



# International Association of GeoChemistry

[www.iagc-society.org](http://www.iagc-society.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Clemens Reimann

Last week I spent my time submitting two papers and a conference abstract. I guess you can all imagine what I was busy with: editing the papers, and especially the conference abstract, to meet the publisher's demands. It was certainly not science! And I wondered, as I have often done before: Is this really effective? I was typesetting, and I was entering the authors' names and affiliations and the names of the suggested reviewers not only once but up to three times on the different websites. In short, lots of fun and very time consuming.

I am old enough to remember the time when we still had secretaries to do a lot of this work, when the journal offices offered help in typesetting and even went to the length of redrawing figures if the submitted version was "not good enough." All this is gone. When we want to publish in open access journals, we even have to pay for the publication of papers that we submit more or less print ready. These days everything is "do it yourself." The argument I often hear is, "But it is all so easy these days with the computer and much more effective." Is it really?

I have noticed the last couple of years that it is increasingly difficult to find reviewers for manuscripts coming in for publication. It is also becoming more difficult to find volunteers for the work in our learned societies. I hardly find time to read through the issues of the few journals that I still get. Where has all that time gone? I think you all know the answer: it goes to typesetting, filling in time sheets, writing travel bills of ever increasing complexity, preparing project proposals exactly according to prescribed standards, and reading through pages and pages of "author instructions" on the Internet. Is that really the way we want it? Do we really want less and less time for science and ever increasing bureaucracy? Is there really nothing that can be done about this?

If you want to see how science could function, I strongly recommend that you read the Goldschmidt biography by Brian Mason (*Victor Moritz Goldschmidt: Father of Modern Geochemistry, 1992, Geochemical Society*). Of course Goldschmidt was an exceptional geochemist. But do we really need to wonder why science made such great advances during these years? Might it have something to do with the fact that scientists were allowed to do what they are really good at: science instead of administration?

I have a very personal message to our young scientists: Do not lose sight of the fact that it is the science that is paramount, not all this bureaucracy that is forced upon us these days. Keep in mind that it is the science that counts and not the number of letters in the title of a paper or in the research highlights that many journals now require. It is the science that is the interesting and important part of our work. Solving the many societal needs that require the expertise of a geochemist is our real task!

**Clemens Reimann**  
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IAGC President

## GEOCHEMISTRY OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE (GES-9)

Superbly organized by Suzanne Anderson, the IAGC-sponsored GES-9 meeting was held on 3–7 June 2011 in Boulder, Colorado, USA, on the campus of the University of Colorado. Drawing more than 120 participants from 12 countries, the meeting addressed the following themes through keynote lectures and poster presentations: critical zone processes, organic contaminants, microbial geochemistry, environmental geochemistry, and landscape integration. A full report on the conference will appear in the next issue of *Elements*.



GES working group leadership. From left to right: Steven Banwart, Suzanne Anderson (GES-9 Chair), Jérôme Gaillardet (GES-10 Chair), Siggie Gislason (GES Working Group Leader), Mark Hodson (GES-8 Chair)

## CALL FOR IAGC 2012 AWARD NOMINATIONS

Now is the time for 2012 IAGC award nominations! The window of opportunity for nomination submission will extend through 30 November. The awards to be bestowed in 2012 are the Vernadsky Medal, the Ebelman Award, the Distinguished Service Award, the IAGC Fellow award, and the IAGC Certificate of Recognition. For a summary of the awards and instructions on how to submit your nomination, visit [www.iagc-society.org/awards.html](http://www.iagc-society.org/awards.html).

## 2012 PHD STUDENT RESEARCH GRANTS

Generously supported by Elsevier, the IAGC PhD student research grants help support the cost of analytical needs of geochemistry PhD students. Up to three PhD student research grants (US\$3,000 maximum) may be awarded annually, based upon receipt of deserving proposals, as determined by the Committee. Applications for 2012 will be accepted through 1 December 2011. Funds will be dispersed to winning applicants before 1 May 2012. Recipients will be profiled in *Elements*, on the IAGC website and in the spring edition of the *IAGC Newsletter*. Recipients will also receive a one-year complimentary IAGC membership. For application instructions and to download the necessary forms, please visit [www.iagc-society.org/phd\\_grants.html](http://www.iagc-society.org/phd_grants.html).