

An Introduction to the UNESCO International Geosciences Program IGCP 732 LANGUAGE of the Anthropocene

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The UNESCO IUGS IGCP 732 project LANGUAGE of the Anthropocene (Lessons in anthropogenic impact: a knowledge network of geological signals to unite and assess global evidence of the Anthropocene), Present and future Geology – the global scale evidence of the Anthropocene was granted as a new UNESCO IUGS IGCP project in spring 2021 and will run for 5 years. IGCP projects intend to bring scientists together for workshops, field trips and scientific exchange and to enable international cooperation in the geosciences, especially with the contributions of scientists from developing and less developed countries. The Anthropocene, which has yet to be defined, establishes a powerful concept associated with unprecedented global change and the anthropogenic predominance of the Earth System. Recognizing and managing this novel situation in a sustainable way requires a planetary network and accompanying knowledge framework, therefore, IGCP 732 aims to engage new ideas and networks in the development of the Anthropocene concept. The major tasks are to unite and assess global evidence of the Anthropocene and to establish the Anthropocene as a fertile framework for future geosciences. This will be achieved by 1) developing a network of expertise and project partners globally; 2) designing and running workshops in developing countries; and 3) designing and collating an open database of existing information and expertise on the Anthropocene. In addition, IGCP 732 is also linked to the Anthropocene Working Group (AWG) of the Subcommission on Quaternary Stratigraphy of the International Commission on Stratigraphy, and the ongoing research of potential GSSPs (Global Boundary Stratotype Section and Point, or 'golden spike'), marking the onset of the Anthropocene as a chronostratigraphic unit of the Geological Timescale. Since the start of the project, more than 60 scientists from 27 countries have already become members of IGCP 732, thereof more than 50 % from developing countries. Contributions at international conferences help to increase the visibility of IGCP 732 and the urgent challenges the Anthropocene concept comes up with. This year, a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya (hybrid, including virtual participation) is planned, focusing on an African perspective on the Anthropocene. According to the goals of UNESCO IGCP, particularly young (female) scientists should be encouraged and financially supported to join the workshop. This project is supported by the International Programs of UNESCO IGCP and the Austrian Academy of Sciences.