

EGU session on the sediment dynamics of tropical river systems

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The BSG provided sponsorship and support to organise a session at the European Geosciences Union General Assembly in Vienna, April 2015. The session was convened by two early career researchers from the UK (Hackney and Simon Dixon, Birmingham) as well Prof. Edgardo Latrubesse (University of Texas), all of whom are actively researching sediment dynamics in tropical river systems; Latrubesse being an internationally recognised researcher in this field. The session sought to bring together expertise and research in tropical river systems in order to gain a more holistic view on the sediment dynamics of these important global systems. Contributions were invited which focussed on all aspects of sediment dynamics and associated geomorphological processes in tropical regions at scales ranging from local bank erosion to continental scale channel evolution, and over timescales ranging from the contemporary to the millennial.

To provide a holistic, global overview to the session, the grant received by the BSG went to facilitating the attendance at the session of Assistant Prof. Sagy Cohen (University of Alabama). Sagy's recent research has focused on the development of WBMSed (Cohen et al. 2013; Cohen et al. 2014), a distributed global discharge and sediment flux model. He has recently applied WBMSed specifically to tropical rivers in order to assess if, and how, different tropical rivers are in a global context (Syvitski et al. 2014). It was this which formed the basis of Sagy's exciting key-note, solicited talk.

The session was a success, attracting 17 contributions from across the globe (allowing an oral and poster session at the EGU). Contributions came from the UK, USA, Germany, The Netherlands, Japan, Taiwan and Australia. Three of our six oral presenters were categorised as young scientists and we are delighted that one received a travel grant from the EGU to attend the session. There were a further four young scientists presenting in the poster session. The session was well attended, with approximately 40 people attending the oral session, and similar numbers at the associated poster session. One of the main measures of success (and one of the aims of this session) is the generation of discussion surrounding the presentations between researchers working in cognate fields. It was clear to see this was the case, with conversations between the audience and presenters continuing after the oral session had finished, and lengthy conversations being held during the poster session. We were encouraged by the participants to organise the session again next year, and we hope that this will be just as successful as the first.

In addition, the support received by the BSG to facilitate Cohen's attendance at the session enabled discussions about future collaborations between with Cohen, as well as with other presenters in the session. Plans for fruitful future collaborations have been outlined and these will ultimately feed into the development of future research grants. One initial outcome of this collaboration Hackney's involvement in convening a session on large river modelling with Cohen at the AGU in San Francisco, December 2015.

Overall, the session could not have been a success without the sponsorship of the BSG. It has helped broaden the discussion on tropical rivers and open new avenues of research up the convenors. Thank you BSG.



Figure 1: Dr Jan-Hendrik May (Uni Wollongon, Australia; left) and Dr Chris Unsworth (Uni Exeter, UK; right) presenting their research during the BSG sponsored session on the sediment dynamics of tropical rivers. Photo's courtesy of Simon Dixon.