

EDITORIAL

This NEOGENE NEWSLETTER is the first of a series dedicated 1) to establish a better communication among the numerous subcommission members and 2) to give more VISIBILITY within the international scientific community to a stratigraphic Subcommission which is struggling under the weight of an incredibly large amount of new proxy data originating from Ocean Drilling and from extremely detailed work on land.

The last page of this Newsletter shows the location of the almost THOUSAND drillsites, which documents beyond any doubt that our knowledge of the ocean floor improved drastically in the last 25 years, since Ocean Drilling started. If Ocean Drilling maybe irrelevant of the Precambrian stratigraphy and to a certain extent also for the Palozoic stratigraphy, its importance rapidly increased for the Mesozoic and becomes FUNDAMENTAL for the Neogene, a time interval which is documented almost in every single drillsite!!

The decision to create a NEOGENE NEWSLETTER was made after the disaster of the SNS 1993 annual report: indeed, the change in the ICS directorate, in the deadline, in the format resulted in a sort of NON-PERFORMANCE situation, very unpleasant and disturbing. So, I mailed a questionnaire to all the voting members, as a first attempt to revitalize the Subcommission and to make its members more responsive:

The questionnaire was a success: its text and comments on the answers received, represent the first part of the Newsletter.

A second part follows, with the present structure of the Subcommission, that is organized in Regional Committees and the membership list.

The third and main part of the Newsletter contain focussed items, such as an article by the ICS chairman J. Remane on defining chronostratigraphic boundaries by GSSPs, a report of the Paleogene/Neogene Working Group (by its chairman F. Steininger), a report of the Miocene/Pliocene Working Group (by its chairman R. H. Benson), a report on the Pliocene time-scale Working Group (by its chairman W. H. Berggren), a report on the Villafranchian conference, an update of Miocene stratigraphy and an update on Pliocene stratigraphy by a very active member (D. Rio) and his associates.

The fourth part of the Newsletter contains reports of activity (individual, national or group) by various voting members.

The fifth and final part contains the presentation of planned activities of the Neogene Subcommission for 1995 and 1996, and also two articles by young, aggressive scientists who are not (yet) members of the Subcommission, but were invited to present here their ideas and plans.

I sincerely thank all those who contributed to this newsletter, making it so rich and informative. I also thank Luigi (Sonio) Ronchi, who helped me with patience and intelligence to put it together.

*Maria Bianca Cita
professor of geology at the University of Milano
chairman, Subcommission of Neogene
Stratigraphy*

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