



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SEDIMENTOLOGISTS

Newsletter

October 2007

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REPORT

Soft-rock UK: Sedimentology in Britain

The British Sedimentological Research Group (BSRG) is the principal focal point for all aspects of sedimentological research in the UK. The group is an informal collection of sedimentologists from both Britain and the rest of the world. BSRG is affiliated to the Geological Society, the professional body for UK earth scientists. Anybody with an interest in soft-rocks can join BSRG – indeed the group has always been proud of the fact that there is no membership or joining fee, no forms to complete, and anybody who attends a BSRG meeting becomes a member by default. However, it is true to say that in more recent years BSRG has become a bit more organised, appointing a committee to look after matters and represent the subject area as needs be. Currently the chairman is Jon Noad (Shell Canada), secretary Gary Hampson (Imperial College, London), treasurer Jeff Peakall (Leeds), and industry liaison John Howell (Bergen). The BSRG website (bsrg.org.uk) is a useful resource, including information on conferences, funds, opportunities and other societies.

The aims of BSRG are: to provide a focus for sedimentological research both within the UK and internationally; to promote and support young research workers (PhDs and post-docs) in sedimentology; to organise and support high-quality research meetings including an annual meeting, and to provide a resource base for sedimentologists world wide.

BSRG organises an annual meeting, usually held just before Christmas and

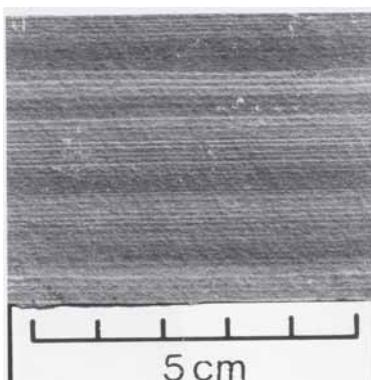


Figure 1. Laminites in the Caithness flagstones, Devonian lacustrine facies, NE Scotland, showing pattern produced by variations in solar output due to sun-spot cycles.



Figure 2. Bamburgh Castle (14th Century) in Northumberland, NE England, sitting on the Whin Sill (quartz dolerite intrusion) with Lower Carboniferous sandstones (at level of cross) below.

lasting 2 days, where several 100 attend. This is generally held at a university, last year at Aberdeen, at Durham in 2005, at Manchester in 2004 and Leeds in 2003. There is often a fieldtrip arranged, but on occasion we have had to suffer snowstorms or freezing winds, as December in the UK is not renowned for its kind weather. Workshops and short courses are also organised.

The next BSRG meeting will be held 16-18 December 2007, at the University of Birmingham, and will be organised by Greg Sambrook-Smith (g.smith.4@bham.ac.uk). Everybody, anybody, in the UK and neighbouring countries, or even farther afield, with interests in sedimentology in its broadest sense, is welcome to come.

BSRG is also involved with other meetings, co-convening or sponsoring them, organising sessions or helping students to attend. Upcoming conferences include: 16/07/07: 13th Bathurst Meeting of Carbonate Sedimentologists, UEA, Norwich; 21/11/07: Petroleum Geoscience Collaboration Conference 2007, Geological

Society, London. BSRG arranges field trips and short courses during the year, primarily for research students and postdocs, and in recent years these have included field-trips to the Isle of Skye and County Clare, western Ireland.

The last big conference was the meeting in Aberdeen in December 2006 convened by Adrian Hartley, and here sessions were held on Deep-water clastics (3 sessions actually), Gravity flows, Carbonates and their diagenesis, Sedimentation and tectonics, Applied continental and shallow-marine sedimentology, Fluvial and shallow-marine clastics, Sediment dispersal and provenance, and Continental sediments. There were 80 talks and 40 posters.

Clearly sedimentology research is alive and well in Britain. There are plenty of home-grown postgraduate students interested in the subject and a good number come from overseas too to add diversity to the research culture. Projects cover rocks of all ages from all parts of the world. Experimental sedimentology too, computer simulations, and isotopic studies are also popular areas of



Figure 3. Soft-sediment deformation of bedding cut out by a channelled cross-bedded sandstone. Is this cross-bedding tidal I wonder? Beneath Bamburgh Castle.

study. North Sea oil exploration has provided a rich source of research opportunities and in recent years there has been much effort to understand deep-water clastics for example, spurred on by the discovery of reservoirs in these rock-types. There are still many aspects of British stratigraphy that have not been looked at with modern eyes. Recent work on the Mesozoic of the Wessex Basin is producing exciting data in terms of isotope stratigraphy, useful for correlation and explaining the occurrence of black shales. Carboniferous strata are widespread in the UK, as well as Europe and North America of course, and still have new stories to tell relating to climate change, the development of icehouse times, carbonate platform evolution and cyclostratigraphy. Of note here is the application of the

Imperial College (London) Ocean Model (ICOM) to show that the tidal range in Upper Carboniferous epicontinental seas depends on the state of sea-level. During highstands a microtidal regime is established with water stratification, whereas during lowstand/transgressive times a meso- to macro-tidal regime is predicted, so with a greater abundance of tidalites.

It is impossible in a few words to write anything meaningful about specific sedimentological research topics being studied in the UK, so I just mention one contribution from the last BSRG Conference: Steven Andrews of Aberdeen University has recognised sun-spot cycles in lacustrine sediments from the Devonian Orcadian Basin (Caithness flagstones) and Neoproterozoic (1.2 Ga) Torridonian Group, both from



Figure 4. Several thin-bedded graded sandstones (storm beds?) with spectacular burrows descending from the base of the sandstone; is this necessarily shallow-marine? Just above Figure 3. Beneath Bamburgh Castle. Answers on a postcard please to m.e.tucker@dur.ac.uk

northern Scotland. This was achieved by measuring 1000s of lamina thicknesses and Fourier analysing the data. The cyclicity is actually visible in hand-specimen (see Figure 1). So the sun has been fluctuating in its imitable way on a decadal scale for 1000s of millions of years.

And to conclude: some pictures of beautiful sedimentary structures in Lower Carboniferous sandstones of northeast England, cropping out beneath the 14th Century Bamburgh Castle in Northumberland (Figure 2).

See the disturbed bedding, cut out by a channelled cross-bedded sandstone (Figure 3); could the cross-bedding be tidal I wonder? And then just above, several thin-bedded graded sandstones with spectacular burrows descending from the base of the sandstone (Figure 4) (necessarily shallow-marine?).

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REPORT

4th International Limnogeology Congress

Barcelona, Spain, 11-14 July, 2007

The International Association of Limnogeology (IAL) promoted the 4th International Limnogeology Congress (ILIC 2007), which has been held in Barcelona, NE Spain, from 11th-14th July 2007. This 2007 edition was the continuation of a congress serie dealing with the holistic study of ancient and recent lacustrine basin systems. The previous ILIC congresses were held in Copenhagen (Denmark, 1995),



Figure 1. Pre-Congress field trip 1. La Segarra Lacustrine System: Outcrop view of carbonate lake facies with siliciclastic influences (Lower Oligocene, Argençola Fm) (photo provided by Alberto Sáez).

Brest (France, 1999) and Tucson (USA, 2003).

Limnogeology aims at the multidisciplinary study of ancient and recent lacustrine systems and their palaeoenvironmental and environmental significance. As a consequence, the congresses of this emergent discipline deal with both integrative and specialized contributions from very diverse, complementary fields of research focused on any kind of lacustrine records. Since 1995 the ILICs have been the main IAL activity and have been promoting collaboration among researchers across all disciplines of lacustrine research, from related Earth Science disciplines (i.e. Sedimentology, Stratigraphy, Basin Analysis and Modelling, Structural Geology, Geochemistry, Palaeogeography and Palaeoclimatology, among others) to Palaeolimnology and Lacustrine Palaeobiology. These congresses also seek to provide a periodic updated overview of the state of knowledge



Figure 2. Pre-Congress field trip 2. Castillo de Sora Mountain: Panoramic view of Ramblian to middle Aragonian distal alluvial and lacustrine deposits in the northern side of Montes de Castejón (central Ebro Basin) (photo provided by Concha Arenas).

on lacustrine records and of advances in their integrative comprehension.

The 4th ILIC was organized by several Spanish universities (Barcelona, Zaragoza and Complutense de Madrid), research institutes (Earth Science Institute Jaume Almera, Pyrenean Institute of Ecology, Spanish Geological and Mining Institute-IGME), scientific societies (Institució Catalana d'Història Natural) and social institutions (Fundació La Caixa). Additional sponsoring and/or financial support was provided by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science-MEC, the Generalitat de Catalunya (Agència Catalana de l'Aigua, AGAUR, Institut Geològic de Catalunya-IGC), the International Association of Sedimentologists-IAS, the Spanish Council of Scientific Research-CSIC, the Institut d'Estudis Catalans and the Spanish Geological

Society-SGE. Some corporations (Aigües del Ter I Llobregat, ExxonMobil Upstream Research, Repsol-YPF) kindly supported too the congress activities. From this newsletter we would like to thank all these institutions and corporations that have made possible the congress, and also thank the researchers and professionals who were involved and participated in the congress.

The activities of the 4th International Limnogeology Congress comprised guest plenary lectures by some invited researchers and more than 300 oral and poster contributions presented by 250 attendees coming from 33 countries. In this new ILIC edition, topic oral and poster sessions was the main activity, including thematic sessions that in some cases were new in the ILICs.



Figure 3. Post-Congress field trip 2. Mequinenza system (SE Ebro Basin): Participants looking at lacustrine coal beds of Oligocene age in the active mining zone of Mina del Pilar (photo provided by José L. Cuevas).

In addition to the thematic sessions developed in the attractive venue of the CosmoCaixa building of Barcelona, more than 30 people attended the pre- and post-congress field trips that showed nice examples of both ancient and recent lacustrine records in NE Spain (eastern and central Ebro Basin, Pyrenees). Some photographs taken during the field trips are shown below. The guides for these field trips have been included in the Geo-Guías Series (No. 3 – Geological field trips to the lacustrine deposits of the northeast of Spain) published by the Spanish Geological Society-SGE.

The website of the Congress

(<http://www.ilic2007.com/>) will be active at least until the beginning of 2008. The electronic document including Abstracts of the conference is available there for all the interested IAS colleagues.

The next ILIC will take place in Germany in 2011 following the same principles and aiming at the same objectives of the former ones. We look forward to meeting again there our colleagues and friends.

*Lluís Cabrera
(on behalf of the Organizing Committee of the 4th International Limnogeology Congress)*

REPORT

Alluvial Fans 2007 Meeting

June 18-22, Banff, Alberta, Canada

ALLUVIAL FANS 2007 continued an informal tradition of specialized gatherings of alluvial fan researchers that began in 1995 with an SEPM-sponsored meeting in Death Valley, California, U.S.A. This was followed by ALLUVIAL FANS 2003 held in Sorbas,

Spain. The Death Valley and Sorbas meetings showcased alluvial fans in arid or semi-arid climates, so holding the 2007 meeting in Banff, Canada, allowed fans in quite a different environment (humid temperate, and post-glacial) to be examined.



Figure 1. Debris flow alluvial fans are a significant hazard for the Canadian Pacific railway track through the Rockies.



Figure 2. The upper part of the alluvial fan that feeds into Emerald Lake, Canadian Rockies.

The merits of holding a relatively small meeting at a location where talks and posters could be interspersed with field visits were again demonstrated. The meeting attracted a diverse group of scientists all of whom had a common interest in studying the same topic – alluvial fans – from a variety of perspectives. In addition to the focus on geomorphology and sedimentary geology that had characterized the previous meetings, issues of land use, hazards, dating of events and modeling of fan deposition were amongst the subjects tackled at the meeting. The informal format of the conference ensured lively discussion in the conference rooms of Banff Park Lodge, during the two day-long local field trips and in various restaurants and bars around the town in the evenings. There were 55 people at the meeting and as well as representing a wide variety of interests, they came from all around the world, with 22 countries and five

continents represented.

The main conference lasted 5 days, with three days devoted to oral and poster presentations (with mercifully no parallel sessions). There were three keynote oral presentations, by Adrian Harvey, University of Liverpool (a review of controls on fan morphology), Gary Weissmann, University of New Mexico (a summary of issues about hydrogeology of fans), and Tammy Rittenour, Utah State University (an update on new methods of dating fan sediments and events). There were 35 other oral presentations, and 19 poster presentations were displayed.

Two days of the meeting were spent on local field trips which were attended by all participants. The first trip went to sites in the Lower Bow Valley and Canmore areas of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, and the second trip visited sites further north and west



Figure 3. Hoodoos in fan delta gravels, Kootenay River, Canadian Rockies.

in the Upper Bow Valley and Yoho National Park. On these trips, a variety of fluvial-dominated and debris-flow dominated fans were seen and active streamflow processes were observed. An important theme on these trips was hazards on fans, and what humans have done to mitigate the hazards, as human infrastructure (roads, railway tracks, housing development) is frequently located

on fans in the Banff-Yoho region.

Longer field trips were also held, involving about half of the meeting's participants. Before the meeting, one field group with seven participants followed a route from Vancouver to Banff over four days, while a second group of 15 participants spent three days, starting in Calgary came via Kananaskis Country and the Columbia River valley to Banff. After

the meeting a select group of six hardy souls spent nine days travelling from Banff to Kluane National Park to see spectacular fans in Yukon Territory before returning to Calgary.

The principal organizer of the meeting was Philip Giles (Saint Mary's University) with assistance from co-organizers Gary Nichols (Royal Holloway, University of London) and David Wilford (B.C. Forest Service). IAS provided travel grants for seven international students, some of whom would not have been able to attend without this support. Funding was also received from the Society of Sedimentary Geology (SEPM) to support student participants and the Canadian Geomorphology Research Group (CGRG) provided funding for a coffee break. Sincere gratitude is given to each of these organizations for their assistance in contributing to the success of ALLUVIAL FANS 2007. A publication of papers, edited by Wilford, Nichols, and Giles, is being planned and a tentative agreement has been reached with the journal *Geomorphology* for a special issue expected to appear in 2008.

At the end of the meeting, the question «Where will the next meeting be held?» was answered with a presentation by Asma Al-Farraj. She has proposed to hold ALLUVIAL FANS 2011, in early

January, in Ra's al Khaymah, United Arab Emirates, with field trips extending into adjacent Oman. The 2007 meeting website will be kept online and updated with information about 2011 when it becomes available.

The locations of these Alluvial Fans meetings have been very varied, the attendees have been a diverse group each time, with only 6 Alluvial Fans diehards who have attended every meeting, but the common thread in addition to the overall theme has been the enthusiasm with which all participants have contributed to each meeting. The big conferences with thousands of attendees may present an opportunity for people to showcase their research, but small thematic meetings are the forum for the exchange of ideas and are generally much more fun.

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Gary Nichols

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REPORT

13th Bathurst Meeting of Carbonate Sedimentologists

16-18 July 2007, University of East Anglia, Norwich UK

The Bathurst Meeting, an international forum for the discussion of all aspects of carbonate sedimentology, mineralogy and diagenesis met at the University of East Anglia in Norwich UK between the 16 and 18th July 2007. 107 delegates attended representing participation from 18 countries around the world. The meeting started with a BBQ and drinks in the grounds of the university on the evening of Sunday 15th July. Despite the nationally stormy weather, somehow, the rain held off!

Some delegates had arrived early to participate in pre-meeting field trips to look at the Chalk of southern England (led by Andy Gale, Portsmouth and Ian Jarvis, Kingston London); the Plio-Pleistocene Crag deposits of East Anglia (led by Alan Kendall, UEA) or the Albian-Cenomanian red and white chalks of west Norfolk and their associated hydrogeology (led by Julian Andrews and Kevin Hiscock, UEA). It is rumoured that an impromptu tasting of fine English wines was a much appreciated cultural activity on the Isle of Wight.

The meeting proper started on Monday 16th and preserved the time honoured and cherished traditions of Bathurst Meetings: no parallel sessions and ample time (10 minutes) for discussion of each presentation. Delegates were thus able to attend all the presentations and had ample time to see and discuss posters particularly during the lunch breaks which were held in the poster room.

A wide range of carbonate-related research was presented and sessions covered continental carbonates, diagenesis, cool water carbonates, reservoirs, porosity, dolomites, platforms, slopes, and cycles and rhythms. A number of highly engaging and topical keynote presentations were given ranging from 'speleothems as archives' (Ian Fairchild, Birmingham); 'U-Pb dating opportunities' (Randy Parrish BGS Keyworth/Leicester); 'cement fabrics' (Tony Dickson, Cambridge) to 'peritidal carbonate cycles' (Dan Bosence, Royal Holloway London).

This 13th Bathurst Meeting was the first convened since the death of Robin Bathurst earlier in the year.

To commemorate, and celebrate, Robin's legacy, in the afternoon of Monday 16th a special session was convened, attended by Diana, Robin's widow, and their sons. John Hudson (Leicester) and Noel James (Queens) both contributed excellent short presentations on their reminiscences of the man, the scientist and those legendary early meetings. The session was completed by participants making oral contributions from the floor. The atmosphere in the auditorium was touching and warm and the Bathurst family have let it be known that they were very pleased and moved by the event.

Finally it was decided by the delegates that the meetings will continue and Bristol was chosen by vote for the next meeting in 4 years time: the infamous 'cow bell' was passed, with due ceremony, to Fiona Whittaker (Bristol) the next organiser.

Robin Bathurst lives on through these meetings: there can be no finer tribute to the man.

*Prof. Julian Andrews,
Dr Alan Kendall and
Ms Rosie Cullington (Organisers)
School of Environmental Sciences,
University of East Anglia
Norwich, NR4 7TJ, UK*

Sedimentology - Publisher's Report 2006

Circulation

Over **4,000** institutions had access to the current content of *Sedimentology* in 2006. An additional **996** institutions have access to *Sedimentology* content older than one year via licensed databases. These numbers are expected to grow during 2007.

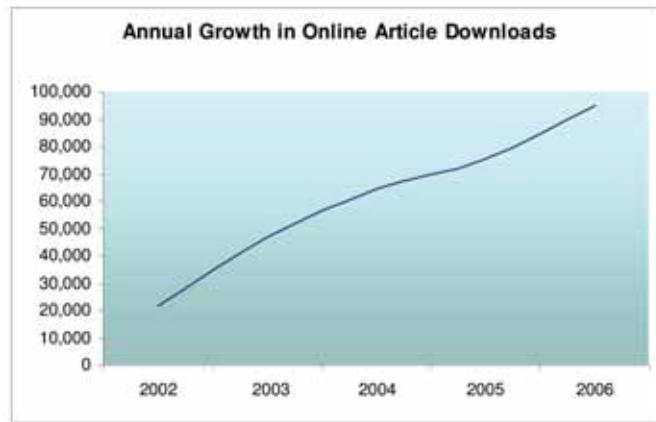
In addition there were **1,525** individual subscriptions to *Sedimentology* in 2006, mainly from members of the **International Association of Sedimentologists**.

Readership

Articles from *Sedimentology* were downloaded from the online version just less than **95,000** times in 2006, a growth of 25% on accesses in 2005. IAS Member downloads accounted for over 10,000 of these accesses.

Over **1,300** readers are signed up to receive an email table of contents alert for each issue.

The Top Downloaded article during 2006 was; 'Fluvial responses to climate and sea-level change: a



review and look forward' by Michael D. Blum and T.E. Tornqvist.

Citations

The 2006 impact factor is **1.746**, giving *Sedimentology* a ranking of 4th in the Geology ISI category.

Authors

In 2006 **180** papers were submitted to the journal.

Average time to first decision on papers submitted in 2006 is

currently **80** days, with time to online publication currently running at an average of 80 days, and time to print publication is 90 days.

Via the Blackwell Author Services website, authors have the ability to track the progress of their manuscript from receipt at Blackwell through the production process to publication. Registered authors benefit from free access to the full text of their papers in Blackwell Synergy, as well as a 20% discount on Blackwell publications.

IAS Postgraduate Grant Scheme

IAS has established a grant scheme designed to help PhD students with their studies. We are offering to support postgraduates in their fieldwork, data acquisition and analysis, visits to other institutes to use specialised facilities, or participation in field excursions directly related to the PhD research subject.

Up to 10 grants, each of about € 1000 are awarded twice a year.

These grants are available for IAS members only, and only for PhD students. Students enrolled in MSc programs are **NOT** eligible for grants. Research grants are **NOT** given for travel to attend a scientific conference, **NOR** for acquisition of equipment. Student travel grants for conferences can be usually obtained directly from organizers of the meeting.

The **Grant Scheme Guidelines** provide a summary of required information needed for successful a Grant Application. Applications are evaluated on the basis of the scientific merits of the problems, the capability of the researcher, and reasonableness of the budget.

Supervisor's Letter Guidelines list the information needed.

IAS Grant Scheme Guidelines

The application should be concise and informative and contains the following information (limit your application to 4 pages):

Research proposal - 2 pages maximum

Bibliography - ½ page

Budget - ½ page

Curriculum Vitae – 1 page

Recommendation letter (or e-mail) from the supervisor supporting the applicant is mandatory and the research proposal must be sent directly to the Treasurer of IAS by the application deadline.

Guidelines for letter from supervisor

The letter from the supervisor should provide an evaluation of the capability of the student to carry out the proposed research, the significance and necessity of the research, and reasonableness of the budget request. The letter must be sent directly to the Treasurer of IAS by post or e-mail by the application deadline (Patric Jacobs, Department of Geology and Soil Science, Ghent University, Krijgslaan 281/S8, B-9000 Gent, BELGIUM. E-mail: patric.jacobs@ugent.be). An application form is on our website (<http://www.iasnet.org>).

Grant application

Research Proposal –

- ♦ **Title**
- ♦ **Introduction:** Introduce the topic and provide

relevant background information; summarise previous work by you or others. Provide the context for your proposed study in terms of geography, geology, and /or scientific discipline.

- ♦ **Motivation:** It should have a clearly written hypothesis or a well-explained research problem of geologic significance. It should explain **why** it is important. Simply collecting data without an objective is not considered wise use of resources.
- ♦ **Methods:** Outline the research strategy (methods) that you plan to use to solve the problem in the field and/or in the laboratory. Please include information on data collection, data analyses, and data interpretation.
- ♦ **Facilities:** Briefly list research and study facilities available to you,

such as field and laboratory equipment, computers, library.

- ♦ **Bibliography** – provide a list of key (5-10) publications that are relevant to your proposed research. The list should show that you have done adequate background research on your project and are assured that your methodology is solid and that the project has not been done already.
- ♦ **Budget** – Provide a brief summary of the total cost of the research. Clearly indicate the amount (in euros) being requested. State specifically what the IAS grant funds will be used for.
- ♦ **Curriculum Vitae** - Name, postal address, e-mail address, university education (degrees & dates), work experience, awards and scholarships, independent research projects, your abstracts and publications.

Application deadlines: 1st session: **March 31**
2nd session: September 30

Recipient notification: 1st session: **before June 30**
2nd session: before December 31

CALENDAR



11th FRENCH CONGRESS OF SEDIMENTOLOGY

23-25 October 2007
Caen, Normandy,
France

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Web-page: <http://www.congres-asf-caen.unicaen.fr>

26th MEETING OF SEDIMENTOLOGY *

1-3 September, 2008
Bochum, Germany

Dr. Adrian Immenhauser
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Website: <http://www.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/sediment/>

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON TECHNOLOGY
ICHNIA 2008

1 – 5 September, 2008
Cracow, Poland

Prof. Alfred Uchman
Institute Nauk Geologicznych
Jagiellonian University
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Web-page:

<http://www.uj.edu.pl/ING/ichnia08/index.html>

POKOS'3 - POLISH SEDIMENTOLOGICAL CONFERENCE
REGIONAL CONTEXT OF SEDIMENTARY ENVIRONMENTS AND PROCESSES

17-19 September, 2008
Kudowa Zdrój,
Sudetes, Poland

Dr. Jurand Wojewoda
Institute of Geological Sciences,
University of Wrocław
E-mail: %20pokos3@ing.uni.wroc.pl
Web-page: <http://www.pokos.img.uni.wroc.pl/>

XIII LATINAMERICAN CONGRESS OF GEOLOGY & XIV PERUVIAN CONGRESS OF
GEOLOGY

29 September -
3 October, 2008
Lima, Perú

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Committee)
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Hydrocarbon Geology)
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Website (under construction) <http://www.congresosgp.com/>
Website Sociedad Geológica del Perú <http://sgp.org.pe/>



18TH INTERNATIONAL SEDIMENTOLOGICAL CONGRESS *

26 September
1 October, 2010
Mendoza,
Argentina

Eduardo Piovano
GIGES

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