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European Association for Geochemistry

MESSAGE FROM THE EAG PRESIDENT

Geochemistry is a truly international science, and the main focus of EAG activity is our planning and involvement in Goldschmidt conferences. So is there a rationale for a regional organisation for geochemistry? Of course we can easily point to the importance of building links with those who work in the same part of the world, are easy to interact with and face the same funding systems, but geochemistry also has distinct flavours in different parts of the world.

I recently had the pleasure of participating, with a large number of other geochemists, in a conference entitled 'Structure, Tectonics and Ore Mineralisation Processes', held in Townsville, Australia. What was really striking was the difference in the balance of geochemical science being carried out in Australia relative to that in most of Europe. The very issues that are considered peripheral and unimportant in Europe have a central economic significance in Australia, while whole areas of geochemistry that are at the centre of European efforts today have little impact on the Australian scene. Of course we all try to spend our time pursuing the most important and fundamental advances in the science, as we see them, but the priorities of funding agencies clearly hold sway over where we decide to look for those fundamental advances. As a result, science that is seen as hopelessly academic in one part of the world, such as dating individual metamorphic minerals, can be at the forefront of applied research in a place where the economic imperatives are different. I find this a rather reassuring thought – the great pioneers of 19th century science and engineering worked closely with industrialists and entrepreneurs, and few of us would willingly commit to a programme of research that would be of no possible use to the world at large. It is good to know that, once you look around, so many different parts of geochemistry are of practical importance.

Once we grasp the fact that what we do can be of practical value in many different ways, I think we should ask ourselves whether we make enough effort to get that message across to the wider world. We are facing important issues of energy and mineral resource supply, climate change and environmental pollution of many sorts. Geochemists can offer major contributions in these fields. Maybe it is time for the various geochemical communities, with their different directions and applications, to put a bit more effort into demonstrating to a wider world that what we do matters, and that the fundamentals of our science will underpin the eventual solutions to many of the problems society faces today.

Bruce Yardley
President

CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS FOR 2006 EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF GEOCHEMISTRY AWARDS

H.C. UREY AWARD

The H.C. Urey Award is given annually by the European Association for Geochemistry and is intended to honour established scientists for outstanding research contributions to any field of geochemistry. The award is based solely on scientific merit without regard to nationality, and will normally be presented at the V.M. Goldschmidt Conference. Nominations for the H.C. Urey Award should be accompanied by a brief statement from the nominator outlining the reason for the nomination and should include an abbreviated curriculum vitae and bibliography of the proposed candidate, as well as several letters of support.

RECENT RECIPIENTS: G. Eglington and J. Hayes (1997), J.-G. Schilling (1998), J. Edmond (1999), D.J. DePaolo (2000), R.K. O'Nions (2001), G. Turner (2002), N. Shackleton (2003), H.C. Helgeson (2004), A. Navrotsky (2005)

Nominations for the 2006 H.C. Urey Award should be submitted before 15 February 2006 to:

Alex Halliday
Department of Earth Sciences
University of Oxford
Parks Road
Oxford OX1 3PR
United Kingdom
e-mail: Alex.Halliday@earth.ox.ac.uk

HOUTERMANS AWARD

The Houtermans Award is given annually by the European Association for Geochemistry and is awarded in recognition of an outstanding publication or series of publications by a young scientist under the age of 35, within the fields of geochemistry or cosmochemistry. The award consists of a medal and a certificate. Recent recipients: Ken Farley (1997), Terry Plank (1998), Eric Hauri (1999), Gleb Prokrovsky (2000), Jess F. Adkins (2003), Albert Galy (2004), Mark E. Hodson (2005)

Nominations for the Houtermans Award should consist of a brief statement from the nominator outlining the reason for the nomination and should include an abbreviated curriculum vitae and bibliography of the proposed candidate. Nominations should be submitted before 15 February 2006 to:

Terry Seward
Institut für Mineralogie und Petrographie
ETH Zentrum, NO E 59
Sonneggstrasse 5
8092 Zürich, Switzerland
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MEETING REPORT: GES-7 AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

The 7th Symposium on the Geochemistry of the Earth's Surface (GES-7) was held at the congress center in Aix-en-Provence, France, August 23–27, 2005. Over 100 scientists travelled to the meeting in southern France, motivated by their desire to learn the latest in Earth surface geochemistry. The symposium was organized by Jean Dominique Meunier of the CEREGE. The GES organization is a working group of the International Association of Geochemistry (IAGC). The principal focus of the GES meetings is on Earth surface processes. The GES-7 meeting continued that overall theme and focused on the multiscale environmental biogeochemistry of the Earth's surface. One notable session was 'Global element cycles and climate change through Earth history', which was held in honour of Fred Mackenzie. Other sessions included 'Environmental impact of waste management', 'Water cycle and resources: Geochemical tracers and contaminants', 'Biogeochemical processes in soils and ecosystems: From molecular to landscape scale', 'Weathering: Processes, rates and age' and 'Coastal biogeochemistry: From land to continental slope'. For those who missed the meeting, some of its major scientific results will be reported in a dedicated volume of *Journal of Geochemical Exploration*. The volume will contain 104 extended abstracts from the meeting and is due out before the end of this year. GES-8 will be held in Reading, United Kingdom, during 2008; it will be organized by Mark Hodson.