

**MINUTES OF THE SEGH BOARD MEETING HELD ON 28th MARCH 2025 AT 13:00
(LONDON, UK) ON ZOOM**

Agenda:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters arising from the last Minutes
4. Report on ECR matters
5. Report on Fellows' Matters
6. Proposed Constitution Amendment
7. Report on Membership and Finance
8. Updates on Belfast 2025 Conference (Dan Middleton)
9. Reports from the Regions
10. Updates on the website/social media
11. Report on EGAH
12. AOB

Attendance:

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| 1. A Argyraki | 7. O Humphrey | 13. J Kumar Biswas |
| 2. O Morton-Bermea | 8. K Torrance | 14. K Rodgers |
| 3. F Onyangore | 9. X Huo | 15. J Olajide-Kayode |
| 4. M Gabersek | 10. M Abdou | |
| 5. D Middleton | 11. D Purchase | |
| 6. G Gibson | 12. M Watts | |

The meeting commenced at 13:03 (London) and the Agenda for the day was shared for members to preview. AA welcomed the new Board members who were attending the meeting for the first time, and hoped that the empty Regional Chair positions would be filled in the course of the tenure.

1. Apologies were received from:

(i) Felicia Ajayi (ii) Carlos Monteiro (iii) Muhammad Zaffar (iv) Andrew Hursthouse

2. The Minutes of the last meeting had earlier been circulated to members. AA suggested that the Agenda items should be taken sequentially and related matters that arose **(3)** from the last Minutes taken along with them.

4. MG reported that the 3rd ISCMGEH (Europe) that held in November 2024 was very successful, with high quality papers presented by the students. Himself and Carlos Monteiro wrote a blog about the Conference which had been uploaded on the SEGH website. The Book of

Abstracts for the Conference was also already on the website. GG suggested that the students who presented at the ISCMGEH-Europe should also be encouraged to submit papers for Belfast 2025. AA added that a video of some sections of the Conference would soon be uploaded to the YouTube channel. On the *ECR Lunch* during the Belfast Conference, DM suggested that it would be better if some of the Fellows could join the ECR Lunch; giving some mentorship and to spice up the event. This received support and DM is to arrange for the ECR and Fellows' lunches to be on separate days.

MA added that no other *Coffee Meetings* had been held, probably due to the tight schedule of a lot of the ECRs who were quite busy with their doctoral studies. She advocated the need to organise more. AA added that the 10 members who were given complimentary 1-year SEGH memberships from the ISCMGEH-Europe should be kept in the ECR loop, and hopefully as long-term SEGH members.

Actions: (i) MG and MA to work on organizing more ECR *Coffee Meetings*, where there would be discussions on what the ECRs want the Fellows to talk to them about at the ECR Lunch at Belfast 2025 (Status: Ongoing). (ii) AA to encourage winners of the 3rd ISCMGEH-Europe to submit papers for Belfast 2025 (Status: Ongoing).

5. While acknowledging that Fellows are quite busy, GG canvassed for keeping the momentum of the Fellows Group going by continuous contributions to the Society. She stated that the plan was to have AH give a synopsis of the research and Talks that the Fellows have been doing and giving at the Belfast Conference. There had been no response from the Fellows on this yet, but GG would send another request for input/contributions as the Conference start date is nigh. AA suggested that additional contribution of Fellows could be to organise field trips/workshops on a local or regional scale for ECRs and even mid-career academics/researchers.

Action: GG to request for input from Fellows on Talks and on the presentation to be made by AH at Belfast (Status: Ongoing).

6. The document detailing the proposed amendment(s) to the Constitution prepared by GG and KT had been circulated to Board members for their comments. Particularly, GG reiterated that KT had pointed out that there was no provision in the Constitution for the Fellows' category, having been created after the Constitution had been drafted. She added that the Membership categories also needed to be better spelt out, especially to reflect what is advertised on the website periodically. These were part of the proposed amendments. Additionally, Board approval was sought for the award of Honorary Fellowship to a member; who, if approved by the Board, would be awarded the Honorary Fellowship at the Belfast 2025 Conference. The Board was unanimous in agreement with the proposed amendments and the Honorary Fellowship award. On the modality for informing the membership about the Board-approved amendments for their vote, it was agreed that it should be done via an email containing the proposed amendment and an attached online form for voting.

Action: JO to send proposed Constitution amendment to the membership along with an online form to vote (Status: Done).

7. On finance, KT stated that the end-of-year statement for the Society is being worked on as the financial year ends on 1 April. He reported that the Society had ca. GBP 7,900 in its coffers, a slight improvement on the account's state at the same time last year. He opined that it would be necessary to provide some funding to DM for the Belfast 2025 preparations, and a decision needed to be made on how much the advance would be. The Board approved that an advance should be sent to DM for the Conference planning. In addition, KT reported that the Society currently had ca. 150 active members in its database.

Action: KT to send an advance to DM for Belfast 2025 planning (Status: Ongoing).

8. DM reported that the targeted sponsorship for the Conference was between GBP 11,000 and 15,000. However, as at the time of the meeting, only GBP 4,225 had been secured. He added that the flat fee for the Queen's University's dedicated conference organizing team is ca. GBP 11,000. In addition, between GBP 5,000 and 6,000 is needed for room bookings (venues). This ca. GBP 16,000 would need to be covered regardless of the conference attendance. QMX had picked up a bronze sponsorship, Agilent confirmed a *silver plus* sponsorship (GBP 2,000) and Perkin Elmer picked up a silver sponsorship (GBP 1,500).

He added that 35 prospective attendees had shown interest in the Conference, 6 of whom are giving Keynotes and for whom the fees have been waived. While he said there were still a few hopeful sponsors, including *Visit Belfast*, he confirmed that any advance from the Society would be helpful. A networking event is being planned at a local distillery for Wednesday evening, which is estimated to cost ca. GBP 3,800 (for 100 participants). This means that the full suite of the Conference's social events would be the Ice breaker on Tuesday, the networking event on Wednesday and then the Thursday dinner. To GG's question on contingencies should sponsorship and registrations not cover the proposed budget, DM stated that the worst-case scenario would be to take from his personal research budget to cover the deficit; as Conference planning/funding was covered under his fellowship funding. AA added that some funding had been requested from the IUGS for conference attendance support for prospective participants from LMICs, and prizes for both student and ECR presentations. This, she said should encourage more people to attend the conference and bring in more funding.

According to DM, some authors of the 35 Abstracts submitted are yet to register for the Conference. When those are added to the prospective attendee list, it should be about 50. He added that promotion of the Conference within Queen's University had been stalled in order to allow more international participants to register. He said the plan is to create a flexible arrangement where internal (Queen's University) participants could pay 1/3 of the registration fee for daily attendance. On accommodation availability/booking, DM stated that a lot of hotels were booked up because of a Golf Open tournament holding in July. However, the University had made some hostel accommodations available. There is also an arrangement for breakfast to be served at the Conference venue at 8am daily.

Six (6) Keynote speakers had been confirmed for the Conference, reflecting a gender, age and research theme/interest balance.

On decisions on Abstract status, DM said that once the initial deadline of 31 March is reached, the Abstracts received will be screened, and continuously so for the extended submission period.

Letters of acceptance would be issued to authors as needed in order for them to process travelling documents. GG suggested that the Abstracts from countries requiring visas to travel to Belfast should be sorted first, so as to save time.

Actions: (i) KT to send an advance to DM for Belfast 2025 planning (Status: Ongoing), (ii) JO to send a reminder about Abstract submission to members (Status: Done), (iii) Board members to encourage people within their networks to submit Abstracts and to give information on possible sponsors (Status: Ongoing), (iv) DM to mail Aria in Springer on possible sponsorship besides the student/ECR prizes.

9. The Americas is planning to begin their Talks (to be done 4 times in a year). OM is currently working with Universities in Mexico and local Geochemical Associations to achieve this. An update would be provided as soon as all plans are in place. AA encouraged all Chairs to think about organizing local events, especially with students in their Research Groups or Faculties. This could be field or laboratory demonstrations on any of the SEGH research thematic areas. AA also reiterated the long-term wish that China would be more involved in SEGH activities. She encouraged XH to take up this challenge, starting with her own Research Group and extending outwards. XH responded that she would start to re-ignite interest in/engagement with the Society from the SEGH *WeChat* group. AA added that she would make a request to join the SEGH *WeChat* group so she can also join the interactions. For Africa, JO stated that SEGH activities are promoted via the various Conferences of the professional groups, and this will be intensified. AA advised that an SEGH-focused local event should also be considered. JB is also engaging with his colleagues in allied disciplines to create more awareness about SEGH and SEGH events. GG referenced the SEGH online meeting organised by India a few years back, stating that some of those who attended that event were potential SEGH members if they could be reached. AA encouraged anyone with ideas to mail it to her/JO so that plans can be made and things set in motion.

Actions: (i) Americas seminars to commence soon, (ii) AA and XH to rekindle interest in SEGH via the *WeChat* group, (iii) GG to try to find the host of the SEGH India online event from a few years ago and send the name to JB, (iv) All Regional Chairs to put in more efforts at *spreading the tentacles* of SEGH.

10. For the period 20/11/24 to 27/3/25, OH reported that there were 1,100 users, with an average engagement time of 3 mins 41 secs. Global spread demographic and gender balance were similar to the last report and most visitors to the website were still in the 18-34 age group. The top pages were *SEGH 2025*, *Home Page* and *ISCMGEH – Europe*. 3 new blogs had been uploaded in the period reviewed and OH again enjoined Chairs to send in blogs or better still, have their students write some.

11. DP reported that the number of submissions had greatly increased, and she thanked the Associate Editors for rising up to the task. Compared to 2023 when about 100 articles were received monthly, about 300 articles are now received monthly. The journal's quality has been maintained and hence, the rejection rate is about 65%. DP thanked a number of Editors that have

retired for their service to the journal, while welcoming the new Editors who have joined the journal. She stated that the list of retired and new Editors would be sent to the Board. She adduced the increase in the number of manuscripts received by the journal to either being noticed more or the delisting of many environmental journals from *Web of Science* and transfer of their manuscripts to EGAH. She therefore encouraged Editors to periodically check their dashboards as the number of submissions has increased markedly. GG inquired if there was another SEGH Editorial in the works, seeing that the once written in the past had been well read.

12. The other business that was discussed was the host for the 2026 Conference. AA said she would contact Ricardo to see if Brazil would host the conference, and encouraged others to also make suggestions on the next host. GG suggested that a generic message could be sent to the membership for anyone interested in hosting the 2026 Conference to indicate. She added that the same message could be sent to the Editorial Board.

Action: (i) AA and OM to try to reach Ricardo on possibility of Brazil hosting the 2026 Conference, (ii) If Brazil is not promising, AA to prepare the Expression of Interest message on the 2026 Conference hosting for JO to send to the membership and the Editorial Board.

AA thanked all for their time and contributions, the meeting was unanimously adjourned and ended at 14:18 (London).