

International Mineralogical Association

Activities' Report - Year 2018

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1. Introduction

Founded in 1958, the IMA is the world most important organization aimed at coordinating and promoting mineral sciences, in particular modern studies of the chemical-physical properties of minerals and their synthetic analogues, their use to develop industrial production and technological applications, to preserve cultural heritage, to improve human health and make it safer, to make mineral classification and conservation in the museums more rational and effective. Making the public aware of these scientific results and of their impact on human health and wellness as well as on the preservation of the environment is also a major issue for the IMA. IMA organizes scientific and managing meetings, promotes international cooperation among the present 39 member societies and represents them in the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS).

2. Main activities carried on by the IMA during 2018 relevant for Italy and for CNR

The XXII IMA Meeting and General Assembly was held in Melbourne on 13-17 August 2018. Details can be found at www.ima2018.com. Based on the peculiarities of Australian interests, the meeting mainly focussed on raw materials, mining processes and their environmental implications. Issues closer to the Italian mineralogical community and to CNR were also discussed, such as planetary mineralogy, physics and chemistry of minerals, geo-bio interactions, the development of mineral analogues with technological properties, mineral fibres and their impact on human health. Ten plenary were given by worldwide recognized experts including the IMA past-president, and 41 scientific sessions were organised. Among their convenors, many Italian scientists were active: Gilberto Artioli (UniPd; Geosciences and Cultural Heritage), Andrea Giuliano (Macquarie Univ.; Mantle xenoliths, kimberlites and related magmas: the diamond trilogy), Alessandro Gualtieri (UniMoRe) and Elena Belluso (UniTo associated to CNR-IGG; Mineral hazards: the environmental and human health problem represented by raw and ma-processed mineral phases with special attention to asbestos minerals), Federico Pezzotta (Museo Storia Naturale di Milano; Minerals and mineral museums), Massimo Nespolo (Univ. Nancy; Modular aspects of mineral structures), Marco Pasero (UniPi; The ever-growing mineral diversity in the Earth and the Solar System: new minerals, including nano- and biominerals, and related nomenclature/classification issues), Paola Comodi (UniPg; Unseen but integral to the Earth's interior: how minerals determine properties and processes).

The 2018 IMA Medal of Excellence in Mineralogical Sciences was awarded to Gordon E. Brown Jr (Stanford Univ.), www.ima-mineralogy.org/Brown.htm.

The IMA business meetings were also held during the meeting. A report prepared by the Italian delegates is available at www.cnr.it/it/organismi-scientifici-internazionali/relazione/239/ima-business-meetings-2018-report-en.pdf.

The IMA executive committee confirmed that the XXIII IMA meeting will be held in Lyon in 2022 and will focus on "Mineralogy and space"; special attempts will be made to make both the society and the media more aware of the recent results and of the importance of mineral sciences. This is actually a very important goal also in Italy, where this perception is presently inadequate.

Since the end of the meeting and until August 2020, the new IMA president is Patrick Cordier (Univ. Lille)

3. Activities carried on by Roberta Oberti within the Union during 2018 and impact on the Italian scientific community

The Italian representative had several collaborative exchanges with the IMA councillors, in particular with Marco Pasero (UniPi), the IMA secretary Hans-Peter Schertl (Bochum Univ.) and the IMA treasurer David Bish (Indiana Univ), and has promptly informed the Italian mineralogical community using the mailing list of the Società Italiana di Mineralogia e Petrologia. She also helped the IMA president, Patrick Cordier (Lille Univ.) to start a proactive collaboration with the International Union of Crystallography (IUCr) aimed at organizing in the next future an International Year of Mineralogy

4. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost

The IMA is the most important international organization for mineral sciences. It is crucial that the Italian community (there represented by the CNR) plays a proper role at the international level, and is proactive to solicit IMA decisions. Moreover, the annual fees for IMA membership (360 \$) are really low with respect to the benefits that can be obtained.

5. Evaluation of Italians' attendance and how to improve interest and involvement

The Italian contribution to scientific initiatives for the XXII Meeting and General Assembly held in Melbourne was important and appreciated; however, the now chronic lack of proper funding has limited the number of Italian participants. The SIMP Council has been continuously and timely informed on IMA news by Roberta Oberti, and often offered useful comments and suggestions. This work will certainly provide the Italian mineralogical community with new international contacts and the chance to be proactive in new projects and initiatives launched by the IMA, and perhaps IUGS (of which IMA is a member).

6. Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs (if known)

IMA officers do not represent their countries but their expertise and roles. Italian participation to IMA activities has been always characterized by a strong involvement and a high profile, even in the president role (Stefano Merlino (UniPi) 1994-1998). At present, Marco Pasero (UniPi) is serving both as Councillor and as vice-chair of the IMA Commission on new minerals, nomenclature and classification, the most active in the IMA. A number of further Italian researchers is serving in the IMA Commissions: Alessandro Gualtieri (UniMoRe) is vice-chair of the newly approved working group on "Asbestos, asbestiform minerals, and other respirable minerals that pose potential negative health risks", in which Giovanni Andreozzi (UniSapienza and CNR-IGAG associate) and Giancarlo Della Ventura (UniRomaTre) are serving as members. Cristian Biagioni (UniPi) is the Italian member of the Commission on new minerals, nomenclature and classification, Paola Comodi (UniPg) is serving as secretary of the Commission on physics of minerals, in which Francesco Di Benedetto (UniFi) and Mauro Prencipe (UniTo) are serving as members.

7. Conclusions

In 2018, the involvement of Italian researchers in IMA activities has been important and proactive, and was greatly appreciated. The Italian mineralogical community has been timely informed on each activity, and its efforts have been properly highlighted on the IMA stage.

Signature



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