

INQUA – International Union for Quaternary

Activities' Report - Year 2023

Giovanni Monegato

1. Introduction

The International Union for Quaternary (INQUA) was founded in 1928 from a scientific research group with the goal of improving the knowledge of environmental changes during glacial periods through multidisciplinary research. At Present 41 countries are INQUA members (34 are contributors and decision makers) contribute to INQUA initiatives; these are partially summarized in the last issue of Quaternary Perspectives (2 issues, June and December 2023). In the last INQUA Congress in Rome about fifteen countries showed their interest in becoming member or returning as contributors; their delegate participated as auditors.

INQUA activities restarted regularly during 2023, including the meetings of the Executive Committee re-started to join in person.

At December 1st 2020 INQUA was registered as INQUA Foundation incorporated under the laws of the Netherlands and registered with the trade register of the Chambers of Commerce under number 81067321. The foundation has its official seat in the municipality of Utrecht and its business office at Princetonlaan 6, 3584CB Utrecht, the Netherlands, at the Geological Survey of the Netherlands (TNO). The webpage of INQUA is: <https://www.inqua.org/about/foundation>

Since 2021 INQUA newsletter service is active thanks to the recruitment of new secretary staff. During 2022 this service became monthly and includes updates on INQUA activities.

On March 13th 2022 INQUA released a public statement of condemn of the Ukraine conflict, interrupting the cooperation with Russian and Belarus institutions. Thus, the delegates of these countries were not allowed to participate at the Congress in Rome.

2. Main activities carried on by INQUA during 2023 relevant for Italy and for CNR

From 13 to 20 July 2023 the XXI INQUA Congress took place in Rome, in the Roma Sapienza campus and co-organized by the CNR and AIQUA (Italian association for Quaternary Study). 89 countries were represented by 2749 delegates, a larger attendance in respect to the previous congresses. 143 sessions were organized, about 14 for each day. About half of the delegates were ECR (more than 1300 including 813 Ph.D and Msc students), the highest in the INQUA Congress history.

Even in 2023 many International Focus Group (IFG) and Project had an Italian leader:

- HYPEDAE (PalaeoHYdrological, -PEDological and -AEolian processes shaping Quaternary landscapes) IFG sponsored by TERPRO and coordinated by Alessandro Fontana, University of Padova;
- EDITH (from Earthquake Deformation to seismic Hazard assessment), Project sponsored by TERPRO and coordinated by Franz Livio of University of Insubria.
- NEPTUNE Project sponsored by CMP and coordinated by Gaia Mattei of the Partenope University of Napoli.
- LEMON (Landscape Evolution Marker Online Network), Project sponsored by TERPRO and coordinated by Nicolò Parrino of the University of Palermo.
- INQUA-MARE (INtegrated QUaternary MARine REcord at Sensitive Latitudes), Project sponsored by CMP and coordinated by Karen Gariboldi of University of Pisa.
- DATESTRA (Database of Terrestrial European Stratigraphy), IFG sponsored by SACCOM and coordinated by Perluigi Pieruccini of University of Torino.

Guido Stefano Mariani and Francesca Ferrario are editors of the journal Quaternary Perspectives. Pierluigi Pieruccini ed Andrea Zerboni are Associated Editors of the Scientific Journal of INQUA, Quaternary International.

Italy hosted in 2023 several researchers among the INQUA Fellowship program. Finally, Mauro Coltorti received the INQUA Honorary Fellowship.

3. Activities carried on by Giovanni Monegato within the Union during 2023 and impact on the Italian scientific community

During 2023 I was involved in as member of the organizing committee of the XXI INQUA Congress as co-chair of the Scientific Program Committee for the organization and scheduling of the Congress program. From January to May 2023 many meetings took place in Rome with the INQUA President Thijs van Kolfschoten and the EC members, in order to define the sessions, evaluating grant applications, and for logistic questions.

During the XXI INQUA Congress I participated, as Italian voting delegate, at the meeting of the INQUA International Council, in which the following issues were discussed: 1) the several initiatives of the outgoing EC; 2) the proposal for changing the managing of INQUA in the following four-years mandate; 3) the nominations for the new members of the EC and the venue for the XXII INQUA Congress. Then we voted for these issues.

During 2023, many meetings took place for the METIQ Project and the Quaternary Map of Italy at the scale 1:500.000 was presented at the Congress in a dedicated scientific session and exhibition space. The working group continued its activity since the end of the 2023 in order to finalize the METIQ Project for the subsequent year.

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

The planned activities for the XXI International Congress involved the Italian Quaternary community with multidisciplinary works in which many early career researchers of Public research (CNR, universities, INGV, OGS, ISPRA) are involved. These activities ensure continuity and success for the Italian research in national and international frameworks, as stated by the involvement in INQUA projects.

The XXI INQUA Congress was successful both from the attendance and for media visibility. The opening ceremony was honored by the presence of the President of the Italian Republic and by the minister of University and Research; while the closing ceremony had the transfer of the venue with India, for the XXII Congress in 2027, at the presence of the Indian Ambassador in Italy.

The subjects of the funded INQUA Projects, also looking at the XXI International Congress of 2023, are hot topics for the study of the ongoing climate and environmental changes; moreover, these topics can be of great interest for media in the forthcoming years that will be characterized by EU incentives in the RRP.

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

The importance of the INQUA membership for Italy can be easily detected from the relevant number of Italian scientists involved in INQUA commissions, editorial boards and in International Focus Group and Projects, including the organization of workshops and thematic short courses. The works for the XXI International Congress were remarkable on the light of the debated themes, for improving the gathering among Italian research groups in the study of our country and the application of Quaternary studies for the study and protection of the Italian landscapes. The Italian lead of INQUA for the next intra-congress period (2023-2027) will be important for international research initiatives. In this mean the METIQ Project is a stimulating initiative. In this period, after the sanitary emergency, the organization of virtual events contributed to maintain gather the Italian Quaternary community and give it an international exposure.

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

7. Organismo o in Commissioni e Programmi correlati (di cui si è a conoscenza)

- Laura Sadori is INQUA President.
- Alessio Rovere is CMP commission president.
- Adele Bertini is SACCOM commission vice-president.
- Giovanni Monegato, Roberta Pini, Enrico Capezzuoli are Advisory Board Members of SACCOM commission.

- Alessandro Fontana and Alessandro Michetti are Advisory Board Members of TERPRO commission.
- Andrea Zerboni is TERPRO commission president.
- Irene Puliti is ERC member for TERPRO commission.
- Pierluigi Pieruccini and Andrea Zerboni are Associated Editors of Quaternary International
- Guido Stefano Mariani and Francesca Ferrario are Editors of Quaternary Perspectives
- Alessandro Fontana and Pierluigi Pieruccini are IFG Responsibles for 2023.
- Karen Gariboldi, Gaia Mattei, Nicolò Parrino and Franz Livio are project responsibles for 2023.

8. If Union with CNR Commission, short summary about the 2023 CNR Commission activities

At Present a specific CNR-committee for INQUA does not exist but only the DSTTA Working Group "Dinamica del paleoclima" (<https://dta.cnr.it/paleoclima/>) made in 2018 is active on these themes. The activities for Quaternary researches are coordinated by AIQUA (Italian Association for Quaternary Study). The association has up to 170 members, manages the journal "AMQ - Alpine and Mediterranean Quaternary", organizes several events such as meetings, workshops and summer schools on topics related to Quaternary studies.

Since June 2018 the writer is President of AIQUA, re-elected in June 2021.

9. Notes (if any)

No additional notes to report.

10. Conclusions

The Italian participation in INQUA gained more relevance because of the increased role of Italians in leading and decisional roles within the organization. For the first time an Italian, Laura Sadori, was elected President of INQUA.

Signature



Place and date

Padova, 01/05/2024