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## International Mineralogical Association

### FRANCES WALL IS NEW IMA COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

IMA reported in a recent issue of *Elements* that a new Council post had been created, namely that of Communications Officer. I can now reveal that the Council has duly elected me in this role. I enjoyed meeting IMA colleagues during my recent term of office as General Secretary of the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland and look forward to working with the international mineralogical community to publicise, discuss and explore the activities of IMA.

It is very much a testament to the success of *Elements* that my post is now required. An important part of the job is to channel IMA reports and articles into the *Elements* pages, where IMA has the opportunity to communicate with scientists worldwide – and perhaps as important – where, through its member organisations, scientists worldwide are able to communicate with the readership of *Elements*. There are 38 member mineralogical societies or groups in IMA. Seven of them are partners in *Elements* and therefore have plenty of opportunity to tell us of their activities. This leaves mineralogical societies (with a small 's' because some are groups within geological societies) in another 31 countries about whom I hope we will learn more in future editions of *Elements*. I plotted the seven 'Elements countries' and the 31 other IMA member countries on a world map to make the point that we can considerably expand the countries that contribute to *Elements* by welcoming submis-



Frances Wall, new IMA Communications Officer, studying maar deposits in the Auvergne during her 'day job' as petrology researcher at the Natural History Museum, London, UK.

sions from IMA members. My plan is to feature occasional articles from member countries, aiming eventually to complete the tour of all of them. Looking at the world map, one notices large gaps in the coverage in Africa, the Middle East and southern Asia, which have virtually no mineralogical representation. Presumably 'mineral physics is not big in Malawi', and of course mineral scientists working in these countries may be members of their geological societies, national organizations in other countries, and/or geochemical or clay minerals societies. But I wonder how well we reach these people, who must be most in need of good international communications. Perhaps this is a question I can try to answer in the coming issues.

Articles explaining the work of three IMA commissions and working groups have been published in *Elements*, and over time I would like to explain what all of the groups do. Editorial matter from the IMA Council will also continue, together with news of meetings and, never the most glamorous reading but essential reporting if we are to keep you informed of IMA activities and decisions, the accounts of business meetings.

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Seven national mineralogical societies are partners in *Elements* and members of IMA (blue). There are a further 32 IMA member countries (red).

