

Report for 2014 – Ireland and Northern Ireland

IUGS and IGCP Committee for Ireland and Northern Ireland

Chair : Mr. Koen Verbruggen, Director of Geological Survey of Ireland, Koen.Verbruggen@gsi.ie

Secretary: Ms. Mary Carter, Mary.Carter@gsi.ie

Member: Dr. Marie Cowan, Director of Geological Survey of Northern Ireland

The adhering organisation is the Royal Irish Academy, contact Rebecca Farrell, R.Farrell@ria.ie

Irish Scientists are taking part in the following projects

IGCP Project 585: E-MARSHAL: Earth's continental MARGins

IGCP Project 587: The Ediacaran (Vendian) Puzzle

IGCP Project 597: Amalgamation and breakup Pangaea

IGCP Project 598: Environmental change and sustainability in karst systems

Main developments in Geoscience

Politics Plus Exchange Initiative

This project aims to enhance understanding between eight elected representatives in Northern Ireland and select Geoscientists from both Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland. The scheme intends to help MLAs establish links with active scientists and help scientists understand political decision-making and how they can input to policy development.

The first pairing project of its kind at any of the regional Assemblies, the project paired MLAs with a number of leading Geoscientists for the last six months. Over the course of the scheme the Geoscientists and the MLAs gained an understanding of how the Northern Ireland Assembly works, how legislation is made, and how they may inform the process. Projects undertaken included topics such as hydraulic fracturing ('fracking'), the impact of climate change on historic buildings in Northern Ireland, and health and the natural environment. The scheme is facilitated by the Northern Ireland Assembly Legislative Strengthening Trust (NIALST) in partnership with the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI), Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and the Royal Irish Academy (RIA).

iCRAG

A growing world population puts pressure on all commodities and environment. Ireland has a resource security problem that the Irish Centre for Research in Applied Geosciences (iCRAG) will help resolve. iCRAG will transform applied geoscience research in Ireland, delivering economic impact for a broad range of application areas and industries.

Geoscience underpins the discovery of raw materials, water and energy resources that are critical to the world's economy. With increasing demand and diminishing supply, focused innovations in geoscience are of paramount importance globally. Ireland is home to Europe's largest zinc mine, untapped hydrocarbon resources in challenging NE Atlantic deep water environments, and a diverse geological framework with important untapped seabed and groundwater resources. Forming an integrated team of internationally leading researchers and both large- and small-scale industry partners, iCRAG will carry out research to find and harness these resources whilst protecting the environment.

Led by University College Dublin, iCRAG partner institutions include Trinity College Dublin, NUI Galway, University College Cork, NUI Maynooth and Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. These will be supported by Government Institutions, the Geological Survey of Ireland, Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources, Teagasc, and the Environmental Protection Agency. There are 53 industry sponsors ranging from Irish companies to multi-nationals – including multi-company alliances PIPCO and Geoscience Ireland. iCRAG was established in 2014 by Science Foundation Ireland with funding of €18m along with an additional €8m from industry partners.

More information is on the website at <http://icrag-centre.org>