



European Association of Geochemistry

www.eag.eu.com

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Bernard Bourdon

Funding Geochemistry and Other News

For the most part, geochemistry is perceived as an academic discipline whose impact on society is limited. However, as time passes, geochemistry and its related multiple subfields have become essential in showing the way towards solutions for the major challenges that our society has to face in the future. EAG Past President Eric Oelkers, in a provocative plenary lecture at the Goldschmidt meeting in Knoxville, told us "how geochemistry can save the world." There is no end to the list of domains where geochemists can help in this noble cause. **Energy:** The future depends on finding and better managing new energy resources, be they unconventional gas and oil or new sources of uranium and coal, until other more renewable and ecologically friendlier energy sources can take over. The underground capture and storage of CO₂ also require the advanced and multifaceted knowledge of geochemists. **Water:** Being able to predict the quality of water resources and the pathways of contaminants released by human activities clearly requires the know-how of geochemists. **Mineral resources:** The scarcity of several strategic materials is a challenge for geochemists involved in understanding the genesis and long-term utilization strategies for ore deposits. This list could be further expanded by adding climate change, forensic geochemistry, soil

conservation, etc. However, while specific programs are targeted at these societal questions, it can be said that the geochemical community has failed at being identified as the prime science at the root of and leader in the applications mentioned above. From that perspective, our community should "reclaim its copyrights" and become more proactive in increasing its visibility to governments, funding agencies and the European Union. In my own subdiscipline, isotope geochemistry, it is rather obvious that the boundary between basic science and the science that funding agencies or governments include in their focused programs is very fuzzy. Many tools and approaches originally developed for understanding mantle geochemistry or the early Solar System have been used in more applied geochemical approaches. Overall, this is true for most geochemical fields, where much of the basic understanding upon which applied geosciences are based stem from more fundamental investigations that are nowadays unfortunately looked down upon by funding agencies. All this is probably rather obvious to most geochemists. Yet, I am convinced that one has to be relentless in making this message known, if we are to halt and perhaps even reverse the ever-diminishing funding stream for fundamental geochemical research. There is a clear need for raising awareness about this topic, and our societies should be at the forefront of this endeavour.

On another front, I would like to talk to you about the recently launched EAG blog (<http://blog.eag.eu.com/>). It is a new endeavour that started in March 2012; we have several regular geochemical bloggers and various intermittent

bloggers and storytellers, and naturally, contributions from the community are highly encouraged and more than welcome. I would like to congratulate Juan Diego Rodriguez-Blanco (University of Leeds) and his team, as well as Marie-Aude Hulshoff from the EAG, for making our association even more lively through this blog.

Bernard Bourdon, EAG President
Lyon, April 2012

goldschmidt 2013

Florence
Italy
August
25-30



Florence, birthplace of the Renaissance and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, hosts the Goldschmidt conference in August 2013. Set in one of the most beautiful cities in the world, Goldschmidt2013 boasts cultural delights and an excellent science program. The Goldschmidt conferences, co-sponsored by the EAG and the GS, is now the foremost conference in Geochemistry, with over 3300 delegates attending the 2011 meeting in Prague.

**Call for additional sessions starts
September 2012**

DO PUT THESE DATES INTO YOUR DIARY
AND JOIN US FOR WHAT LOOKS SET TO BE
AN OUTSTANDING MEETING.



goldschmidt.info/2013

