



International Association of Hydrogeologists

Early Career Hydrogeologists' Network (ECHN)



# Annual Report 2018/2019

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## **1. Introduction**

The Early Career Hydrogeologists' Network (ECHN) was established during the reorganization of the commissions and working groups of the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH) on July 1st, 2011.

The ECH Network aims to support hydrogeologists in the early stages of their careers and to promote their involvement in IAH affairs. The ECH Network focuses on information sharing, networking and strengthening the status of early career hydrogeologists within IAH.

This report presents activities carried out by the ECHN from September 2017 to June 2019, as well as the plans for the coming year.

## **2. ECHN structure and ECHN Steering Committee**

The present structure of the network consists of a Steering Committee (SC), led by a Chairperson and two Co-chairs and Task Teams, supported by a group of Advisors composed of past members of the committee.

To ensure active participation of the ECHN steering committee, members are invited to join the committee for one year as part of the task teams. Following this time, members can re-apply if they are willing to continue involvement. Membership of the steering committee is not automatically renewed to allow for new member involvement, changing priorities of existing members and also reflect that involvement may be task specific or due to geographical location, e.g. assisting the organizing committee in a specific annual IAH congress.

After the IAH Congresses held in Dubrovnik, Croatia (September 2017) and in Daejeon, South Korea (September 2018) the ECHN Steering Committee was renewed as follows:

- Richard Hoffman (Belgium), Yassine Echelfi (Morocco), Jared Van Rooyen and Sabine Henry (South Africa) joined the SC [2017-2018],
- Rui Hugman (Portugal) and Gaathier Mahed (South Africa) decided not to renew their commitment with ECHN SC [2nd half 2018],
- Antonia Genot (Chile), Luis Camilo Suescún (Colombia) and Sten-Magnus Mostek (Japan) have been invited to be part of the SC as representatives of the ECH Branch in their countries [2nd half 2018 - 1st half 2019],
- Sebnem Arslan (Turkey) has retired from ECHN SC [1st half 2019],

- Carlos Maldaner (Canada/Brazil) resigned chair and became an ECHN Advisor and Jared Van Rooyen (South Africa), previously part of the Task Teams, was pointed to take the position [Sept. 2018].
- Raquel Sousa (Portugal) and Stefania Stevenazzi (Italy) accepted the invitation to be co-chairs [Sept. 2018].

### **Current steering committee**

Jared Van Rooyen (South Africa)	Chair
Raquel Sousa (Portugal)	Co-chair
Stefania Stevenazzi (Italy)	Co-chair
Tirza Contreras (Honduras)	Task team
Yassine Echelfi (Morocco)	Task team
Sabine Henry (South Africa)	Task team
Luis Camilo Suescún (Colombia)	Task team
Richard Hoffmann (Belgium)	Task team
Antonia Genot (Chile)	Task team
Sten-Magnus Mostek (Japan)	Task team
Viviana Re (Italy)	ECHN Advisors (Past Chair)
Carlos Maldaner (Brazil/Canada)	ECHN Advisors (Past Chair)

Information on the ECHN-SC is regularly updated and available online at:

<https://echn.iah.org/about>

## **3. Activities**

### **3.1. Meetings of the Steering Committee**

During the reported period, steering committee meetings were held on the following dates:

- March 30, 2018
- July 19, 2018
- February 06, 2019
- May 30, 2019

### 3.2. IAH Congress

#### *44th IAH Congress (Dubrovnik, Croatia)*

The 44th IAH Congress was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia from 25-29 September 2017. The congress counted on ~100 ECHs and was once again a great opportunity for ECH networking and development of our professional careers. ECHN activities counted with the great support of the Congress Organizing Committee and IAH Central. Following are listed the ECHN activities in the 44th IAH Congress:

- Attendance to IAH Council meeting by the ECHN chair at the time Carlos Maldaner.
- Highlighting ECHs with the ECHN Logo in the oral presentations (ECHN logo was made available for download in the conference website) and stickers on poster presentations.
- Affordable accommodation alternatives made available both on the conference website and ECHN one provided by the Korean OC.
- A thematic side session on “Successful projects: from application to management” which counted with the presence of senior hydrogeologists working in the government, industry and academia: Rowena Hay, director of the private consulting company Umvoto located in South Africa; Marco Petita, professor at the “La Sapienza” University of Rome, Italy; and Tibor Stigter, a senior lecture at IHE Delft, The Netherlands, who advice early career hydrogeologists by sharing their experience on project management and career development. The 30 early career had the opportunity to ask questions and interact with the panelists.
- ECHN SC members was actively present at the IAH booth during the whole conference.
- ECHN Annual General Meeting (AGM). Some 19 attendees were present most of whom were keen to learn more about how the network operates and showing interest in being part of the ECHN’s steering committee.
- Congress ECHN Social event: it started with an icebreaker dynamic followed by a hydrogeological challenge. The Social Session was an opportunity to attendees to meet junior and senior hydrogeologists, exchange ideas and have fun.
- Early Career Oral Presentation and Poster Prizes (organized in collaboration with the Organizing Committee), were awarded during the closing ceremony. The evaluation commission was composed by ECHN-IAH members (Viviana Re and Carlos Maldaner).

For the first time in an IAH Congress a keynote lecture was given by early career hydrogeologists. The talk, entitled “Responsible (ground) water Scientists- A heritage for future generations” was given by Viviana Re and Raquel Sousa invited by the IAH council.

#### *45th IAH Congress (Daejeon, South Korea)*

The 45th IAH Congress held in *Daejeon, South Korea* from 9 - 14 September 2018. The congress counted on 50-60 ECHs and was once again a momentous occasion to meet and socialize with early career hydrogeologists, especially from East Asia. ECHN activities counted with the great support of the Congress Organizing Committee and the IAH Council. Following are listed the ECHN activities in the 45th IAH Congress:

- Attendance to IAH Council meeting by the ECHN chair at the time Carlos Maldaner.
- Highlighting ECHN delegates on congress badges.
- Highlighting ECHs with the ECHN Logo in the oral presentations (ECHN logo was made available for download in the conference website) and stickers on poster presentations.
- Affordable accommodation alternatives made available both on the conference website and ECHN one.
- ECHN SC members was actively present at the IAH booth during the whole conference.
- ECHN Annual General Meeting (AGM). Some 25 attendees were present, most of whom were keen to learn more about how the network operates. During the AGM the new chair, Jared van Rooyen from South Africa was presented.
- Congress ECHN Social event: a large number of early and mid-career and senior members took part at the event. The hydrogeological challenge of the Social Function was a "PictoHydro" game.
- Early Career Oral Presentation and Poster Prizes (organized in collaboration with the Organizing Committee), were awarded during the closing ceremony. The evaluation commission was composed by present and old ECHN-IAH members (Viviana Re, Carlos Maldaner and Judith Flügge).
- There was the 2nd edition of an ECHN keynote lecture, this time given by Jared van Rooyen who shared his experience in the use of social media for promoting scientific research.

Furthermore, IAH Congresses always allow ECHN members to have the chance to disclose their work and talk, advice, receive suggestions and counselling from ECHs, students, professors and professionals attending the meeting.

### **3.3. World Water Day**

In 2019, World Water Day was remembered by ECHN with a video and a special message remembering the role of groundwater in safe water access to all, and this year World Water Day motto's WATER FOR ALL. This message was shared through the ECHN social medias and through the IAH newsletter (thanks to Kellie Nicholson).

## **4. Exchange and dissemination of knowledge**

Since the beginning of ECHN's activities, the LinkedIn group has been used as a platform for information sharing and discussion. Each member of the group can post jobs, conference announcements, groundwater events, make questions, leave comments and suggestions. The platform is used by ECHN to also promote ECHN and IAH activities, special sessions and the events and activities that are held at the IAH International Congresses.

The profile of the group is regularly updated by Tirza Contreras, Jared Van Rooyen (from 2019) and Sebnem Arslan (since 2019). The current number of members of the ECHN's LinkedIn group is 852.

The network takes the advantages of all social media platforms available nowadays, in order to communicate with the various young generations. Therefore, the platforms used by ECHN are:

- Facebook page, administered by Jared Van Rooyen, Stefania Stevenazzi and Richard Hoffmann, with 1777 followers (1731 likes), open since January 2014;
- Twitter account, administered by Stefania Stevenazzi and Luis Camilo Suescún, with 741 followers, open since December 2014;
- Instagram account, administered by Jared Van Rooyen and Sabine Henry, with 67 followers, created in September 2018.

The aims and usages of the social media platforms, as well as their pros and cons, are still a point of discussion with the IAH Council.

The ECHN website, launched in 2014 (<https://echn.iah.org/>) is currently administered by Raquel Sousa and Stefania Stevenazzi. The website is constantly updated with news and pictures to help promote both ECHN and IAH activities at international level.

## 5. ECHN Branches

The ECHN National Groups allow ECH's to network and share technical information with other hydrogeologists in their own country and/or city. Examples of events include side events at hydrogeological national meetings, technical presentations, hydrogeological tours or socializing with local/national experts in the field of hydrogeology.

Current National branches are:

1. West Australia
2. Brazil
3. Canada
4. Chile
5. Colombia
6. Italy
7. Japan
8. Portugal
9. South Africa
10. United Kingdom
11. U.S.A.

Contacts and other information (website, social media) are collected in the interactive world map that is present at the link: <https://echn.iah.org/echn-national-branches>

## 6. Outlook

The main objective of the ECHN for 2019/2020 are:

- Attract new ECHs to be part of the Steering Committee;
- Inspire ECHs to become members of IAH and the ECHNetwork;
- Maintain/improve the activities organized during the Annual IAH Congresses;
- Support the launching of National Branches and improve interaction between them and with the Central ECHN;
- Improve communication between IAH / ECHN community and with ECHN National Branches;
- Create a platform on the ECHN website for Career Development for ECHs;
- Support ECHs in their career development and daily life challenges we all face as junior hydrogeologist;
- Promote discussion between ECH within the hydrogeological community;
- Promote Groundwater awareness within the public domain through online community platforms and engagement activities.

- Support the interaction between Junior and Senior hydrogeologists, with special dedication to the Mentoring Scheme held by IAH.

10th July 2019

*Jared Van Rooyen*

*On behalf of the Early Career Hydrogeologists' Network*