



## A brief report on the 2<sup>nd</sup> PAGES Young Scientists Meeting in Goa, India

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Back in 2009, PAGES experimented with a different type of meeting for the first time – the inaugural Young Scientists Meeting (YSM) in Corvallis, USA. Recently several 1<sup>st</sup> YSM alumni worked together with PAGES to build on the success of that inaugural meeting with another YSM. The 2<sup>nd</sup> YSM took place from the 11-12 February 2013 at the International Centre Goa in India. It brought together graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and early career scientists from around the globe to share their research, network, present and attend workshops and panel discussions designed to address the specific challenges and opportunities facing early career paleoscientists. A total of 79 participants from over 27 countries attended the meeting.

Participants were welcomed by S. Rajan, Director of the National Center for Antarctic and Ocean Research, the Goan host institution. Thorsten Kiefer, PAGES Executive Director, then outlined the rationale behind the meeting and expressed the hope that the YSM would foster multi-disciplinary, international interaction and collaboration amongst the next generation of paleoscientists.

The meeting was structured around seven themes: Climate Forcings; Regional Climate Dynamics; Global Earth-System Dynamics; Human-Climate-Ecosystem Interactions; Chronology; Proxy Development, Calibration and Validation; and Modeling.

Twenty participants gave oral presentations and many others presented posters around each of these themes. A written peer-feedback activity provided presenters with valuable feedback on their presentation and ways to improve. The best presentations received an award, including one year of free online access to the *Nature Geoscience* journal: Ilham Bouimetarhan (Bremen, Germany) and Vladimir Matkovsky (Moscow, Russia) received prizes for the best oral presentations, and Jesper Björklund (Göteborg, Sweden), Gayatri Kathayat (Xi'an, China), and Timothée Ourbak (Niamey, Niger), for the best poster presentations.

In the keynote talk Alan Mix of Oregon State University reflected back upon his career as a climate scientist, which began during a time of discovery defined by a paucity of data – a stark contrast to the present, with its wealth of data and the commensurate need for new approaches to interpreting it. He emphasized the need for more interaction among paleoscientists and the increased need for more quantitative climate data, which can be better utilized by the modeling community.

The three “The Art of” sessions were a newly framed item in the YSM program and aimed to provide young scientists with practical information about data sharing, reviewing and communicating science (see the following articles).

In “The Art of Sharing Data”, David Anderson from the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research, and National Climatic Data Center, highlighted the importance of sharing data, and in particular, making data publicly available through archiving. He discussed the data-rich world we live in where the sharing and archiving of data can increase the visibility of an individual's research tremendously, and how easy accessibility to datasets will encourage the community to develop new and novel quantitative approaches to interpreting them.

In “The Art of Communicating Science” Gavin Schmidt from the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies suggested ways to convey science to different audiences and how to tackle controversies and criticism. He recommended the use of simple language with common examples and as many pictures and graphs as possible, instead of tables and technical jargon.

“The Art of Reviewing” panel included Alicia Newton, Editor of *Nature Geoscience*; Denis-Didier Rousseau, Co-Editor-in-Chief of *Climate of the Past*; Chris Turney, Asian and Australasian Regional Editor for the *Journal of Quaternary Science*; and moderator Alberto Reyes, of Queen's University, Ireland. They fielded many questions from the audience,

addressing various topics such as signing reviews vs. double-blind reviews and what editors expect in a good review. It became clear during this session that many YSM participants did not feel their training had prepared them adequately for the peer-review process.

During breakout sessions, participants divided into groups and deliberated on four challenges facing young paleoscientists. More detailed summaries of the breakout and “The Art of” sessions are reported elsewhere in this issue of PAGES news. A key theme emerged across all groups: Many of the big important issues and problems facing early-career paleoscientists are similar the world over and may be dealt with through international efforts. However, just as many are specifically local, and therefore will require local solutions.

There was, of course, plenty of opportunity for social interaction with one another, as well as with the organizers and guests. Communal meals, the icebreaker, and a dinner on one of the famous Goan casino boats featuring a Bollywood show, gave participants an opportunity to bond with each other while enjoying Indian culture and food.

To conclude, participants thanked PAGES for taking the initiative to hold the YSM, and requested such meetings be convened more often. We would also like to gratefully thank the generous sponsors, listed below, whose contributions directly assisted many young scientists travel to and attend the meeting.

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