



International Permafrost Association

Opening note

While we are probably all busy with finishing our tasks for 2025, we are happy to provide the November newsletter. Again, you find a number of reports from meetings of members and groups of the IPA community, showing the great

commitment to collaboration and exchange. In addition, the IPA now invites applications for new Action Groups for the period 2026/2027. Please submit your ideas on permafrost-relevant activities in science, engineering and education,

including concrete outcomes by December 31, 2025!

Happy reading and best regards,
Isabelle & Gonalo

IPA Action Group 2026-2027 call

IPA Action Groups ([link](#)) are meant to fund targeted groups working on permafrost towards the production of well-defined products. Action Groups are funded on a competitive basis at up to €3000 per year (maximum of €6000 over two years). These groups have limited terms and

focus on clearly defined research outputs, such as maps, scientific publications, or databases, that can be supported through the organization of workshops, management support, technical support, etc. To apply, please download the instruction document and submit your application as a PDF to the

IPA Secretariat at secretariat@permafrost.org (c/o Lin Chen). Receipt of your application will be confirmed in an email from the IPA Secretariat. Application deadline: 31 December 2025 ([link](#)).

Provided by Lin Chen

IPA Action Group: PermHg

Over the past several months, the Permafrost–Mercury (PermHg) Action Group has made substantial progress toward completing a harmonized, open-access database of mercury (Hg) observations from permafrost-affected regions. We compiled 117,802 individual measurements from 59 published studies spanning soils, vegetation, and water

bodies across the northern hemisphere permafrost domain. This database fills a critical data gap in quantifying terrestrial Hg storage and assessing the potential mobilization of legacy Hg with ongoing permafrost thaw.

During the past year, our efforts focused on harmonizing and quality-controlling the data

through standardized units, observation-type classification, and metadata consistency checks. These steps enabled robust statistical analyses, revealing that Hg concentrations consistently follow the pattern: lake sediment > soil > vegetation > water. Median concentrations were 70 ng g⁻¹ for lake sediment, 50 ng g⁻¹ for

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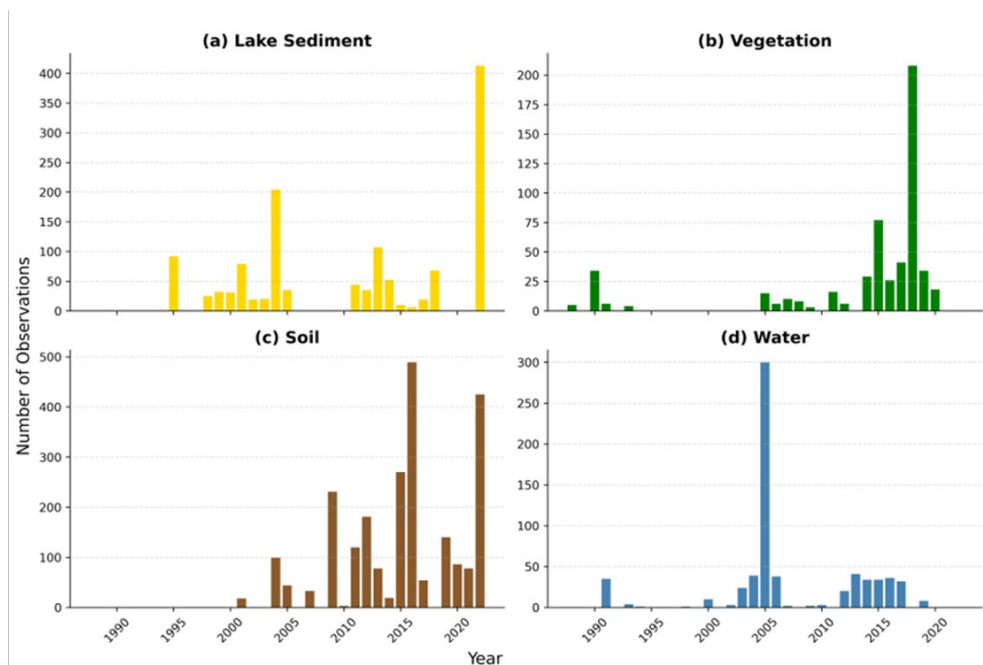
soil, 15 ng g⁻¹ for vegetation, and 2 ng L⁻¹ for water.

Figure 1 illustrates the number of Hg observations collected over time, showing steady growth in measurements since the 1990s and underscoring the increasing scientific attention to Hg cycling in permafrost regions.

We have now completed a final draft of our manuscript, A Consolidated Database of Mercury Observations for Permafrost Regions, which will soon be submitted to Earth System Science Data (ESSD). The database is finalized and will become publicly available through GitHub and Zenodo once the manuscript is accepted. Several members of the Action Group will continue to

maintain and monitor contributions via GitHub to ensure the database remains a living resource for the research community.

Provided by: Christine Olson



The number of observations collected over time for (a) lake sediment, (b) vegetation, (c) soil, and (d) water Hg observations in the PermHg database.

IAG Regional Conference on Geomorphology (RCG)

The IAG Regional Conference on Geomorphology (RCG) was a great success. The conference took place from 16 to 18 September, 2025 in Timișoara, Romania under the theme Geomorphology for society: challenges and opportunities and was organised by IAG and the Romanian Association of Geomorphologists. The conference was hosted by the West University of Timișoara. 249 geomorphologists from 33 different countries gathered in the historic city of Timișoara to enjoy 20 thematic sessions,

including the successful thematic session on Permafrost and Periglacial Processes in Climate Changes Context co-organized by IAG and IPA, 4 keynote lectures, in total 135 oral presentations and 97 poster presentations, inclusive networking opportunities, welcome cocktail event and conference dinner, 2 pre-conference field trips with 27 participants, 1 post-conference field trip with 28 participants, and an Intensive Training Course with 29 participants. The IAG allocated 10 grants of

in total 4800 Euros to favour and support Young Geomorphologists worldwide to attend the Regional Conference as well as to take part in the related Intensive Training Course. During the 4th IAG-EGU Intensive Training Course on Geomorphic services for environmental change understanding: from field surveying to dynamic and systemic risks evaluation, leading European researchers provided training in experimenting and applying complementary field investigation techniques for evaluating

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climate change impact in sensitive mountain environments. All details on the IAG Regional Conference on Geomorphology

2025 can be found at: <https://rcg2025.geomorphology.ro/>

Provided by Achim A. Beylich, IAG Secretary-General



NSERC PermafrostNet Finale Event

In November 2025, the NSERC PermafrostNet network concluded its transformative six-year journey with a celebration at Carleton University's Advanced Research and Innovation in Smart Environments (ARISE) Building in Ottawa, bringing together researchers, community members, partners and supporting organizations. The finale event marks a significant moment in Canadian research with the end of the first strategic national partnership to address thawing permafrost.

The evening began with welcomes and introductions from Elham Gharji, the NSERC CREATE LEAP Program

Coordinator, followed by presentations from Janet King (PermafrostNet Board Chair), Rafik Goubran (VP Research & International at Carleton University), and Tristan MacLean (Director of Operations), who shared perspectives on the network's accomplishments, institutional support, and quantified impact. After an intermission featuring networking and refreshments, the evening continued with Ramona Pearson providing an inspiring talk about Scotty Creek Research Station, followed by Olivia Meier-Legault reflecting on the student experience and training legacy, and Stephan Gruber, the Scientific

Director, concluding the evening with remarks on the network's vision and future directions.

PermafrostNet's strength lay in its collaborative structure, connecting 16 co-investigators from 12 universities, 40+ partner organizations, and 200+ active network members spanning government, Indigenous communities, and industry. The evening highlighted the capabilities developed, relationships established, and knowledge products created by the network, and how they will continue serving Canada's climate adaptation needs for years to come. As the network concludes, its legacy persists through

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continued initiatives like CRE-
ATE LEAP, PermaRail and
through the next generation of

permafrost researchers shaped
by this collaborative vision.

Provided by Tristan MacLean



Dr. Christopher Burn, Former President of IPA, Con- ducts Academic Exchange in NIEER, China

Dr. Christopher Burn, Past-
President of the IPA, was in-
vited in November 2025 by the
State Key Laboratory of Cryo-
spheric Science and Frozen
Soil Engineering (SKL-
CSFSE), Northwest Institute of
Eco-Environment and Re-
sources (NIEER), Chinese
Academy of Sciences (CAS),
for a two-week academic ex-
change visit. He was supported
by the CAS President's Interna-
tional Fellowship Initiative
(PIFI) Distinguished Scientist
Program. Dr. Lin Chen, the IPA
Secretariat and the Vice-Direc-
tor of SKL-CSFSE, is the host
researcher at the CAS.

During his trip to Lanzhou, Dr.
Burn delivered a special work-
shop titled "Scientific Paper
Writing" with faculty and stu-
dents of NIEER, sharing



insights into the academic writ-
ing process and best practices.
Over the following three days,
he visited the Qinghai Institute
of Salt Lakes, CAS in Xining,
Qinghai, and traveled through
the Qilian Mountains, where he
visited research test sites and
traveled through the various
landscapes. He was particularly

impressed by the extensive
grassland environment at high
elevation that might resemble
Pleistocene Beringia.

In the subsequent days, Dr.
Burn toured the experimental
facilities of the SKL-CSFSE,
engaging in in-depth discus-
sions with researchers on

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equipment applications and technical advancements. On November 14th, he gave another presentation focusing on the Illisarvik field experiment, introducing cutting-edge research progress in permafrost field studies. On November 15th, he engaged in a comprehensive discussion with Dr. Mingyi Zhang, the Vice-Chair of the NIEER and Director of the SKL-CSFSE, focusing on strengthening future

cooperation in permafrost research, field monitoring, and international collaboration.

This marks Dr. Burn's first visit to China. Dr. Burn was pleased to see several Chinese colleagues whom he had met through the activities of the IPA, including the IPA Vice President (Dr. Funjun, Niu), former the EC members, National Representative, and the Action

Group's PI. He praised the Institute for its advanced and comprehensive experimental equipment, and expressed great enjoyment of his travel experience and Chinese cuisine during the trip.

Provided by Chris Burn, Zhuangzhuang Liu, Haikun Qin, & Lin Chen

22nd China Rock Mechanics and Engineering Academic Annual Conference



The 22nd China Rock Mechanics and Engineering Academic Annual Conference and the High-level Forum on Polar and Marine Engineering was successfully held at the Harbin Institute of Technology from October 17th to 19th, 2025. This conference is jointly organized by the Chinese Society

for Rock Mechanics and Engineering (CSRME) and the International Consortium on Geo-disasters and Risk Reduction (ICGdR), and co-hosted by the School of Civil Engineering of Harbin Institute of Technology, the Professional Committee of Polar Geotechnical Mechanics and

Engineering, the Branch of Marine Engineering Geohazards Prevention and Control, and the State Key Laboratory of Cryospheric Science and Frozen Soil Engineering, etc.

Centering on the theme of “Opportunities and Challenges in Polar and Marine Engineering”,

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the Harbin main venue arranged 24 invited expert reports and 11 outstanding young researcher reports. More than 300 experts and scholars from China, the UK, Japan, etc. participated in this conference.

This conference adheres to the characteristics of previous academic annual meetings on Rock Mechanics and Engineering, and is committed to creating a multi-disciplinary and cross-industry academic

and technical exchange platform for polar and marine engineering, leading the new development of polar and marine engineering technologies.

Provided by Shengyi Cong & Lin Chen

Announcements

3rd ACOP 2026: The 3rd Asian Conference on Permafrost (ACOP) 2026 will be held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from June 28 to July 2, 2026. Abstract Deadline is extended to December 31, 2025 ([link](#)).

Call for Papers for the Permafrost Warming Collection in Scientific Reports: This Collection welcomes original research on the impact of climate change on permafrost and associated communities and ecosystems, including but

not limited to, observational studies or models with a clear rationale and supported on observational data ([link](#)).

IAG ICG 2026: The 11th IAG International Conference on Geomorphology (ICG) will take place in Christchurch, New Zealand, 2-6 February 2026. Covering all aspects of geomorphology, the conference has received 1165 abstracts. 760 orals and 405 posters have been accepted. More information about the conference including plenary speakers,

fieldtrips, workshops, conference sessions, and registration details can be found on the conference website ([link](#)).

Permafrost Discovery Gateway Webinar: Climate change and infrastructure development drive ice-rich permafrost thaw in point lay (Kali), Alaska. Invited Speaker: Billy Connor, University of Alaska Fairbanks - Friday, December 5, 2025 ([link](#)).

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For future newsletters, contributions or input are always welcome. Please feel free to contact the **IPA Secretariat at secretariat@permafrost.org (c/o Lin Chen)**.

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