

International Mineralogical Association

Activities' Report - Year 2020

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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 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 2020 relevant for Italy and for CNR

In 2020, the IMA Business meetings and the election of the new officers should have been held in Krakow during the European Mineralogical Conference, a good chance for a major interaction with the IMA officers. Obviously, ECM was delayed to 2021 (and recently we knew that it will be carried out online only). Consequently, the 2020 IMA procedures were continuously delayed until in December they were fixed to the next possible dates, i.e. 12 and 14 January 2021. During these meetings, Anhuai Lu (Beijing) was elected President for the term 2021-2022. Hans-Peter Schertl (Bochum) was elected First vice-president (and will become president for the term 2023-2024). The new Secretary (2021-2024) is Sylvie Demouchy (CNRS Montpellier), and the new concellours (2021- 2024) are: Ross Angel (CNR-IGG, Padua), Hiroaki Ohfuji (Sendai) and Catherine McCammon (Bayreuth, confirmed). Travis Olds (Pittsburgh) will serve as Treasurer up to 2024. The 2020 IMA Medal of Excellence in Mineralogical Sciences has been awarded to Georges Calas, (Paris). Some concern was raised about the 2021 IMA budget, and the punctuality shown by CNR in paying the annual fees was acknowledged. During 2020, the IMA website (<https://www.ima-mineralogy.org/>) has been greatly improved and continuously updated, and the archives on IMA history and documents are now almost completely digitalised. The next IMA General Assembly should hopefully be held in July 2022 in Lyon, and its scientific organization is almost complete. The Italian mineralogical community has proposed a number of scientific sessions as well as of pre- and post-meeting field trips. Actions were proposed and discussed which are aimed at enhancing the perception of the importance of mineralogical sciences during the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development (YIBSSD 2022, see www.iybssd.org for more detail), of which IMA is one of the Founding Unions. Many of these actions will profit of media coverage during the IMA meeting in Lyon. A working group has been nominated for this task, which includes Michele Zema (UniPv, CNR-IGG associate, and Executive Outreach Officer of the International Union of Crystallography, IUCr, of which CNR is an adhering body, and for which the Italian community and a number of CNR Institutes are very proactive), as well as Giuseppe Cruciani (UniFe), a former president of the SIMP.

3. Activities carried on by Roberta Oberti within the Union during 2020 and impact on the Italian scientific community

The Italian representative had several collaborative exchanges with the IMA president and secretary in force (Patrick Cordier, Paris and Hans-Peter Schertl, Bochum) and the IMA councillor Marco Pasero (UniPi), and has promptly informed the Italian mineralogical community using the mailing list of the Società Italiana di Mineralogia e Petrologia (SIMP). Moreover, she prompted planning of Italian activities to be held during IYBSSD in order to improve communication on the impact of mineralogical studies on sciences, in particular on geological, environmental and materials studies and on society.

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 if compared to the benefits that can be obtained for Italian researchers.

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


The Italian contribution to scientific initiatives of IMA in 2020 (as in previous years) was important and appreciated.

6. Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs

IMA officers do not represent their countries but their expertise and roles. Italian participation to IMA activities has always been characterized by a strong involvement and a high profile, even in the presidential role (Stefano Merlino (UniPi) 1994-1998). At present, Marco Pasero (UniPi) is serving both as Councillor (up to 2022) and as vice-chair of the IMA Commission on new minerals, nomenclature and classification, the most active in the IMA. Ross Angel (CNR-IGG, Padua) has recently been elected councillor for the term 2021-2024. 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. Ferdinando Bosi (Sapienza RM) 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

The involvement of Italian researchers in IMA activities which could be held in 2020 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.



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