



INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GEODESY AND GEOPHYSICS
UNION GEODESIQUE ET GEOPHYSIQUE INTERNATIONALE

Strategic Plan 2026-2035

1. Introduction

The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) is one of the largest and oldest international networks of geoscientists, having been established in 1919 with the goal to strengthen international collaboration. Today the IUGG is a non-governmental, international scientific organisation with 75 member countries (as of 2026) operating under the auspices of the International Science Council (ISC). Through its eight Associations, the IUGG influences the research agendas across several Earth and Space Science disciplines, convenes scientific meetings, encourages the establishment of scientific data services, coordinates regional and global scientific projects, and seeks to inform scientific policy. The IUGG operates as a federation of these Associations, with primary responsibility to national adhering bodies (rather than individual members), thereby serving as a globally representative, cross-disciplinary advocate, that coordinates standards, large-scale programs, and cooperation across the full spectrum of Earth and Space Sciences. National adhering bodies play a central role as key interfaces between the IUGG and national geoscientific communities.

1.1. Research in the Geosciences

The research agendas in geosciences are developed by the IUGG Community of Associations and their sub-entities (commissions, divisions, services, working groups, networks, etc.). In addition, the IUGG Community initiate and manage Inter-Association and Union Commission activities, as well as liaise with a number of inter-governmental, national and civil organisations. Furthermore, the Associations maintain several essential services that provide data and analysis outputs for many scientific and international communities.

1.2. Scientific Meetings and Global Collaboration

The IUGG Community organise IUGG General Assemblies, Association Scientific Assemblies, topical meetings, workshops, and geoscience education events. These meetings and events attract thousands of scientists every year, and showcase the cutting-edge research undertaken by the scientists identifying with the various Association geoscientific disciplines, as well as provide forums for initiating and sustaining international collaboration. These forums facilitate the sharing data and analysis outputs that enhance scientific knowledge in the Earth and Space Sciences. In particular, the IUGG Community initiate and support international interdisciplinary research programs and projects, such as the World Climate Research Program (WCRP; 1980-present), the International Lithosphere Program (ILP; 1981-present), the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD, 2024-2033), and the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Science (2025-2034). Scientists from all countries are invited to participate in Association activities.

1.3. Informing Scientific Policy and Outreach

The IUGG collaborates with other organisations under the umbrella of the ISC, the United Nations, and others, to promote science and to inform scientific policy. The dissemination of scientific knowledge among its member countries, for the benefit of scientists all over the globe, and for the public in general, is an important responsibility of the IUGG. The IUGG and its Associations publish proceedings, newsletters, scientific journals, and are active on social media.

2. Mission Statement

To promote the study of the Earth and its environment in space, and to provide scientific leadership in addressing key geoscientific challenges, fostering international collaboration, disseminating knowledge for the benefit of society, and providing essential services to scientists and civil society.

3. Vision Statement

To be a global leader in advancing geoscientific disciplines, fostering sustainable development, enhancing the resilience of communities to natural hazards through scientific excellence, and advancing international cooperation.

4. Core Values – DORIC

The IUGG is guided by the core values represented by the acronym DORIC (**D**iversity, **E**quality, and **I**nclusion, **O**pen Science and **S**ervices, **R**elevance and **E**xcellence, **I**ntegrity, **C**ollaboration).

4.1 Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

The IUGG is committed to fostering a just and inclusive scientific Union where the voices of individuals of different genders, career stages, backgrounds, and nationalities can be heard. The IUGG promotes equal opportunities, respects diverse perspectives, and provides financial support for active participation for geoscientists regardless of their personal circumstances. The IUGG strives to ensure equitable access to research outcomes and collaborative opportunities for all member countries and individual scientists. The IUGG Community pays particular attention to global engagement and advancing the success of women and under-represented minorities in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

4.2 Open Science and Services

The IUGG champions the principles of Open Science, which strives to collect, manage, analyse and readily share research outcomes and data in the geosciences. The IUGG supports the principles of Open Access to scientific publications, and the development and open availability of scientific software. By advancing standards for data, models, and analysis products, the IUGG contributes to greater reproducibility, accessibility, and international collaboration in the geoscientific disciplines.

4.3 Relevance and Excellence

The IUGG Community is committed to promoting research that advances our understanding of the Earth system and planets, and contributes to addressing the critical global challenges of our time, including (but not limited to) natural hazards, climate change, and sustainability. The IUGG engages with the public, stakeholders and policymakers operating in the geoscience field, supporting scientific assessments by United Nations (UN) bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), among others.

4.4 Integrity

The IUGG upholds the highest principles and ethical standards in research and international collaboration, as promoted by the ISC. The IUGG's activities are guided by the principles of good practice based on scientific methods, including independence, openness, objectivity, robust methodologies, data handling, scrutiny and replication of results. These principles encourage the advancement of knowledge and the promotion of public trust in science.

4.5 Collaboration

The IUGG encourages scientific cooperation at all levels of society. The IUGG promotes collaboration among its Associations, with other scientific Unions and organisations, and researchers across the globe by providing a platform for scientific discourse, as well as providing direct financial support.

5. Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Advance and Promote Scientific Research and Knowledge

Objective 1.1: Support Cutting-Edge Research in selected Earth and Space Sciences disciplines

- Align the IUGG research agendas with research projects concerned with the Earth System, the near-Earth space environment, and planets, and promote and support research initiatives that address sustainability challenges in the widest sense.
- Encourage research projects addressing critical scientific challenges, with an emphasis on strategic, Association-led initiatives, that focus (where appropriate) on the “Global South” and other vulnerable regions.
- Promote interdisciplinary research within the IUGG Community, e.g., through joint Scientific Assemblies and workshops, inter-Association Commissions or projects, etc.
- Seek to improve engagement between the IUGG leadership group (i.e., the Bureau and Executive) and the Associations and Union Commissions by, e.g., IUGG leadership group attendance at Scientific Assemblies, ad hoc meetings at international events such as AGU, AOGS and EGU, and so forth.

Objective 1.2: Enhance Data Sharing and Service Accessibility

- Promote Open Access data repositories, ensuring free and equitable access to valuable geoscientific data.
- Advocate for the development and adoption of standardised data protocols to facilitate seamless data sharing and collaboration among all stakeholders.
- Encourage Associations to establish and maintain essential scientific services, e.g., for distributing data and analysis products to the scientific and broader community.

Objective 1.3: Align with International Science Council (ISC) Strategic Goals

- Stronger engagement with the ISC, including participation in committees, representation on high-level ISC bodies, and attendance at key ISC events, such as the ISC General Assemblies.
- Align the IUGG strategic objectives with the ISC's principles and long-term goals.
- Promote greater cooperation among GeoUnions on ISC-related matters and initiatives, e.g., such as the International Lithosphere Program (ILP).
- Advocate for the integration of geoscientific insights into national and international policy and decision-making processes.
- Encourage the Associations to contribute to the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (IDSSD) through appropriate initiatives.

Goal 2: Foster Collaboration and Partnerships to Address Global Challenges

Objective 2.1: Strengthen International Scientific Networks

- Organise and support international conferences, symposia, and workshops that encourage international participation, scientific exchange, networking, and education.
- Promote exchange programs and collaborative research projects that deepen global scientific ties and enhance shared expertise.
- Encourage Associations and Union Commissions to develop ambitious research agendas that leverage the IUGG's broad expertise and strong connections with other scientific organisations, space agencies, and national and international institutions.

Objective 2.2: Engage Effectively with International Organisations and Stakeholders

- Establish liaison mechanisms to align efforts and enhance impact with key organisations, such as those that engage in or promote geoscientific research (see <https://iugg.org/partners/partner/>), and their relevant program initiatives.
- Collaborate with governmental and non-governmental organisations on regional and global initiatives that promote science-based solutions to shared challenges.

Objective 2.3: Support Research that Advances the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Other Global Initiatives

- Align the IUGG research agendas and IUGG activities with the UN's SDGs, particularly in areas such as global change, water management, and sustainable urban development.

- Advance our understanding of climate and Earth System changes that have an anthropogenic cause, as well as encouraging research into harm mitigation or remedial strategies, systems and technologies.
- Promote research, outreach and education on topics such as natural hazards, early warning systems, and disaster preparedness strategies.

Goal 3: Inspire and Empower the Next Generation

Objective 3.1: Support Early Career Scientists (ECS)

- Ensure ECS representation on the appropriate IUGG Committees, so that the voices and perspectives of the next generation of scientists are heard.
- Encourage each Association to identify ECS representatives to serve in leadership positions, and to offer mentorship and the necessary continuity to these ECS so that they may make a meaningful impact on the IUGG Community's activities.
- Provide networking opportunities for ECS through both formal events, and informal groupings, across the geoscientific disciplines represented by the IUGG Community, in order that ECS can participate in cross-disciplinary research initiatives.

Objective 3.2: Promote IUGG Engagement in Universities and Research Institutions

- Develop outreach and training initiatives for universities, including educator-focused events that equip educators with the tools to inspire future geoscientists.
- Organise workshops for educators and students, e.g., during IUGG General Assemblies and Association Scientific Assemblies, and other IUGG Community events.

Objective 3.3: Advance Geoscience Education and Capacity Building

- Create and distribute educational resources appropriate for students, educators, and professionals to deepen expertise in the IUGG's Earth and Space Sciences disciplines.
- Support capacity-building efforts, especially in developing countries, to close knowledge gaps and to promote scientific equity, ideally in partnership with the ISC and other global bodies.
- Implement strategic science communication initiatives to "demystify" the geosciences and to promote public understanding through appropriate digital platforms and media.

Objective 3.4: Promote Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI)

- Provide guidance on DEI, focusing on increasing representation and participation of women and other under-represented groups within the IUGG Community.

Goal 4: Strengthen Governance and Operational Effectiveness

Objective 4.1: Promote Financial Transparency

- Implement detailed and regular financial reporting on IUGG and Association income, expenditure, and resource allocation.
- Centralise the Association accounts under a single financial system.
- Establish an independent Audit Committee to regularly review financial practices.
- Improve the tracking and reporting of fund allocation, particularly for ECS travel grants and workshop support, and evaluate the impact of all funding initiatives.

Objective 4.2: Strengthen Association Engagement and Coordination

- Provide the Associations with resources and support to enhance their impact and to ensure their voices are reflected in IUGG decisions and initiatives.
- Boost engagement from member countries through regional action plans, local events, and incentives for participation in IUGG projects and other initiatives.
- Implement strategies for improving the communications between Associations, Union Commissions, and adhering bodies, with a view to fostering collaborative and cross-disciplinary activities, as well as sharing insights and tips on “best practices”.

Objective 4.3: Optimise Bureau Operations

- Align budget planning with the IUGG’s Strategic Goals, e.g., by updating guidelines on IUGG support for symposia, strategic initiatives, support for the DEI and ECS committees, etc.
- Define clear responsibilities for members of the Bureau, e.g., by assigning individual Bureau members the task of engaging with each of the Associations.
- Develop annual Implementation Plans to drive strategic initiatives, as well as ensuring accountability and measuring impact and progress of all IUGG activities.
- Enhance the relevance and impact of Annual Reports and activity reviews by aligning them with strategic objectives.
- Improve the sustainability of IUGG operations, with a particular focus on lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

Objective 4.4: Strengthen Membership Engagement and Value

- Improve the perceived (and actual) “return-on-investment” for the IUGG member countries that contribute to the IUGG funding.
- Clearly articulate member benefits, and maintain regular communications with national adhering bodies, e.g., through online meetings.
- Expand geographic representation of IUGG country membership.
- Monitor and address membership issues, such as dues models, separate Association memberships, status of non-paying member countries, and regularly benchmark against other international Scientific Unions.
- Investigate different models of IUGG membership (e.g., individual membership, low or free national membership under special arrangements, corporate sponsorship, etc.).

Objective 4.5: Integrate Risk Management into IUGG Financial Planning

- Identify financial risk factors, e.g., dues issues, increasing costs, declining income, and develop mitigation strategies.
- Develop contingency plans for various financial scenarios, including potential funding shortfalls.
- Ensure that the IUGG Secretariat has a stable “home” and funding support for key personnel.

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