

# Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems (IGU CSRS)

## Report 2019-2020

A. Membership .....	1
A1. Structure of the Current Steering Committee .....	1
A2. Corresponding Members .....	2
B. Meetings .....	2
B1. 27 <sup>th</sup> IGU CSRS Colloquium: United States (2019) .....	3
B2. 28 <sup>th</sup> IGU CSRS Colloquium: Croatia (2020-2021) .....	3
B3. Participation in the IGU Conference in Istanbul (2020-2021) .....	3
B4. Participation in the IGU Conference in Paris (2022) .....	4
B5. Plan for IGU CSRS Colloquia 2022-2024 .....	4
C. Networking .....	4
D. Publications and Dissemination .....	5
D1. Publications Derived from Previous Colloquia Appeared in 2019-2020 or in Process of Edition .....	5
D2. Other Publications .....	5
D3. Digital Networking .....	6

### A. Membership

#### A1. Structure of the Current Steering Committee

- Co-Chairpersons
  - Serge Schmitz                      Belgium                      [s.schmitz@uliege.be](mailto:s.schmitz@uliege.be)
  - Valerià Paül                      Spain                      [v.paul.carril@usc.gal](mailto:v.paul.carril@usc.gal)
- Secretary
  - Fiona Haslam McKenzie                      Australia                      [fiona.haslam-mckenzie@uwa.edu.au](mailto:fiona.haslam-mckenzie@uwa.edu.au)
- Members
  - Suk Kyeong Kang                      Turkey                      [ecoksk@gmail.com](mailto:ecoksk@gmail.com) | [skang@ohu.edu.tr](mailto:skang@ohu.edu.tr)
  - Hualou Long                      China                      [longhl@igsrr.ac.cn](mailto:longhl@igsrr.ac.cn)
  - Aleksandar Lukić                      Croatia                      [alukic@geog.pmf.hr](mailto:alukic@geog.pmf.hr)
  - Lou Angeli Ocampo                      the Philippines                      [ocampo\\_louann@yahoo.com](mailto:ocampo_louann@yahoo.com)
  - Cornelia Steinhäuser                      Germany                      [cornelia.steinhaeuser@uni-muenster.de](mailto:cornelia.steinhaeuser@uni-muenster.de)
  - Marcin Wojcik                      Poland                      [wojcik.moskwa@gmail.com](mailto:wojcik.moskwa@gmail.com)

This structure is the consequence of two successive IGU CSRS Steering Committee (SC) meetings held virtually on 19 May and 11 September, 2020. In those meetings, five of the current members were appointed to join the IGU CSRS SC and one of the Co-Chairs and the Secretary were elected. Three issues are highlighted:

- i. Some of the previous SC members had served for eight years and/or had been previous Co-Chairs and in line with the leadership guidelines were required to resign in 2020. A previous Co-Chair, Ana Firmino, unfortunately passed away in May 2020. In recognition of her passionate quest to recruit young PhD students, the SC decided to name the annual IGU CSRS scholarships for participation in colloquia targeting PhD students from UN classified developing countries, the “Ana Firmino Scholarships”.
- ii. Previous Co-Chair Holly Barcus was elected as IGU Vice-President in mid-2020.
- iii. For the approval of the IGU Commissions/Task Forces — and their respective Chairs and Steering Committees — by the IGU Virtual General Assembly held on 21 August, 2020, the IGU sent two suggestions for the IGU CSRS SC composition:
  - a. Invite members from South/Southeast Asia, Africa and/or Latin America.
  - b. Observe the gender balance.

## A2. Corresponding Members

The number of corresponding members of the IGU CSRS is 567 in total from 65 countries as of 4 January, 2021. This is calculated by means of the e-mailing list (see D3).

Country	Number	Country	Number
Afghanistan	1	Malaysia	1
Australia	28	Mexico	1
Austria	4	Morocco	1
Bangladesh	1	Netherlands	8
Belgium	7	New Zealand	6
Brazil	21	Nigeria	3
Burundi	1	Poland	4
Cameroon	2	Portugal	8
Canada	56	Romania	8
Chile	2	Russia	3
China	17	Saudi Arabia	1
Columbia	1	Serbia	2
Croatia	1	Singapore	1
Czech Republic	7	Slovakia	1
Egypt	2	Slovenia	3
Ecuador	1	South Africa	7
Finland	1	South Korea	24
France	18	Spain	43
Germany	28	Sri Lanka	1
Greece	1	Sudan	1
Guinea	1	Sweden	5
Haiti	1	Syria	2
Hong Kong	1	Taiwan	2
India	151	Thailand	4
Iran	6	Turkey	3
Ireland	16	UK	17
Israel	4	USA	248
Italy	10	Vietnam	5
Ivory Coast	1	Others	5
Japan	115	<b>Total</b>	<b>566</b>

## B. Meetings

The annual IGU CSRS colloquium is the most important activity of the commission since its inception (originally as a Study Group so-called “Rural Systems”) in the IGU Conference held in Washington in 1992. They are a unique opportunity for academic collegiality and the interchange of experiences between worldwide rural geographers. Importantly, they always contain a 4-days fieldtrip developed in rural locations to know initiatives, experiences, economic activities, transformations, conflicts, etc., which are understood as living laboratories to explore and, in parallel, as arena for in situ academic debates regarding sustainability in rural areas. Typically, colloquia are progressively held in a different continent, each year trying to alternate Global North and Global South.

The 27<sup>th</sup> IGU CSRS colloquium was held in Minnesota and Wisconsin (United States of America) in July 2019 and the 28<sup>th</sup> was expected to be held in Croatia in August 2020, following the IGU Conference organised in Turkey, the location being chosen, among other reasons, because of the geographical proximity and the good air connections between Istanbul and Zagreb. However, the covid-19 pandemic has caused the postponement of the latter, to be held in 2021, in line with the IGU Conference in Istanbul also being postponed. It is the first time since 1992 that the IGU CSRS annual colloquium has not been held.

Logically, the IGU CSRS also participates in the IGU conferences, commonly by means of special sessions.

#### B1. 27<sup>th</sup> IGU CSRS Colloquium: United States (2019)

Website: <https://www.macalester.edu/geography/igu-csrs2019/>

This colloquium was themed *Sustaining Rural Systems: Rural Vitality in an Era of Globalization and Economic Nationalism*. With 55 attendants from 16 countries, it was developed in Minnesota and Wisconsin, *en route* and with paper presentation sessions held in Saint Paul and Eau Claire. The Co-Chairs of the organising committee were Holly Barcus (Macalester College) and Paul Kaldjian (University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire). The main aim of the event was to discuss how globalisation and economic nationalism impact rural areas. Although they are quite often understood as contradictory spatial dynamics, they happen in parallel. Additionally, and despite the global and the nation-state scales gaining momentum, the rural local scale remains important. There were four foci of attention:

1. Rural innovation and rural-urban partnerships.
2. Rural demographics, recognising diverse patterns.
3. Rural land-use transitions.
4. Transitions affecting especially the farming sector.



#### B2. 28<sup>th</sup> IGU CSRS Colloquium: Croatia (2020-2021)

Website: <https://www.pmf.unizg.hr/geog/rural>

This colloquium is themed *Rural on the Move: Transitions, Transformations, Mobilities and Resistance*. The event is organised by the University of Zagreb and chaired by Aleksandar Lukić. For the planned event in August 2020, there were 85 accepted abstract submissions from 30 different countries. In late 2020, a new call for August 2021 has been opened in order to open the possibility to submit new abstracts and, additionally, all already accepted delegates are kindly requested to confirm their decision to participate.

The main intention is to discuss on the notion of rural change, primarily its dynamics, intensity, persistence and interconnectedness. The countryside will be seen as an area experiencing rapid transitions and transformations (in different domains: economic, social, technological, political, cultural, environmental, etc.), mobilities (traditional and novel) and resistances to change (conservative and progressive).

#### B3. Participation in the IGU Conference in Istanbul (2020-2021)

The IGU CSRS has convened three scientific sessions for the IGU Conference to be held in Istanbul in August 2021, as follows:

1. *Food Market: From Global to Local and Vice Versa*, chaired by Serge Schmitz and Valerià Paül. The purpose is to document the world diversity of food processing, distribution and consumption patterns, with an increasing disconnection between producers and consumers, but at the same time acknowledging the initiatives “relinking” them.

2. *Living in the Countryside in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, chaired by Serge Schmitz and Holly Barcus. This session aims to enlighten about the cohabitation of people in the countryside with different migration patterns: those who have chosen to live there but also those who live there but did not chose.
3. *Global Countryside and Local Development: Facing Rural Problematics*, chaired by Eugenio Cejudo, Ana Nieto and Francisco Navarro. The aim is to discuss on the different practices of rural development according to various spatial contexts, applicable frameworks and underling philosophies.

According to the local organising committee the three sessions have received enough submissions to guarantee their proper development.

#### B4. Participation in the IGU Conference in Paris (2022)

The IGU CSRS has begun to discuss about the participation in this forthcoming IGU centennial conference by focusing on the history of the Rural Geography sub-discipline in the context of the history of geographical thought. It is expected to liaise with the IGU commission of History of Geographical Thought and with the local organising committee to hold session/s on this topic, trying to balance the different national geographical traditions with the global geographical community domain — i.e. discussing if the different cultural/linguistic traditions have led towards the development of various Rural Geography schools (e.g. Anglophone *versus* Francophone? Western *vis-à-vis* other trajectories?).

#### B5. Plan for IGU CSRS Colloquia 2022-2024

- The 29<sup>th</sup> colloquium (2022) will be organised in Egypt.
- The 30<sup>th</sup> colloquium (2023) will be organised in Poland.
- Currently, there are two bids for the 31<sup>st</sup> colloquium (2024). The decision will be made in 2022, as usually two years before.

### C. Networking

The IGU CSRS collaborates with other IGU commissions and related international, intergovernmental or inter- and multi-disciplinary groups. These include:

- Serge Schmitz is an editorial member of the journal *Geography and Sustainability*, an initiative largely supported by the IGU, and has contributed with a chapter on farming to the book *Geography and Anthropocene*, coordinated by Barbaros Gönençgil, Vice-President of the IGU, to be presented in the forthcoming IGU Conference in Istanbul.
- Since 2019, IGU CSRS corresponding members from Poland are part of the DESIRA (*Digitisation: Economic and Social Impacts in Rural Areas*) initiative, a EU H2020 Project coordinated by the University of Pisa on improving the capacity of society and of political bodies to respond to the challenges that digitisation generates in rural areas, agriculture and forestry in the next ten years (<https://desira2020.eu/>). The project has been granted for the period 2019-2023.
- In early 2020 a EU H2020 RISE project on sustainable development in mountain areas was granted (<https://www.highlands3.eu/>) for the period 2020-2023 (potentially extended to 2024 due to the covid-19 pandemic). In this project, IGU CSRS corresponding members from different Romanian and Spanish universities cooperate.
- On 22 June 2020, the Alliance of Poverty Reduction and Development (APRD) was officially approved by the Alliance of International Science Organisations (ANSO). This is a non-profit, non-governmental international scientific organisation founded in 2018 by the Chinese Academy of Sciences and 36 other international science and education institutions from around the world. On 17 November 2020, IGU CSRS SC/corresponding members participated in the Inaugural Conference of Alliance of Poverty Reduction and Development, ANSO & International Conference of Global Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development, held in Lincang, Yunnan Province, China, and presented the following keynote addresses:
  - o Holly Barcus: "From Local to Global: Considering the Importance of Place and Local Knowledge in Rural Sustainability".

- Hualou Long: “How to Measure the Efficiency of Targeted Poverty Alleviation in China: A Perspective of Third-Party Assessment”.

#### D. Publications and Dissemination

Academic dissemination has been a central concern of the IGU CSRS since its origins. Most of the early colloquia derived in conference proceeding books but some of them took considerable time to publish after the respective colloquia. Furthermore, in many countries a proceedings book is not considered a legitimate scientific publication. For these reasons in previous conferences it was decided that the results of the presentations held in the colloquia might be published by means of peer-reviewed conference proceedings and peer-reviewed papers in ranked scientific journals (commonly, by means of a special issue). The main weakness of the latter is that they appear after the event and they depend on the *ex post* submission of papers and the reviewing timing of the respective journal.

All these publication systems have been intensively discussed in the last years by the IGU CSRS SC. Hence, the current publications reflect different choices made between the IGU CSRS SC and the respective local organising committees.

##### D1. Publications Derived from Previous Colloquia Appeared in 2019-2020 or in Process of Edition

- For the 26<sup>th</sup> IGU CSRS Colloquium held in 2018, a book of peer-reviewed short chapters listed in a previous report was published. In addition, a special issue of the journal *Documents d'Anàlisi Geogràfica* — entitled “Rural Landscapes Beyond the Idyll” — was published in 2020 with papers from this event, available at: <https://dag.revista.uab.es/issue/view/33/showToc>  
The introductory section of the special issue: Paül, V.; Tort, J. & Trillo, J. M. (2020): Presentation. Rural Landscapes Beyond the Idyll. *Documents d'Anàlisi Geogràfica*, 66(2): 245–255. <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/dag.653>
- From the 27<sup>th</sup> IGU CSRS Colloquium held in 2019, currently two publications are in process of completion (expected for mid-2021):
  - A special issue of the *Geographical Review* entitled “Sustaining Rural Systems: Rural Vitality in an Era of Globalization and Economic Nationalism”, edited by Holly Barcus and William Moseley. The papers are beginning to be available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/utgr20/current>
  - A book entitled *Rural Transformations: Globalization and its Implications for Rural People, Land, and Economies*, to be published at Routledge, edited by Holly Barcus, Serge Schmitz and Roy Jones.

Approximately each one contains around 10 individual contributions.

##### D2. Other Publications

The IGU CSRS is a commission where academic collegiality produces outcomes such as publications written in collaboration or cross-changes in different instances well beyond the direct scientific dissemination derived from the organised colloquia. There are different examples of this relevant academic trend; in 2019-2020 two cases in point are as follows:

- Griffin, C. J.; Jones, R. & Robertson, I. J. M. (2019): *Moral Ecologies. Histories of Conservation, Dispossession and Resistance*. Cham: Palgrave.  
Included in this book there are chapters from various IGU CSRS corresponding members from Australia and Brazil.
- Since 2017, Valerià Paül is a member of the editorial committee of the *Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles*, the journal of the Spanish Association of Geography. One of the initiatives since then has been an invitation to renowned experts from outside Spain to contribute as invited authors. Two have come from the IGU CSRS, one in 2018 (Guy Robinson) and one in 2020:

Hoefle, S. W. (2020): Conservation Refugees and Environmental Dispossession in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Critical Geography. *Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles*, 84, 2895, 1–34.  
<https://doi.org/10.21138/bage.2895>

### D3. Digital Networking

Website <https://igu-csrs.github.io>

In mid-2020, we set up a new website of the IGU CSRS. Currently (January 2021) is being updated.

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ruralgeography/>

E-mail list [igu-csrs@okayama-u.ac.jp](mailto:igu-csrs@okayama-u.ac.jp)  
<https://ml.okayama-u.ac.jp/mailman/listinfo/igu-csrs>

Submitted by Co-Chairs



Serge Schmitz



Valerià Paül

Liège and Santiago de Compostela, 15 January, 2021