



## International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), Initiative on Forensic Geology (IFG)

### Monthly Update and Information for IUGS E-Bulletin, October 2025

#### **Sands of Change: Change of Date, Geological Society of London, March 2026**

The date for this hybrid, one day international conference, *'The Global Challenge of Sand Mining and Illegal Sand Mining'*, has changed from 3 December 2025 and will now take place on 18 March 2026. It will be held at The Geological Society of London, in association with the International Union of Geological Sciences Initiative on Forensic Geology, Geological Society of London Forensic Geoscience Group, and the British Geological Survey. This event is of interest to academics, practitioners, law enforcement and those interested in the governance and mitigation of risks associated with illegal sand mining.

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/the-queens-university-belfast-41343632673>

Abstract submission (250 words): [laurance.donnelly@ahkgroup.com](mailto:laurance.donnelly@ahkgroup.com) | [dpirrie@helfordgeoscience.co.uk](mailto:dpirrie@helfordgeoscience.co.uk)

#### **INTERPOL Workshop on Illegal Mining and Illicit Trafficking of Minerals, Hanoi, Vietnam, October 2025**

From 23-24 November 2025, Dr Laurance Donnelly was invited to work with INTERPOL on illegal mining and Illicit Trafficking of Minerals in Vietnam. This event included an activity within the framework of the *project 'Fighting Climate Change and Loss of Biodiversity'* (Project GAIA), supported by; the Vietnam Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear safety and Consumer Protection and the International Climate Initiative (ICI). Dr Donnelly provided information on the causes and modus operandi for international mining crime and minerals trafficking, sampling, sample preparation, provenance determination and traceability, with a focus on illegal gold, illegal sand, and illicit minerals smuggling across the China-Vietnam-Laos-Cambodia borders.

#### **Forensic Geology, Geological Society, Northwest Regional Group, Manchester, UK, October 2025**

On 23 October 2025, Dr Laurance Donnelly provided an evening lecture on forensic geology to the Geological Society, Northwest Regional Group. The presentation included an overview of the original and historical development of forensic geology, since the early part of the 1800s to present day. The presentation also focused on crime scene examination, geological trace evidence and how geologists working with the police and law enforcement search the ground for burials related to homicide and to locate buried objects associated with serious and organised crime and counterterrorism. Throughout, there was international operational case examples provided to demonstrate how forensic geologists support criminal investigations. The final part of the presentation provided information on illegal mining and the international trading of illicit minerals and associated crime such as money laundering, smuggling, theft, adulteration and substitution of precious minerals and metals, diamonds, gemstones and fossils.

<https://eurogeologists.eu/donnelly-advancements-in-forensic-geology-geological-police-and-law-enforcement-collaboration/> and <https://forensicgeologyinternational.com/>

#### **Forensic Geology, Meggen, Germany, September 2025**

On 10-12 September 2025, Dr Laurance Donnelly was invited to the, '11th Meggen Raw Material Days, Meggen, Germany, where he gave a keynote presentation on, *'The Global Escalation in Illegal Mining and Illicit Minerals Trafficking'*.

[https://geoberuf.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/bdg-media/Anmeldung\\_und\\_Programm.pdf](https://geoberuf.de/fileadmin/user_upload/bdg-media/Anmeldung_und_Programm.pdf)

#### **Forensic Geology, University of Heidelberg, Germany, 2026**

Several members of IUGS-IFG (Dr Laurance Donnelly, Prof Lorna Dawson, Prof Duncan Pirrie, Prof Robert Fitzpatrick, Dr Alastair Ruffell, Prof Jennifer McKinley), have been in discussions with the University of Heidelberg, Germany, for the establishment of a teaching module on forensic geology commencing in 2026, and representing the first formal course on forensic geology to be held in Germany.

#### **Forensic Geology, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 2026**

IUGS-IFG has agreed to provide a session on forensic geology at the, *'41<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Environmental Geochemistry and Health'*, in Slovenia, on 13-17 July 2026, in collaboration with the Geological Survey of Slovenia, University of Ljubljana-Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, Geological Society of Slovenia, and Society for Environmental Geochemistry and Health (SEGH).

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#### **6th Ibero-American Seminar on Forensic Geosciences Chile, November 2025**

The 6th Ibero-American Seminar on Forensic Geosciences will take place in Chile, on 20-22 November 2015. The event will be held in the Andrés Antonio de Gorbea Auditorium of the Faculty of Physical and Mathematical Sciences of the University of Chile, for further information contact [martin.molina@uan.edu.co](mailto:martin.molina@uan.edu.co) | [salvador.fass@pf.gov.br](mailto:salvador.fass@pf.gov.br) | [laurance.donnelly@ahkgroup.com](mailto:laurance.donnelly@ahkgroup.com)

#### **82nd Annual Meeting of the IUGS Executive Committee, Bogota, Colombia, January 2026**

The IUGS Executive Committee meeting will take place in Colombia on 24-25 January 2026. Dr Laurance Donnelly will provide a summary presentation on IUGS-IFG main achievements in 2025, work plan for 2026 and budgetary request for 2026-2027.

**IUGS-IFG Annual Report 2025**

The IUGS Executive Committee has requested for the IFG 2025 annual report to be submitted by 15 December 2025. Any information to be included in this report, by IUGS-IFG members, must be sent to Dr Laurance Donnelly before 30 November 2025 in the required format (provided in the covering email to this monthly summary).

**IUGS-IFG Funding, 2025-2026**

Members of IUGS-IFG are asked to make contact with recommendations for funding in 2025-2026.

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