

meetings co-conveners David Anderson and Robin Webb with input from all of the attendees. The first part will primarily consist of a compendium of data centers within PAGES and in overlapping fields. The second part will present guidelines on how to set up a regional or topical data center. Although the document will be produced in hardcopy, available from the WDC-A in Boulder and the PAGES IPO in Bern, it will also be put on the PAGES and WDC-A Internet sites, where it will be maintained more dynamically and thus remain an invaluable research tool into the future.

For more information on the evolving PAGES Data Guide contact David Anderson (dma@paleosun.ngdc.noaa.gov) or look for updates on the PAGES and WDC-A web sites (<http://www.pages.unibe.ch/> and <http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/paleo/paleo.html>).

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PEP1: Paleoclimate of the Americas

MÉRIDA, VENEZUELA, MARCH 16-20, 1998

Over seventy scientists from all over the world, studying paleoclimate from Argentina to Alaska, assembled to address interhemispheric linkages in past climatic and environmental change in the Americas. The meeting began with a session on the human dimensions of climate change, a topic well deserving of this prime time billing given that the Americas transect, and in particular the Andes region, has seen an intricate interplay of human habitation and environmental change for over ten thousand years. The rise and fall of pre-Colombian civilizations in coastal regions, lowlands and the Andes were measured alongside records of pollen assemblages, lake level reconstructions, volcanic history and levels of snow deposition on high altitude glaciers. The interplay of technological, economic and social changes with environment and climate did not end in the distant past. In more recent decades, urbanization and poverty have dramatically effected local ecosystems and at the same time led to increases in the human vulnerability to environmental change.

Discussion of Holocene climate variability in the Americas was understandably dominated by the influence of El-Niño, the signal of which was discussed in records as diverse as Andean lake levels, Galapagos corals, tree rings and historical accounts. In the late glacial session an issue which permeated many of the talks was synchronicity of the Younger Dryas.

A general consensus was reached that the term 'Younger Dryas' describes a European event and should not be forced upon the rich tapestry of climate variability which is being uncovered in the Americas like a square peg into a round hole. Interhemispheric comparisons of Greenland and Antarctic ice core records seemed to indicate that the temperature anomalies are out of phase, such that the Antarctic Cold Reversal coincided with the Allerod-Bolling warming and anomalous warmth in the Antarctic coincided with northern hemisphere cool periods associated with Dansgaard-Oeschger variability. Ocean data were presented which seemed to support these ice core results, in addition to suggesting perhaps a slight southern hemisphere lead. The monkey wrench thrown in this picture was the recent Taylor Dome record, from a coastal Antarctic site, which appears to match the Greenlandic and not the Antarctic pattern. Polynyas were suggested as one possible cause for this anomalous record. The full glacial session centered around re-evaluation of tropical temperature changes during the Last Glacial Maximum and the climatic effects of changes in the ocean thermohaline circulation.

A more detailed reporting of the PEP1 meeting will appear in a future PAGES newsletter. A limited number of extended abstract volumes and further information on PEP1 programs are available from Vera Markgraf (markgraf@spot.colorado.edu). The full meeting program can be found at <http://instaar.colorado.edu/misc/pep.html>.

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ScanTran

ROVANIEMI, FINLAND, MARCH 19-23, 1998

ScanTran is the name adopted for the IGBP high latitude terrestrial transect (Koch *et al.*, 1995) through Scandinavia and northern Europe. The workshop in Rovaniemi represented the third in a series of workshops leading to the development of the ScanTran Science Plan that will be submitted to IGBP later this year. The initial workshop in Høvik (April 1996) was organised by the Norwegian IGBP Committee; as a result of the positive response of participants in that workshop to the proposal to develop an integrated science plan for a Fennoscandian terrestrial transect a second workshop was organised. This second workshop, held in Trondheim (June 1996), developed a clear outline of the science plan for the transect, and produced a report (Heal *et al.*, 1997) identifying both the key features of the proposed transect and the foci for the proposed integrated research programme. The

Rovaniemi meeting was an open meeting to which a wide international audience of scientists and social scientists was invited. The objectives of the meeting were to inform this wider audience about ScanTran, to confirm in greater detail the objectives of the proposed long-term programme of research in order to produce the Science Plan for submission to IGBP, and to identify individuals who would carry forward the process of establishing ScanTran as a recognised IGBP high latitude transect.

Some 90 or so participants registered for the meeting. Although registration was strongly biased towards the terrestrial ecology (GCTE) community, other IGBP core projects were also clearly represented (BAHC, IGAC, PAGES). One session of the formal presentations to the meeting was dedicated to Past Changes, with a keynote presentation by Brian Huntley and Richard Bradshaw that explored some of the key evidence of Holocene environmental and ecological changes in the ScanTran region, and an invited presentation by Matti Eronen that discussed especially the dendroclimatological evidence for Holocene and recent climatic and other environmental changes in northern Fennoscandia. A series of offered papers then discussed a wide range of paleoenvironmental topics. One of the Working Groups during the workshop sessions also was dedicated to Past Changes; the report from this Working Group will form part of the report from the meeting as a whole that is due to be published later this year. This report also will include extended abstracts of the papers presented at the meeting.

The meeting recognised a number of important features of the region encompassed by ScanTran that give added strength to the proposed terrestrial transect study. Amongst these, the established network of research sites with field stations and infrastructure to support field research is a key asset. Similarly, the existence of a large body of existing knowledge that can underpin any new research initiatives is of very great value; such knowledge includes, in the PAGES context, data from ice cores, from sediments both of the surrounding ocean basins and of lacustrine basins in the region, from studies of peat deposits, from dendroclimatological investigations and from archaeological studies at sites within the region. The long-term presence of human populations in the region, and the records of their impacts both from archaeological studies and from research into their indigenous knowledge, are a special feature of this region that will differentiate ScanTran from the other IGBP high latitude transects. The complementary environmental gradients of latitude and continentality also are a special feature of this region. These

continued on page 16