI bank account costs			4 104.75	-826.27 -426.00 -25.00
Balance 2003	7 659.89		3 931.07	
2004				
2004 allocation IUGS (5000\$) De-budgeting unclaimed expenses 2003 Council meetings CGI Flyer MT Working group Firenze prep. & participation Website CGI bank costs			4165.28 426.00	-138.00 -696.00 -426.00 -294.60 -2006.05 -20.00
Balance December 1, 2004	7 659.89		4 941.70	

Problems

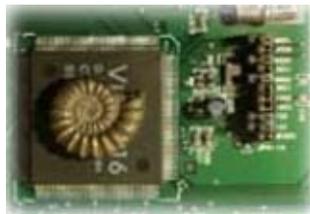
Identifying appropriately experienced Council officers prepared to give time and be proactive has proved difficult but we are hopeful that we will finally fill the two remaining places on the Council in the near future, as proposals have been received from Russia and Namibia. However this still leaves CGI with no representation from South America and China.

Outreach Workshops to exchange practical knowledge and skills are one of CGI's major aspirations. These are, however, expensive to organise and beyond the resources of CGI alone. We are attempting to find co-sponsors to achieve our goals but this makes the logistics more complex and time-consuming.

Conclusions

An excellent year! The ratification and launch of CGI in Florence went extremely well. The Open Meeting and symposia sponsored by CGI at the IGC were well attended. We have a new and dynamic Council and are poised to add two more members to this. The efforts in communication, and in particular our website, have reaped the reward of increasing interest in CGI and a growing network of contacts across the globe. Last but not least our first two Working Groups are making considerable progress towards their goals.

CGI Council
12 December 2004



Annex A: List of Council Members

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