



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HYDROGEOLOGISTS

Australasia-Pacific region, 2015 report

Regional initiatives

There are new developments to report that boost groundwater advocacy in the Australasia-Pacific region. Firstly, a **new IAH New Zealand chapter** has been established during 2015, meeting regularly in Auckland on the North Island. A committee has been established led by **Theo Sarris** (theo.sarris@beca.com) who the Regional VP Dr Wendy Timms introduced to the IAH Australia meeting in Canberra, November 2015. The new chapter committee has been actively supported by the IAH International secretariat addressing various queries and providing promotional material. Dr Timms has volunteered to present a technical talk, and meet with this new group at their first meeting of 2016 (22nd February).

Secondly, to **support groundwater personnel in the Pacific Islands**, informal mentoring and support connections are commencing with senior IAH members in Australia. Peter Sinclair, advisor to SOPAC in Suva Fiji is helping to facilitating the connections. To date, a key connection has been made for groundwater applications of geophysics. Senior IAH members with experience in groundwater management of relevance to islands who wish to volunteer their time (phone and email support etc) to mentor groundwater personnel, are encouraged to contact w.timms@unsw.edu.au.

In addition, an opportunity arose for dialogue with Asian neighbours during holiday travels by the Regional VP. She met with several members of the **Vietnam Hydrogeology Association** (VHS) at the Hanoi University of Mining and Technology in late January, including their President Dr Doan Van Canh, and their VP Assoc Prof Dr Nguyen Van Lam. A picture of this meeting posted to IAH Facebook is [here](#).

ECN best presentation winners, 42nd IAH congress Rome

Young Australians won two Early Career Network (ECN) awards at the 42nd IAH congress in Rome. The Early Career Network presented prizes to **Clement Duvert** (for Best Oral Presentation), and **Luca Traverso** (Best Poster presentation). Both the winners work in Brisbane, Queensland – well done gentlemen! The awards were presented at the closing ceremony by a panel including Viviana Re and Dr Wendy Timms.

Australian National Chapter

The most significant groundwater event of 2015 in our part of the world was the **Australian Groundwater Conference** was held in Canberra, 2-5 November. Organised by IAH Australia and the NCGRT (National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training), over 330 groundwater scientists, policy makers and managers participated. The next conference will be planned for 2017 in Sydney.

In addition the IAH-NSW hosted a Joint Symposium with Australian Geomechanics Society on **Recent Developments and Experiences with Groundwater and Excavations**, with over 160 participants. The IAH-Western Australian branch organised a seminar on **Water**

Management for Shale and Tight Gas Resources, a joint initiative with other stakeholder organisations.

The National IAH Chapter, led by Chris McAuley, also actively contributed to groundwater advocacy with written submissions on various issues. During this year, IAH submissions were prepared for the Draft National Groundwater Strategic Framework 2015-2025, the NSW Aboriginal Water Initiative (NSW), a Discussion Paper on Our Water Future (Northern Territory) and a Parliamentary Inquiry into Unconventional Gas (Victoria).

Despite the distances involved travelling 'Down Under', we were fortunate to hear many international guest lecturers including:

- The **Darcy Lecture** was presented in 7 Australian centres during 2015 by Dr Rainer H. Helmig, head of the Department of Hydromechanics and Modelling of Hydrosystems at the University of Stuttgart. The 2014 Darcy Lecture by Dorthe Wildenschild was also presented in several locations early in 2015.
- The **McElhinney lecture** was delivered in several Australian centres by Ron Peterson on Drilling Fluids: A Common Sense Approach.
- And also the **NCGRT Distinguished Lecturer**, Dr. Peter Dillon, presenting on Progress in Managed Aquifer Recharge and the Water Banking Frontier.

Two IAH members in Australia received awards for their professional contributions. **Professor Craig Simmons** was named South Australian Scientist of the Year at the 2015 South Australian Science Excellence – congratulations again Craig! As the Director of the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training, Craig has been instrumental in advancing groundwater science, governance and training across the nation and beyond. The IAH NSW Branch presented the 2015 Woolley Award to **Professor Ian Acworth**, for his outstanding contributions as the founding director of the Connected Waters Initiative Research Centre at the UNSW Australia and past IAH VP for Australasia-Pacific. The Woolley Award is presented annually to esteemed NSW hydrogeologists at or near retirement.

There were of course, many other events organised by the various IAH branches around the Nation, and co-ordination at regular phone conferences of the National Committee. Memberships for the new year are now successfully flowing through the IAH Australia website. Further information on membership benefits, events, including IAH field trip reports, can be found in newsletters [here](#).

Dr Wendy Timms

Vice President IAH, Australasia-Pacific

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