



## Terms of Reference

# IUGS Heritage Sites and Collections Subcommission

### Subcommission Name

Heritage Sites and Collections Subcommission (HSCS)

### Type

The HSCS is a Subcommission within the International Commission on Geoheritage (ICG), a scientific Commission established by and acting under the auspices of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) (<http://geoheritage-iugs.mnhn.fr>).

The ICG and its Subcommissions aim to actively collaborate and seek partnerships with other Subcommissions, Commissions, organisations and networks at all scales, from local to regional to international, which are active within the field of geoheritage and related disciplines.

### Objectives and Scope

The Heritage Sites and Collections Subcommittee (HSCS) focusses on aspects of a global geodiversity which are fundamental to the Earth Sciences and to the natural heritage of primarily our own planet, the Earth, but also including natural materials derived from elsewhere in our solar system, brought to Earth through natural (i.e. meteoritic) processes, or human exploration. This concept of geodiversity includes all aspects of the natural non-living, solid materials and processes that have formed our planet and solar system, and continue to shape them today, such as geological materials (e.g. modern sediments, rocks, minerals, meteorites and fossils), the processes that formed them (including by rivers and volcanic activity) and the landforms created by such processes (for instance cliffs and glacier-cut valleys). These materials can be found in both a natural, original context and in a cultural context, for instance removed to museums and other institutions for scientific study, education and other purposes.

From this primary resource, sites and specimens considered to be of especial importance as a natural heritage to be safeguarded for future generations can be identified as a 'geoheritage', and the cultural processes developed and applied to help ensure that this heritage is appropriately safeguarded are aspects of 'geoconservation'. It is this process of documentation, selection and conservation which the HSCS aims to promote and develop in a global context. The establishment of the Heritage Sites and Collections Subcommittee, as an integral part of the International Commission on Geoheritage at the 35th International Geological Congress (Cape Town, South Africa) in 2016, will enable the IUGS to take a leadership role in addressing such issues.

In addition, the HSCS can provide the context through which IUGS can actively collaborate with and contribute to other global geoheritage initiatives, such as UNESCO's World Heritage and Global Geopark programmes and IUCN's (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) activities and recommendations in the context of geoheritage. In particular, the HSCS will manage the scientific assessment of proposals for new UNESCO Global Geoparks as framed in the statutes of the IGGP.

Crucially, the HSCS can also lead in the development of procedures and processes to identify those geological and geomorphological sites and specimens that are truly of international importance to both the Earth sciences and global societies – a concept already established within IUGS in the early 1990s as 'Global Geosites'.

## **Membership and Governance**

1. The Heritage Sites and Collections Subcommittee (HSCS) is governed through its own approved statement of Terms of Reference (ToR).
2. The formal executive positions of the Subcommittee comprises a Chair and a Secretary and will be elected by majority vote of the Voting Members of the Subcommittee every 4

years, immediately prior to each International Geological Congress. Any nominations for these posts should be proposed, in writing, and seconded by existing Voting Members of the Subcommittee. Any proposed expansion of the Executive of the Subcommittee will be subject to the approval, through majority vote, of the Voting Members of the Subcommittee. All members of the Executive will have the right to vote on any proposals submitted to the Subcommittee by its Working Groups.

3. The Subcommittee will have the following structure:

(a) Executive (as defined above). Note that only members of the Executive may claim to represent the Subcommittee as a body established under the auspices of IUGS.

*(b) Voting Members:* A *Voting Member* of the Subcommittee and/or its component Subcommittees can be any individual, including representative of any institute, national committee, society or other organization, national or international, with an established profile in the geosciences, and relevant experience linked to geodiversity and geoheritage issues.

The panel of Voting Members of the Subcommittee shall initially number up to 20 persons, selected by the Executive and through independent nomination. The composition of the panel of Voting Members shall be reviewed every 4 years, following the appointment of the new Executive in accordance with Item 2, above, and any nominations for replacement posts should be proposed, in writing, and seconded by existing Voting Members of the Subcommittee.

It would normally be expected that Voting Members should spent no more than two consecutive terms on the panel for the Subcommittee, although the Executive reserves to right to extend this term should no suitable alternative candidate be available, for instance within the scientific discipline, geographical experience or institutional links of the existing Voting Member. In addition, former members of the Executive of the Subcommittee and its component Subcommittees, may, should they wish, continue to contribute to the development of the Commission as Voting Members, without requiring re-election.

All Voting Members will be expected to express opinions on and/or vote on any proposals submitted to the Subcommittee by its Working Groups.

*(c) Working Groups*, formed according to the process outlined in Item 5 below. Conveners and members of Working Groups will not have automatic rights to vote on proposals to the Subcommittee, unless they are also members of the Executive or Voting Members.

(d) *Correspondents of the Subcommission* will be persons and appointed representatives of institutions who have expressed an interest in the activities of the Subcommission and wish to receive news and updates, initially via email. If the number of correspondents reaches a level at which such communication becomes impractical, however, the Executive reserves the right to use the Subcommission website as the sole means of communication outwith the Voting Members and Working Group convenor group. Note that Correspondents will not have voting rights within the Subcommission, unless they are also members of the Executive or Voting Members.

4. Any mid-term vacancies which may arise *within* the established 4 year appointment cycles for the Executive and Voting Members will be filled at the discretion of the Executive of the Subcommission. In addition, the Executive of the Subcommission reserves the right to de-select any Voting Member or other affiliate of the Commission – or veto their initial appointment - should their activities be considered in any way inappropriate or in opposition to the ethos and aims of the Subcommission or they consistently fail to respond to consultations (e.g. to appropriately defined timescales).

5. *Working Groups*: With the exception of specific projects that the Executive may propose, it is expected that the majority of the work of the Subcommission will be carried out through thematic Working Groups. Each such Group will have a Convener who shall communicate directly with the Executive of the Subcommission, including supplying annual progress reports. Any other coordinating or committee positions that each Working Group may require will be at its own discretion.

Proposals for new Working Groups shall be submitted to the Executive of the Subcommission using the attached proforma and include an indication of likely membership (noting that such membership would normally be expected to have a broad international coverage of appropriate specialists and Convenors should not, unreasonably, seek to exclude any additional contributors). Once formal approval from the Subcommission is established, only then can the Working Group will be considered to be acting under the auspices of, or on behalf of, the Subcommission. Nevertheless, no Working Group or Working Group member should claim to represent HSCS, ICG or IUGS in any way unless they are also members of that organisation's Executive. Similarly, any proposals formulated by a Working Group must not be presented as HSCS, ICG or IUGS guidance or policy unless formal approval at the appropriate level has been achieved (see Item 6 below).

Should a Working Group fail to submit a report to the Executive Committee of the Subcommission for two consecutive years, the Executive, at its discretion, may choose to either appoint a new Convener for the Working Group, or close the Working Group.

6. Any proposals from Working Groups of the Subcommittee which may also require ratification by IUGS - for instance on policy matters or Global Geosite nominations - should first be submitted to the Subcommittee for approval for discussion, leading to a formal vote of the Executive and Voting Members. It would normally be expected that a proposal would be considered approved by the Subcommittee, should the number of votes supporting the proposal exceed 50% of the number of Voting Members. The Executive of the Commission reserves the right, however, to make a casting vote, should no clear decision be forthcoming from the voting process. Proposals approved by the Subcommittee will then be passed to the full Commission for further consideration, and if approved (by majority vote) will be passed to IUGS for consideration leading, if appropriate, to formal ratification.

7. The Subcommittee will produce an annual report in the format required by the Commission, to include a list of achievements, Working Groups reports and a work plan for the following year, including budgetary proposals.

## **Meeting arrangements**

Executive members of the Subcommittee will endeavor to meet at least once a year, preferably in connection with a major international conference event and/or at IUGS Executive Committee meetings. The HSCS also aims to collaborate with partner organisations to establish thematic sessions at key national and international meetings. Working Group meetings will be at the discretion of such groups.

## **Dissemination**

The Subcommittee will use its website, <http://geoheritage-iugs.mnhn.fr/>, to disseminate news and information about its aims, objectives and activities, including those of its Working Groups. The Annual Report of the Subcommittee will also be posted on the website.

## **Resources and budget**

The Secretary of the Subcommittee will prepare an annual budgetary proposal, based on a work plan, to be submitted to IUGS, via the Commission. Proposed activities will focus on the consolidation of the position and role of the HSCS in the context of other global and international initiatives, including participation in key fora and direct liaison/ discussion with key global players. Proposals by Working Groups for funded activities and meetings will also be considered. It is also expected, however, that Working Groups will seek funding and sponsorship from other organisations.

## **Review**

The Terms of Reference of the Subcommittee shall be reviewed every 4 years, on appointment of a new Executive, to ensure that they remain appropriate and effective in the context of the aims and objectives of the Subcommittee. Any revision will be subject to approval by the full Commission and ratification by IUGS Executive Committee and IUGS Council.

1/2018

# APPENDIX



## PROPOSAL TO FORM A WORKING GROUP WITHIN THE HERITAGE SITES AND COLLECTIONS SUBCOMMISSION (ICG): Proforma

<b>Proposed name for Working Group</b>	
<b>Convener</b> (including affiliations and email)	
<b>Secretary</b> (optional)	
<b>Working Group aims</b>	
<b>Proposed activities</b>	
<b>Deliverables and time scales</b>	
<b>Links to other WGs, initiatives, organisations, etc.</b>	
<b>Any other information</b>	

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**Please email the completed Proforma to Kevin Page, Secretary HSCS at:**  
[kpage@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:kpage@plymouth.ac.uk) (cc: [pdewever@mnhn.fr](mailto:pdewever@mnhn.fr)).