



# INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL UNION COMMISSION OF MOUNTAIN STUDIES ANNUAL REPORT 2025

<https://igu-mountains.org/>

## A. MEMBERSHIP

- The composition of the executive committee of the Commission of Mountain Studies for 2024-2028.

### IGU CMS STEERING COMMITTEE 2024 – 2028

*Composition of the CMS Executive and Steering Committees;*

The Executive Committee and Steering Committee of the IGU Commission of Mountain Studies (CMS) collectively represent a highly diverse and internationally distributed group of scholars. Gender and career-stage diversity are also reflected within the Committee, bringing together internationally distinguished senior researchers and early-career scholars. This inclusive composition strengthens the collaborative capacity, knowledge exchange, and scientific leadership of CMS within the IGU framework.

Name	Institution / Position	Country	Email
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b>			
Chair Fausto O. Sarmiento	Full Professor; Director, Neotropical Montology Collaboratory, Department of Geography, University of Georgia, Athens	USA / Ecuador	<a href="mailto:fsarmien@uga.edu">fsarmien@uga.edu</a>
Vice-Chair Alexey Gunya	Full Professor, Department of Physical Geography, Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow	Russia	<a href="mailto:a.n.gunya@igras.ru">a.n.gunya@igras.ru</a>
Vice-Chair Irasema Alcántara-Ayala	Full Professor, Department of Physical Geography, Institute of Geography, National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)	Mexico	<a href="mailto:irasema@igg.unam.mx">irasema@igg.unam.mx</a>
Secretary & Website Node Neslihan Dal	Asst. Prof. Mountain Geographer, Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University	Türkiye	<a href="mailto:neslihandal@mehmetakif.edu.tr">neslihandal@mehmetakif.edu.tr</a>
<b>STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>			
Marten Geertsema	Dr. Ministry of Forests, Lands & Natural Resource Operations; Adjunct Professor, University of Northern British Columbia	Canada	<a href="mailto:Marten.Geertsema@gov.bc.ca">Marten.Geertsema@gov.bc.ca</a>
Matthias Schmidt	Prof. Dr. Institute of Geography, University of Augsburg	Germany	<a href="mailto:schmidt@geo.uni-augsburg.de">schmidt@geo.uni-augsburg.de</a>
Bob Nakileza	Dr. Senior Lecturer, Department of Environmental Management, Makerere University, Kampala	Uganda	<a href="mailto:nakilezabob@gmail.com">nakilezabob@gmail.com</a>
Sean Fitzsimons	Prof. Dr. School of Geography / Te Ihowhenua, University of Otago, Dunedin	New Zealand	<a href="mailto:sjf@geography.otago.ac.nz">sjf@geography.otago.ac.nz</a>
Dunlian Qiu	Prof. Dr. Executive Editor-in-Chief, <i>Journal of Mountain Science</i> , Institute of	China	<a href="mailto:qiudunlian@imde.ac.cn">qiudunlian@imde.ac.cn</a>

	Mountain Hazards and Environment, Chinese Academy of Sciences		
Tomás Ibarra	Assoc. Prof, Center UC of Local Development, Education and Intercultural Studies; Center of Intercultural and Indigenous Studies, Pontifical Catholic University of Chile	Chile	<a href="mailto:tucuquere.jti@gmail.com">tucuquere.jti@gmail.com</a>
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Lynn Resler	Prof. Dr. Geography, Department of Geography, Virginia Tech, Charleston	USA	<a href="mailto:resler@vt.edu">resler@vt.edu</a>
Dr. Kenichi Ueno	Assoc. Prof. Faculty of Life and Environmental Science, University of Tsukuba, Ibaraki	Japan	<a href="mailto:ueno.kenichi.fw@u.tsukuba.ac.jp">ueno.kenichi.fw@u.tsukuba.ac.jp</a>
Andreas Haller	Assoc. Prof, Institute for Interdisciplinary Mountain Research, Austrian Academy of Sciences	Austria / Peru	<a href="mailto:andreas.haller@oeaw.ac.at">andreas.haller@oeaw.ac.at</a>
Anand Malik	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Department of Geography, SSN College, University of Delhi, New Delhi	India	<a href="mailto:anandmalik1111@gmail.com">anandmalik1111@gmail.com</a>

### *Honorary Members*

In addition to the Executive and Steering Committees, CMS maintains a group of Honorary Members consisting of internationally distinguished scholars whose pioneering work has shaped the field of mountain studies and the development of montology. These colleagues have been formally recognised through the award of CMS Honorary Diplomas. With deep respect, we also acknowledge Prof. Dr. Jack D. Ives, an Honorary Member of CMS and a defining figure in global mountain research, who has now departed from among us. In honour of his outstanding scholarly legacy and enduring inspiration to the international research community, his name continues to remain on our list of Honorary Members.

Name	Institution / Position	Country	Email
<b>HONORARY MEMBERS</b>			
Axel Borsdorf	Emeritus Professor, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Interdisciplinary Mountain Research	Austria	<a href="mailto:Axel.Borsdorf@uibk.ac.at">Axel.Borsdorf@uibk.ac.at</a>
Yuri Badenkov	Emeritus Researcher, Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences	Russia	<a href="mailto:yubaden@mail.ru">yubaden@mail.ru</a>
Christoph Stadel	Emeritus Professor, University of Salzburg	Austria	<a href="mailto:christoph.stadel20@gmail.com">christoph.stadel20@gmail.com</a>
Jack D. Ives <sup>†</sup>	Emeritus Professor, Carleton University	Canada	
<b>GENERAL MEMBERS / NETWORK</b>			
Pablo Rebolledo	Director, School of Environmental Sciences — Andrés Bello University	Chile	<a href="mailto:rebolledo.dujisin@gmail.com">rebolledo.dujisin@gmail.com</a>
Vishwambhar Prasad Sati	Visiting Professor — IMPRI New Delhi / Mizoram University	India	<a href="mailto:sati.vp@gmail.com">sati.vp@gmail.com</a>
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Pere Sunyer	Postdoctoral Research Fellow — Ca' Foscari University of Venice	Italy	gabriele.orlandi@unive.it
Marco Albarracín	Senior Academic Researcher — Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana	Mexico	peresunyer@live.com
Alden Yepez	Ecohydrology Coordinator / Senior Researcher — Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador	Ecuador	marcoalbarracin@gmail.com
Tobias Boos	Principal Teacher / Senior Researcher — Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador	Ecuador	AMYEPEZ@puce.edu.ec
Daniela Salvucci	Researcher — Free University of Bolzano–Bozen	Italy	Tobias.Boos@unibz.it
	Associate Professor — Free University of Bozen–Bolzano	Italy	Daniela.Salvucci@unibz.it

### *Development of the IGU–CMS General Membership Network*

To strengthen the global visibility and collaborative capacity of the IGU Commission on Mountain Studies (CMS), a General Membership / Network System was launched in 2025. The system brings together scholars and practitioners worldwide and complements the formal Steering Committee structure. General membership is open to interested colleagues via an online application form (<https://form.jotform.com/242946151934966>) shared through conferences and CMS communication channels, enabling participation in information exchange, collaboration, and joint scientific activities.

## **B. MEETINGS**

### *a. The meetings your Commission organized or supported in 2025*

#### **Meeting 1: Frozen Pasts Conference 6 (FP6)**

Theme: Sciences, Humanities and Aesthetics of Ice through Time

Location: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador (PUCE), Quito, Ecuador

Dates: 7–12 July 2025

CMS Role: Main sponsor and scientific collaborator

Participants (approx.): ~300

Frozen Pasts Conference 6 brought together an interdisciplinary community working on cryosphere change, mountain archaeology, environmental humanities and cultural heritage. The opening programme included eight principal invited speakers (two women and six men), reflecting the international nature of the event. The Commission contributed as main sponsor and scientific collaborator, including the organisation of a CMS session on transdisciplinarity and indigenous ontology in high-mountain environments. This session examined the interpretation of snow-covered peaks as cultural landscapes and highlighted the value of Indigenous and local knowledge in socio-ecological research.

The conference strengthened the integration of humanities and environmental sciences within mountain research and enhanced cooperation among scholars working on Andean and global cryosphere issues. The photos include images from the Frozen Pasts 6 posters, scientific sessions led by CMS in Quito, and the PUCE rector's invitation to the CMS delegation (July 2025).

### **Meeting 2: International Mountain Conference 2025 (IMC25)**

Theme: Global Mountain Research for a Sustainable Future

Location: Innsbruck, Austria

Dates: 14–19 September 2025

CMS Role: Scientific programme leadership and session sponsorship

Participants: 1,043 registered participants

The Commission played a leading role in IMC25 through the coordination and sponsorship of six scientific sessions and workshops. Across these CMS-led sessions, 30 researchers presented their work (8 women and 22 men), covering themes including climate-induced landscape change, heritage, risk, modelling, socio-ecological sustainability and global research collaboration. A key academic contribution was the session “Montology in Memory of Jack D. Ives,” honouring the intellectual legacy of our late honorary member and advancing theoretical discussion on montology

Through this engagement, CMS strengthened international networks and interdisciplinary dialogue within global mountain research.

### **Meeting 3: SECTEI 2025 International Conference — Montology & Chimborazo**

Theme: Convergence in Ecoregional Sustainability for Science, Technology and Innovation

Location: University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, USA

Dates: 8–10 October 2025

CMS Role: Supporting partner and scientific contributor

Participants (approx.): ~200

SECTEI 2025, jointly organized by ESPOCH (Ecuador) and the University of Georgia and sponsored by CMS, focused on montology as a framework for socio-ecological sustainability in the Andes Mountains and global mountain systems. The academic programme included seven keynote presentations (five women and two men), alongside multiple thematic sessions on biodiversity, climate change, resilience, livelihoods and innovation.

CMS leadership contributed as keynote speakers and convenors, reinforcing the Commission's collaborative mission and strengthening long-term institutional partnerships in mountain studies.

### **b. Summary of topics and findings**

Across the three international meetings supported or organised by the Commission in 2025, key themes included climate-induced environmental change, cryosphere–society interactions, cultural landscapes,

biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, disaster risk, sustainability transitions, and the continued development of montology as an integrative framework for mountain research and studies.

### ***Frozen Pasts Conference 6 (FP6), Quito***

FP6 examined the scientific, historical and cultural meanings of glaciers and ice, convening scholars from the natural sciences, archaeology, social sciences and humanities. The opening programme included eight principal speakers (two women and six men), and CMS contributed through a session on transdisciplinarity and Indigenous montology. Key discussions stressed interdisciplinary knowledge, the recognition of glaciers as cultural–ecological heritage, the importance of Indigenous perspectives, and the social implications of cryosphere change.



### ***International Mountain Conference 2025 (IMC25), Innsbruck***

IMC25 hosted 1,043 participants and served as a major global forum for mountain research. CMS sponsored and coordinated six thematic sessions, within which 30 presenters participated (8 women and 22 men). Discussions covered climate-driven landscape transformation, heritage and identity, disaster risk and resilience, and international collaboration. A highlight was the CMS-led session “Montology in Memory of Jack D. Ives,” which revisited the conceptual foundations of mountain geography and strengthened research networks. The photos contain some images from the scientific sessions held in Innsbruck (September 2025) by CMS members.



***SECTEI 2025 International Conference — Montology & Chimborazo, Athens (GA)***

SECTEI 2025 advanced montology as a framework for ecoregional sustainability in the Andes and elsewhere. The programme featured seven keynote lectures (five women and two men) alongside interdisciplinary sessions on biodiversity, climate change, livelihoods, geospatial modelling and innovation. CMS leadership participated throughout, helping consolidate long-term partnerships and enhancing the international visibility of mountain sustainability research. The photos include images from some of the SECTEI25 sessions supported by CMS and chaired by the CMS president (information and photos featuring CMS management as keynote speakers can be found on CMS social media and website).



**C. Meetings and activities planned for 2026 and later years**

The Commission plans to continue strengthening international scholarly exchange, collaborative research and methodological innovation in mountain studies through the following forthcoming activities:

### *1. IGU Regional Conference 2026 — International Symposium of Mountain Studies*

Dates: 17–21 August 2026

Location: Istanbul, Türkiye

CMS will convene the International Symposium of Mountain Studies (Session Code: C24.37) as part of the IGU Regional Conference. The session will focus on the socio-ecological dynamics of mountain systems in the Anthropocene, including climate change, environmental hazards, rural transformation, migration, cultural identity and landscape change. Case studies from lesser-known mountains will be encouraged, highlighting the role of mountains as “natural laboratories” for interdisciplinary and multi-scalar analysis.

*2. International Conference IPSI-10. (March 2026)* Under the auspices of the United Nations University’s (UNU) Institute for Advanced Studies of Sustainability (IAS), CMS is co-organizing a public forum for the International Program of the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI), along with the Superior Polytechnic School of Chimborazo (ESPOCH) and the University of Georgia (UGA). CMS is also supporting the implementation of the action plan for IPSI promoting increased Latin American participation for the conservation of productive socioecological mountainscapes. The IPSI-10 will be held in Riobamba, Ecuador,

### *3. Online CMS Business and Research-Coordination Meeting (April 2026)*

Format: Online

An online Commission meeting is planned for April 2026 to coordinate upcoming CMS activities, research collaborations and publication initiatives. The meeting will provide a platform for exchanging ideas, strengthening international cooperation and planning CMS participation in forthcoming conferences and scientific events.

### *4. IGU Thematic Conference — Aligarh, India (November 2026)*

Dates: 3–5 November 2026

Location: Aligarh Muslim University, India

CMS has been invited to serve as an academic partner for the IGU Thematic Conference in Aligarh, subject to approval by the IGU Executive Committee. The Commission intends to contribute actively through keynote participation, scientific sessions and collaborative network-building, thereby strengthening its presence in South Asia and supporting scholarly engagement with mountain research communities in the region.

### *5. International Mountain Day Online Seminar (11 December — Annual)*

To mark International Mountain Day (11 December), CMS will organise an online global seminar in collaboration with leading international organisations and research networks working on mountain sustainability, such as: Mountain Research Initiative (MRI), ICIMOD – International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Alpine Convention, The Mountain Partnership (FAO-Rome), The Himalayan University Consortium (HUC). This annual event will provide a forum for sharing perspectives on current mountain challenges and global sustainability agendas.

## 6. CMS Mountain Podcast Series (from early 2026 onward)

CMS will launch a podcast series dedicated to current debates in mountain geography and montology.

Planned early episodes include:

January 2026 — Prof. Fausto O. Sarmiento, CMS Chair

February 2026 — Dr Carolina Adler, Executive Director, Mountain Research Initiative (MRI)

March 2026 — Dr Bob Nakileza, Perspectives from African Mountains

April 2026 — Dr. Carla Marchant, Perspectives from the Southern Andes

May 2026 — Prof. Alexey Gunya, Perspectives from the Ural Mountains

June 2026 — Prof. Lynn Resler, Perspectives from the Rocky Mountains

The series will contribute to outreach, knowledge exchange and public scholarship in mountain studies.

## D. Number of participants

Meeting	Approx. Participants
Frozen Pasts Conference 6 (Quito)	~300
International Mountain Conference IMC25 (Innsbruck)	1,043
SECTEI 2025 (Athens, GA)	~200

## E. Gender balance among organisational and scientific committees

Meeting	Female	Male	Total
FP6 – Scientific & organisational committee contributors	3	6	9
IMC25 – CMS-led session organisers	3	4	7
SECTEI 2025 – Academic contributors & organisers	5	4	9

## F. Gender balance among keynote speakers

Meeting	Female	Male	Total
Frozen Pasts Conference 6	2	6	8
IMC25 — Keynote speakers	3	6	9
SECTEI 2025	5	2	7

## C. Networking (distinct from Section B – Meetings)

### a. Collaboration with other IGU Commissions (2025)

In 2025, the Commission of Mountain Studies (CMS) cooperated actively with the IGU Commission on Biogeography and Biodiversity (CBB) through the joint organisation of the International Mountain Day (IMD) 2025 Online Seminar, held on 11 December 2025. The event attracted approximately 30 participants from different regions of the world and provided a shared scientific platform linking mountain geography with biogeographical and ecological research. The session opened with remarks by Prof. Fausto O. Sarmiento (CMS Chair), who introduced the epistemological and ontological foundations of montology. *Two thematic sessions followed:*

Session 1: Recent warming in mountain regions

Moderated by Dr Suraj Mal (vice chair-IGU Commission on Biogeography and Biodiversity)

Session 2: Socio-spatial transformations and environmental change

Coordinated by Asst. Prof. Neslihan Dal (secretary-Commission of Mountain Studies)

Participants highlighted the value of the joint CMS–CBB initiative in strengthening interdisciplinary dialogue and promoting comparative research across world regions. The seminar demonstrated the complementarity between mountain geography and biogeography, contributing to wider IGU goals of fostering international scientific collaboration.



### b. Collaboration with other international, intergovernmental, and interdisciplinary bodies (2025)

In 2025, the Commission of Mountain Studies (CMS) cooperated with several international and interdisciplinary bodies beyond the IGU framework. An important example was CMS sponsorship and scholarly support for the event “Territories with Memory: Ecological Legacies of Deserts, Seas, and Mountains,” held in Villarrica, Chile, on 11 December 2025 in conjunction with International Mountain Day. The event was convened by Prof. Tomás Ibarra (CMS Steering Committee Member) in partnership with: CAPES – Centro de Ecología Aplicada y Sustentabilidad, Centro UC Desarrollo Local, Centro Internacional Cabo de Hornos, Duoc UC Campus Villarrica. The two-day gathering brought together academic, Indigenous, community and international participants through lectures, workshops, artistic activities and interactive knowledge stands. More than 460 participants engaged in discussions on cultural-ecological memory, territorial identity and mountain socio-ecological systems. Through this collaboration, CMS strengthened interdisciplinary exchange, supported dialogue between scientific and local knowledge systems, and promoted Latin American perspectives within global mountain studies.



An important and far-reaching collaborative effort with the United Nations University (UNU) to advance the reach of the Satoyama Initiative in favor of transdisciplinary approaches for mountain conservation is being prepared for the application to create a UNESCO-Chair of Montology and Biocultural Heritage to be held at the Superior Polytechnic School of Chimborazo, in Riobamba, Ecuador, with the goal of stimulating a comprehensive effort to include Montology as the approach of choice for mountain research, education, planning, and management.

*c. Cooperation aligned with ISC–CIPSH interdisciplinary objectives (2025–2026)*

In support of the interdisciplinary missions of the International Science Council (ISC) and the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH), the Commission contributed to cross-disciplinary collaboration through the publication of a book series of Montology, published by Springer-Nature/Switzerland, with a Volume 3 completed in 2025 and the preparation of Volume 4 with the approved proposal for 2026. CMS also published an Special Issue of the journal Sustainability, entitled “Sustainable and Regenerative Ecologies for the Management of Mountain Forestscapes,” guest-edited by CMS Chair Prof. Fausto O. Sarmiento together with the IGU Secretary-General Prof. Barbaros Gönençgil and Assistant Secretary-General Prof. Pankaj Kumar. The submission deadline was extended from 30 September 2025 to March 2026, with ten full APC waivers and additional discounts offered by the publisher to encourage broader global participation. CMS has actively disseminated the call through its networks, strengthening international cooperation in sustainability-oriented montology in line with ISC–CIPSH priorities.

## **D. PUBLICATIONS**

*a. Publications directly related to CMS activities (2025)*

In 2025, the Commission of Mountain Studies (CMS) completed the editorial preparation of the third volume in its Montology Series, an academic book project directly linked to Commission activities. The volume is currently in press and scheduled for publication:

Yépez, A. & Haller, A. (forthcoming 2026). Water in Mountainscapes: Converging Nature and Culture. In F. O. Sarmiento (Ed.), Montology Series, Volume III.

This volume brings together interdisciplinary scholarship on mountain waterscapes and related socio-ecological dynamics. Contributions cover diverse world regions, including the Andes, Himalayas, Alps and East African mountains, and address topics such as hydrological heritage, socio-hydrological processes, cultural landscapes, and climate change. The work reflects the Commission’s ongoing commitment to advancing the montological framework and fostering global academic collaboration

*b. Open edition status*

Publication status: In press (publisher release pending)

Open access: To be confirmed upon publication

Final details regarding open access and distribution will be reported in the next annual report once publication arrangements are confirmed.

c. Commission website

Current CMS website URL:

→ <https://igu-mountains.org/>

The website provides up-to-date information on Commission membership, activities, networking initiatives, publications and upcoming events.

## **E. POPULARIZATION** (to highlight the expertise of geographers on social issues)

a. Publications for wider audiences

In 2025, CMS Vice-Chair Prof. Irasema Alcántara-Ayala published the English-language edition of her popular science storybook:

Alcántara-Ayala, I. (2025). *Erebus and the Moving Mountains*.

The book introduces children and general audiences to landslides, geomorphology and disaster-risk awareness through accessible storytelling, supported by a glossary of key scientific terms. This publication represents a significant contribution to public science communication and reflects CMS commitment to linking geographical research with society.

*b. Media engagement and expert contributions*

In connection with International Mountain Day 2025, CMS Chair Prof. Fausto O. Sarmiento was invited as Guest of Honour Speaker by the Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of Delhi (India) for the inauguration ceremony of their IMD celebration held on 11 December 2025. He contributed a prerecorded welcome address highlighting the significance of mountain research and international scientific collaboration, and acknowledging the role of CMS within the IGU community.

This invitation reflects the recognition of CMS leadership as a reference point in global debates on mountain sustainability and education.

*b. Media engagement and expert commentary*

In connection with International Mountain Day 2025, CMS Chair Prof. Fausto O. Sarmiento was interviewed by Agencia EFE, the leading international Spanish-language news agency, for a feature article on the global importance of mountain regions. In the published piece (11 December 2025), Prof. Sarmiento discussed the socio-ecological significance of mountains, their role in global climate and food-security systems, and the emerging interdisciplinary field of montology, also referring to the work of the IGU Commission of Mountain Studies.

Reference:

Agencia EFE (2025). Día Internacional de las Montañas: los glaciares (11 December 2025).

Available at: <https://efe.com/medio-ambiente/2025-12-11/dia-internacional-de-las-montanas-glaciares/>

This high-profile media engagement helped strengthen public awareness of mountain sustainability issues and highlighted the expertise and international role of CMS within the IGU community.

### ***Communication and Outreach***

In 2025, the IGU Commission of Mountain Studies shared updates on its activities, meetings, publications and collaborations through its website and social-media channels. These communications supported the international visibility of mountain research and strengthened exchanges within the CMS community.

- Website: <https://igu-mountains.org/>
- LinkedIn: (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/107578891/admin/page-posts/published/>)
- X : ([https://x.com/igu\\_cms?s=21](https://x.com/igu_cms?s=21))
- Instagram: ([https://www.instagram.com/igu\\_mountain/](https://www.instagram.com/igu_mountain/))
- Facebook: (<https://www.facebook.com/IGUmountain>)

### **F. ARCHIVAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

During 2025, the Commission transmitted to the IGU Secretary-General the following materials for archival purposes:

- the CMS Annual Report 2025
- announcements and reports related to CMS-supported international meetings (FP6, IMC25 and SECTEI 2025)
- documentation concerning the launch of the CMS General Membership Network
- information notices and outreach material shared through CMS communication channels

In addition, a selection of photographs from CMS-supported conferences and activities has been made available to the IGU for possible inclusion in the IGU e-Newsletter and digital archives. The Commission remains committed to contributing documentation and records of its academic and networking activities to support the long-term institutional memory of the IGU.

### **E. FINANCES**

In 2025, the IGU Commission of Mountain Studies did not receive a financial subsidy from the IGU Treasurer. All activities undertaken by the Commission during the year were supported through the institutional resources of Steering Committee members and collaborating partner organizations.

*International Geographical Union Commission of Mountain Studies*

*Secretary*

