



International Commission on Stratigraphy

Minutes of the ICS Business Meeting, IGC, Cape Town, 31 August 2016

Present: Twenty four members of ICS and visitors. The meeting was chaired by Professor Stan Finney (retiring chair ICS).

Professor Finney (SF) opened the meeting at 18h10 by welcoming the participants and presenting the agenda.

1. Introduction

SF introduced the participants, listing the ICS officers and asking each person to state his/her role in the Organisation. In discussing the role of the Subcommissions, he invited subcommission chairs to review their voting membership, to invite new members, in particular to involve younger members, and to ask those who were no longer active to retire. He also asked the subcommissions to update their membership lists and to provide the Executive with up to date voting-membership lists.

2. Activities for the past year

SF next outlined the activities of the Commission over the period 2015-6. First, he discussed the revisions of the ICS statutes, including the proposed appointment of two new non-voting officers to the Executive, a computing officer responsible for maintaining the website, and a graphics officer, responsible for the production and maintenance of the geological timescale charts.

Next he presented the report for the IGC intercongress period 2012-16, outlining the highlights of that period.

Of particular significance over the last year has been the discussions concerning the potential formalisation of Subseries/Subepoch divisions of the timescale for the Cenozoic Era. It was agreed that this matter should be discussed and considered by the ISSC, chaired by Professor Werner Piller (WP). Professor Martin Head (MH) noted that settlement of these discussions was of central importance for the definitions that were awaited for the Holocene Series/Epoch subdivision.

Discussions then turned to the question of the possible definition of an 'Anthropocene' time unit. MH noted that a proposal for formal definition could be ready in c. 2-3 years time, the preceding period being an establishment of the narrative concerning this possible division. Professor David Harper (DH, Chair ICS-elect) made the point

that this term is already in wide use across the academic world and beyond, by different constituencies with possibly different definitions.

Next SF noted that several new GSSP proposals for stage basal boundaries were in the pipeline and are expected to be submitted to ICS for formal approval in the next period.

Finally SF noted a particular case of the unfortunate conduct of a voting member, explaining that he had felt he had to deal with this issue. He continued that it was inappropriate for voting members and others involved in ICS business to be anything other than polite to each other in their interactions and avoid comments of a personal nature.

3. Executive members

DH, in his role of incoming chair of ICS, proposed a vote of thanks to SF (retiring chair) for his tireless work in running the organisation for the last eight years. He also thanked the retiring Vice-President (Professor Shanchi Peng) and Secretary General (Professor Paul Bown).

The meeting was closed by DH at 19h25.