

Report to the Executive Committee of IGU 2009

This document summarizes the progress made over the last year and our plans for the foreseeable future.

Constitution of the Management Team

We are currently asking individuals who were active in other IGU initiatives if they are ready to continue their activity for the UN IY in their fields and are also inviting new members. We are seeking a team of young individuals who will have institutional support throughout the 4-6 years required for the entire exercise.

Regional Secretariats

Establishing these secretariats will be crucial for our success as a bottom-up organization. They will be responsible for coordinating activities within their respective language communities and for communication between the global secretariat and the local levels. These local actions include the scientific, political, and outreach (media/school books) activities. Additionally, it is vital for each working group of the initiative (political, academic, outreach), particularly in the early phases, that the regional secretariats assist in recruiting local contact people. Each language community secretariat will be responsible for the following:

- Establishing communication channels between members within the region
- Channeling communication between the world secretariat and the regional committees
- If possible, hosting conferences within the region.
- Encouraging the participation of national associations (academic geographers, applied geographers, and geography teachers) and local and regional geographic societies to participate in the preparation process for the UN IY
- Helping the general secretariat (Jena) encourage national IGU committees to establish national secretariats.

National Committees

In addition to the regional/continental secretariats, we would like to organize national committees for the initiative. On this basis, it should be possible to coordinate the activities of the different IGU Commissions and Task Forces, the geographical societies and departments.

Institutional Support

Financial support remains our biggest obstacle. The presentation of the IGU initiative for a UN IY to the Laboratory of Enlightenment was well received. We are now writing a proposal to the State of Thuringia's Ministry of Education, Cultural Affairs and Research for financial support (secretariat, conferences, publications, etc.).

Conferences and Presentation of IYGU

Ron Abler arranged a panel session on the Initiative for a UN Year of Global Understanding at the AAG 2009 Annual Meeting (March 22-27, 2009). Furthermore, the IGU Commission "The cultural approach in geography" will arrange several conferences in the next two years to discuss the overall aims of the IGU Initiative (see "International presentations of IYGU").