



International Permafrost Association

Opening note

Dear colleagues,

In this newsletter you find a summary report from this year's Council meeting, which was held online on May 20. We are happy to welcome John Thornley (USA) as new member and Niu Fuijun (China) as re-elected member, as well as Saskia Eppinger (Germany) as PYRN representative in the EC! At the same time, we say goodbye to Ed Yarmak (USA), Chris

Burn (Canada) and Joseph Young (PYRN) and thank them for their great and continuous support for the IPA!

At the Council meeting, the EC presented the new logo concept and design, prepared by a professional designer. While we all agreed that the current IPA logo is outdated, the Council asked for some more time before deciding on the new logo. Therefore, unfortunately we

cannot present the new logo yet, but stay tuned for more news after summer.

With these updates, we wish all ACOP attendees a successful and interesting conference in Mongolia, including safe travels.

Best regards,

Isabelle and Gonalo

33rd IPA Council Meeting

The 33rd Council Meeting of the International Permafrost Association (IPA) was held online on 20 May 2026, bringing together representatives from IPA's adhering bodies ([link](#)), Executive Committee (EC) members ([link](#)), and invited guests involved in organizing the ACOP2026 and ICOP2028.

Isabelle Grtner-Roer, Co-President, first provided a brief update on activities carried out over the past six months, including monthly EC meetings, IPA newsletters, news Action Groups, Standing Committees,

International Polar Year (IPY-5), and other activities (ICARP IV, Antarctica InSync). Reports highlighted ongoing scientific initiatives, community engagement activities, and preparations for future international collaborations.

Gonalo Vieira, Co-President, provided an update on the nomination process for the upcoming EC elections. Christopher Burn (Past President), Fuijun Niu (Vice President), Edward Yarmak (EC Member), and Joseph Young (PYRN representative) will conclude their terms on the

EC in June 2026. The Council subsequently elected new members to the IPA EC and welcomed their future contributions to the Association. The two nominees, John Thornley from the United States and Fuijun Niu from China, were elected to serve on the IPA EC for the next term (2026-2030). In addition, the PYRN elected Saskia Eppinger, a PhD candidate at the Technical University of Munich, as its new representative to the IPA EC for the upcoming term (2026-2028). Furthermore, Vieira presented the timeline of the decisions regarding the redesign of the logo.

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Dr. Lin Chen

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Co-Presidents:

Dr. Isabelle Grtner-Roer and Dr. Gonalo Vieira

Members:

Dr. Lukas Arenson, Dr. Kjersti Gislns

Dr. Fuijun Niu, Dr. John Thornley, and Saskia Eppinger



The proposed logo was discussed by the Council, and members exchanged views on its design, symbolism, and implementation. The feedback will be considered in the next stage of the redesign process before a final decision is made.

Lin Chen, IPA Secretariat and Executive Director, presented the financial report. The Council then reviewed the financial status and future budget planning and approved the amended 2026-2028 budget. The Council also discussed long-term financial sustainability, including recommendations regarding membership dues. Following a vote by the adhering bodies, the Council approved a small increase in annual dues of €50 per country in 2027, with a further increase of €50 per country in 2029. Moreover, the Council unanimously agreed to maintain the current policy of

suspending relations with the Russian adhering body. The motion will be reviewed again at the next Council meeting.

During the meeting, the Council unanimously approved the selection of Vladimir E. Romanovsky, from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, as the recipient of the IPA Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to permafrost science, monitoring, and international collaboration over several decades.

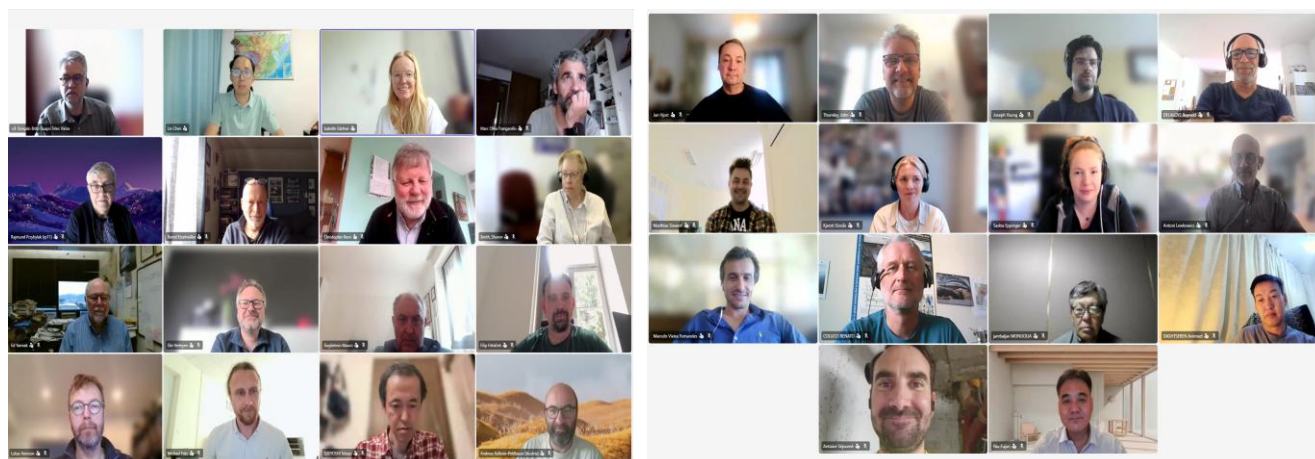
The Council also received updates on preparations for the Asian Conference on Permafrost (ACOP 2026), which will be held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from 28 June to 2 July 2026, and the 13th International Conference on Permafrost (ICOP 2028), which will take place in Florence, Italy. In addition, a preliminary proposal from

China to host ICOP 2032 in Lanzhou was presented to the Council. The Council noted the proposal with interest and emphasized that the call for bids to host ICOP 2032 will remain open until 31 March 2027, allowing additional proposals to be submitted for consideration.

In addition, the Council exchanged views on the possibility of establishing a World Day for Permafrost as a means of promoting global awareness of permafrost and its importance to climate, ecosystems, infrastructure, and northern communities.

The IPA co-presidents would like to thank all participants for their valuable contributions and continued dedication to the international permafrost community.

Provided by: Isabelle Gärtner-Roer, Gonçalo Vieira, Lin Chen





New IPA Executive Committee Members



John Thornley, PhD, PE, BC.GE is a Vice President and Technical Fellow at WSP in Anchorage, Alaska ([link](#)). He has over 20 years of geotechnical and permafrost engineering experience. He is a past President of the US Permafrost Association and a regular attendee of regional and international permafrost conferences. Much of John's current work in permafrost focuses on rehabilitation of aging infrastructure impacted by degrading permafrost. He is also active in the study of impacts of degrading permafrost on earthquake site response and development of new seismic hazards as permafrost thaws. He is also an Associate Editor of the Journal of Cold Regions Engineering. Locally, John is a member of the Municipality of Anchorage Geotechnical Advisory Commission and is an adjunct professor for the geotechnical portion of the Northern Design Course at University of Alaska Anchorage.

As a new member of the Executive Committee (EC), John has large shoes to fill, as he replaces Ed Yarmak and he is sincerely appreciative of the efforts that Ed has undertaken over his years on the EC. John plans to continue the important work of maintaining fiscal stability of the IPA so that we can continue supporting the important action groups and activities of the IPA. In addition, maintaining and expanding collaboration within the science and engineering permafrost community is a key aspect of why John considered the opportunity of joining the EC. Mentorship and empowerment of the next generation of permafrost scientists and engineers is another critical activity. As the permafrost environment continues to change, there is so much to learn, built on the efforts and knowledge of previous generations. To that end, John looks forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming 3rd Asian Conference on Permafrost in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and the opportunity to learn from you.

Fujun Niu has been re-elected as a Member of the IPA Executive Committee for the 2026-2028 term ([link](#)). He has served the IPA since



2016, first as Council Member for China, then as Executive Committee member (2023-2026) and Vice President. Dr. Niu formerly served as Executive Deputy Director of the State Key Laboratory of Frozen Soil Engineering, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and is now a professor at Shanghai Normal University, China, where he leads the Institute of Green and Intelligent Prevention of Geohazards. His research focuses on permafrost engineering, cold-region geohazards, and climate-related impacts on infrastructure. He has published over 300 papers, serves as associate editor of Permafrost and Periglacial Processes and Journal of Cold Regions Engineering, and has received numerous national awards. Dr. Niu is also a key organizer of the three Asian Conference on Permafrost, and remains committed to promoting international cooperation and exchange in permafrost engineering and disaster



prevention within the IPA under the context of climate warming and permafrost degradation, and to enhancing engineering resilience, particularly across Asia and developing countries.

Saskia Eppinger is the new PYRN Representative to the IPA Executive Committee for the term 2026-2028 ([link](#)). She will act as the main liaison between the Executive

Committees of the IPA and its early career researcher network, PYRN. As a member of the PYRN ExCom for the part two terms (2022-2024 & 2024-2026), including serving as vice president during the second term, Saskia is currently a PhD candidate at the Technical University of Munich (Germany). She is committed to strengthening the exchange and collaboration between

early career researchers and senior scientists within the permafrost community.



PYRN Workshop at ACOP2026



PYRN, with support from the International Permafrost Association, will host an all-day workshop to include guest speakers, seminars, breakout sessions, and networking events relevant to permafrost science and engineering, academic and industry career paths, and soft skill development. **Registration is limited and on a first come first serve basis so make sure you register as soon as possible.**

The workshop will take place on June 28th from 9:00 - 17:00. Registration is now live at the following [link](#).

The workshop is free of charge. To attend, you must be:

- Registered to attend ACOP 2026.
- Be a member of PYRN (free to join

via: <https://pyrn.arcticportal.org/join-us>)

- Be an Early Career Researcher (ECR)*

**An Early Career Researcher (ECR) is defined as any student, PhD candidate, or practicing professional who is currently enrolled at a post-secondary institution or has received their highest degree within the past six years. The six-year period can be extended to allow for periods when the ECR was not working in science because of, but not limited to, caring and/or parental responsibilities, disability, personal illness, community obligations, or national service.*

Presentation and Poster Competition:

During the conference, ECRs will have the opportunity to participate in the PYRN Presentation and Poster Competition. To take part, please fill out the form at the following [link](#).

Awards will be given for the top two presentations and posters presented at the conference. Only ECRs from IPA member countries are eligible for the competition.

FrostBytes:

All ACOP participants are encouraged to prepare a short video presentation about their research, called FrostBytes - 'Soundbytes of Cool Research'. Videos will be posted online for viewing after the conference. Awards will be given to the best FrostByte presentation at the end of the ACOP conference. Only ECRs from IPA member countries are eligible for the competition.

The requirements for the videos can be found [here](#).

For inspiration, past FrostByte video submissions are [here](#) and [here](#).

To submit a FrostByte video presentation, upload your submission [here](#) by **June 25th, 2026**.

IPA Action Group updates: Saline Permafrost

The Saline Permafrost Action Group ([link](#)) has had an active and productive year thus far, advancing collaborative research on the distribution, evolution, and impacts of saline permafrost across the Arctic.

A major recent achievement was the publication of two collaborative studies. The first, published in *Nature Communications*, synthesized data from 17 Arctic river deltas and demonstrated that Arctic deltas store approximately 57.5 Pg of organic carbon and 3.8 Pg of nitrogen, highlighting the importance of deltaic environments as major carbon reservoirs and emphasizing the role of saline permafrost and cryopeg systems in Arctic delta evolution. The second study, led by Fabian Seemann and colleagues from AWI and published in *Biogeosciences*, examined organic matter degradation in saline permafrost near Utqiagvik, Alaska. Using a multiproxy sedimentary approach, the study demonstrated how saline permafrost, cryopegs, and thermokarst processes interact to influence carbon cycling and landscape change in Arctic coastal lowlands.



Denys Grombacher and Angelos Almpanis from Aarhus University setting up the towed, SnowTEM system to collect continuous data to resolve the depth and distribution of saline permafrost in northern Alaska.

The Action Group also leveraged extensive international field collaboration during the spring 2026 field season on Alaska's North Slope. Researchers from the United States, Canada, and Denmark participated in the NSF-funded Thaw Below Zero project, which focused on mapping the extent and variability of saline permafrost using airborne-style and ground-based geophysical surveys, lake investigations, and field observations. More than 550 km of geophysical survey data were collected across the Arctic Coastal Plain, revealing that saline permafrost is widespread and laterally extensive, extending at least 50 km inland in northern Alaska. Preliminary results also indicate important connections between saline permafrost, cryopegs,

taliks, thermokarst lakes, and coastal processes.

Looking ahead, the Action Group is preparing a comprehensive review paper on saline permafrost that will synthesize current knowledge of its distribution, origins, geophysical characteristics, ecological significance, and implications for infrastructure and climate feedbacks. The manuscript is planned for submission to *Permafrost and Periglacial Processes*. The group also hopes to utilize IPA Action Group funds to help support publication costs associated with this review paper.



Sam Lee and Rodrigo Rangel from the University of Toronto and Phillip Wilson from UAF collecting profiler TEM data along a transect to image saline permafrost depth and distribution in northern Alaska.

The Saline Permafrost Action Group remains committed to fostering international collaboration and advancing understanding of this widespread but still understudied component of Arctic permafrost systems.



Fuchs, M., Sachs, T., Jongejans, L. L., Strauss, J., Hugelius, G., Frost, G. V., Jones, B. M., Kokelj, S. V., Kutzbach, L., Nitze, I., Overduin, P. P., Palmtag, J., Ping, C.-L., Pokrovsky, O. S., Rivkina, E., Runge, A., Schirrmeister, L., Schwamborn, G., Siewert, M. B., Treat, C., Veremeeva, A., Zubrzycki, S. & Grosse, G. Accepted. Large stocks of

permafrost soil organic carbon and nitrogen in Arctic river deltas. *Nature Communications*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-026-73092-2>

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M., Treat, C., Schirrmeister, L., Liebner, S., and Strauss, J. 2026. Sedimentary insights

into organic matter alteration in Arctic Alaska's saline permafrost. *EGUsphere Biogeosciences*, 23, 3675-3695. <https://doi.org/10.5194/bg-23-3675-2026>

Provided by Benjamin M. Jones

Announcements

- **Applications for the IPA International Conference on Permafrost 2032 (ICOP2032):** The application process for hosting ICOP2032 is open until March 31, 2027. If any countries are interested in submitting a proposal, please contact reach out to the IPA Secretariat at secretariat@permafrost.org (c/o Lin Chen).
- **IPA International Conference on Permafrost 2028 (ICOP2028):** The website for the ICOP2028, which will be held in Florence in June 2028, will officially launch on 30 June 2026. General information about the conference, including the preliminary conference program, will be available upon launch at the website ([link](#))
- **PermaCOST at ACOP:** Several Core Group (CG)

and Management Committee (MC) members will be present at the 3rd Asian Conference on Permafrost (ACOP) in Mongolia, which will be a way to promote the project through presentations, flyers and informal

discussions. PermaCOST will be presented on Wednesday, July 1st, at 1:42 PM in Session 6 "Global Activities on Permafrost in the Next Decade" (D. MG Ballroom). See the abstract on the ACOP website ([link](#)).

- **SCAR Workshop:** A workshop on the Past, Present, and Future of the Wilkes Subglacial Basin will be held as part of the SCAR Open Science Conference in Oslo on Saturday, 8 August, from 4:00 PM, in Room 1 at the conference venue. The workshop aims

to bring together researchers from all relevant disciplines to share ongoing work, future plans, and ideas related to understanding the Wilkes Subglacial Basin, including field observations, geophysical surveys, modelling studies, and interdisciplinary collaborations. Participants are encouraged to come prepared with a few slides (maximum 5 minutes) to present their fieldwork or modelling plans and discuss opportunities for collaboration.

- **38th International Conference on Alpine Meteorology (ICAM):** The 38th International Conference on Alpine Meteorology ([link](#)) will take place from 7–11 June 2027 in Grenoble, France, at the foothills of the Alps. ICAM 2027 will be organized as a hybrid event, combining



on-site and online participation for oral sessions, while poster sessions will be held exclusively on-site. Please note that on-site participation is strongly encouraged especially for presenters. Abstract submission will open in early December 2026 and close at the end of January 2027. Registration will be available from January through March 2027. Please visit the ICAM website ([link](#)) regularly for updates on conference organization and the scientific program.

- **Multiple post-doc positions on modeling permafrost and peatland greenhouse gas emissions and abrupt changes:** The positions are at Laboratoire des Sciences du Climat et

de l'Environnement ([link](#)) near Paris, France: 1) Post-doctoral Fellow in modeling thermokarst processes in northern peat with the ORCHIDEE PEAT land surface model and model validation ([link](#)); 2) Post-doctoral Fellow in simulating greenhouse gases fluxes in response to abrupt warming at the CLIMPEAT large scale field experiment in northern Finland ([link](#)); 3) Postdoctoral Fellow in simulating non CO₂ greenhouse gases emissions from northern peat and model validation ([link](#)); 4) Research Software Engineer integration of multiple developments in the ORCHIDEE land surface model ([link](#)).

- **PhD opportunity at the University of Lethbridge:**

The project will be field-based and hypothesis-driven, while also involving quantitative modelling, spatial analysis, and environmental sensor data analysis. The successful student will work with existing long-term datasets and will help develop new observations related to vegetation structure, near-surface microclimate, snow, and shallow ground thermal conditions. The student will receive a supervisor-funded stipend of approximately \$10,000/year for four years, representing a committed supervisor contribution of approximately \$40,000 over the PhD program. The preferred start date is **January 2027**, although a September 2027 start may also be considered.

Editorial Board

Co-Presidents: Isabelle Gärtner-Roer & Gonalo Vieira

Vice President: Lukas Arenson

Committee Members: John Thornley, Fujun Niu & Kjersti Gisnås

PYRN Representative: Saskia Eppinger

Secretariat – Executive Director: Lin Chen

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).