

UK joins the International Continental Scientific Drilling Program – workshop summary

The UK has now become a full member of ICDP (International Continental Scientific Drilling Program) with effect from April 2012. A launch meeting attended by 70 scientists was held at British Geological Survey, Keyworth in July 2012. The UK has always been an active member of the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program (IODP) but has never before participated as a formal member of the ICDP, despite involvement of scientists in a number of programmes. It has been recognised that it is important that UK scientists are able to participate fully in ICDP to initiate programmes and to allow them to collaborate with existing international science programmes involving ICDP. Recently the British Geological Survey agreed to invest in membership of the ICDP on behalf of the UK's Earth Science Sector to build national capability for the geoscience community. The membership allows UK scientists to now fully participate within ICDP projects via access to key geological sections in order to gain information on processes that cause global change, to understand the controls on resource development, to help monitor and model natural hazards (through borehole monitoring) and investigate fluid-related biological processes in the sub-surface. UK geoscientists will now be fully engaged in both IODP and ICDP and can help develop synergies between these programmes. At the same time the BGS will work with European countries through ECORD-IODP <http://www.ecord.org/> and the European members of ICDP to create a European infrastructure for scientific research drilling.

Programme for the ICDP-UK kick off meeting in July 2012

Welcome and introduction by Professor John Ludden. Introduction to ICDP by Uli

Harms.

Melanie Leng (Leicester/BGS). *SCOPSCO: Scientific Collaboration On Past Speciation Conditions in Lake Ohrid (progress on the deep drilling, the climate history, and evolutionary pressures).*

Philip Barker (Lancaster). *DeepChalla: prospects of deep drilling Lake Challa, Kilimanjaro.*

Henry Lamb (Aberystwyth). *The Hominin Sites and Paleolakes Drilling Project: current status, people and plans.*

Paul Pearson (Cardiff). *Drilling hemipelagic sediments onshore in Tanzania: past experiences, future opportunities and integration with proposed IODP drilling (with Bridget Wade).*

Stephen Hesselbo (Oxford). *Mochras revisited: a new global standard for Early Jurassic Earth history.*

Mike Branney (Leicester). *Miocene explosive super-eruptions near Yellowstone, and the HOTSPOT drilling project.*

Joanna Morgan (Imperial). *Joint IODP-ICDP drilling of the Chicxulub impact crater.*

Damon Teagle (Southampton). *Evolution of the physical, geochemical and mechanical properties of the Alpine Fault Zone: A journey through an active plate boundary (with Dan Faulkner, Elisabetta Mariani, and Catriona Menzies and the DFDP2 Team) with some extra thoughts on the Kelemen et al. Oman Ophiolite Drilling Project.*

Organisational considerations

A small group of UK scientists (Profs. Barker, Leng, Morgan and Ludden) are the ICDP-UK convenors for the first phase of UK membership. For this first phase, John Ludden is representing the UK on the Assembly of Governors, Executive Committee and Science Advisory Group. Responsibility for these will be shared as lines of operation are defined. UK geoscientists can contact members from this group for further information:

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/icdp/ukconvenors.html>

UK membership of ICDP benefits

Member countries are allowed to have a representative on the ICDP Executive and Assembly of Governors committees (EC, AOG). Also member countries may propose members for the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) as and when specific expertise is required. The ICDP contribution to scientific drilling projects is reviewed by the SAG, recommended by the EC and approved by the AOG. Negotiation for each project takes place between the ICDP representatives (Executive Agency) at GFZ Potsdam and the respective Principal Investigators, agreements are laid down in the Joint Research Venture.

UK geoscientists can now:

1. Apply to the PI's of existing projects for access to material and data that have been collected, and are (normally) out of embargo and published.
2. Propose research projects addressing the scientific aims of ICDP. Next deadline is 15th January 2013. There is a pre proposal stage where projects are assessed by the Executive Agency, SAG, and EC. If approved there are funds for an international science team workshop.
3. The second phase "Full Proposal" is made by the PIs and assessed by the Executive Agency, SAG, EC, and AOG.

Full details including individual steps and criteria for selecting ICDP projects can be found at:
http://www.icdp-online.org/front_content.php?idcat=334

Co-mingled funding

A key aspect to the workshop was the opportunity to capture issues specific to the UK community. An overall concern related to obtaining contributions to operational funding from NERC via Standard grants following ICDP's shared cost model (co-mingled funding). Some scientists felt NERC's position was not clear regarding their willingness to support drilling costs; although some examples exist where NERC have provided drilling contributions within Standard grant funding. Members of NERC PRC felt that on some occasions the need to support drilling had handicapped proposals due to perceived high risk, costs, and need to spread costs internationally. A particular issue is the timing of ICDP and NERC proposal deadlines. ICDP need evidence of supporting funding from member countries in advance of commitment to drilling but it is perceived that NERC require a firm commitment to drill and a low 'operational risk'. Ideally members felt that proposals could be submitted relatively early to NERC with a flexible start date of 2-5 years to align with the multinational funding streams. While this may not fit well into annual budgets the reality of complex international cooperation needs to be recognised. The group would welcome a statement of NERC's position.

More information can be found on the ICDP-UK web site:
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/icdp/home.html>