Association Internationale pour l'Étude des Argiles

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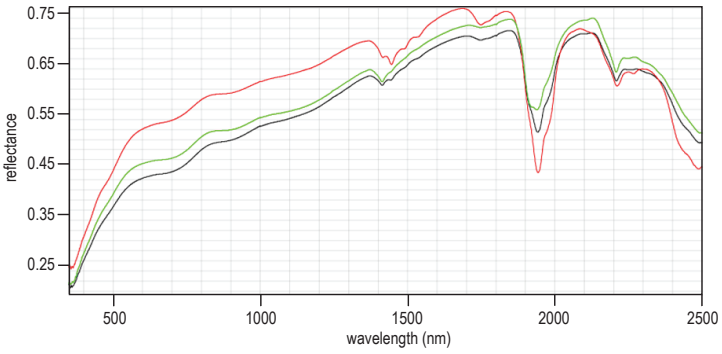
EARLY CAREER CLAY SCIENTISTS RESEARCH GRANTS

The AIPEA Early Career Clay Scientists (ECCS) Committee was established in 2021 to enhance opportunities for scientists within 5 years of completion of their PhD. This has led to an active international network of ECCS researchers featuring an online bi-monthly webinar series, workshops for early career scientists at AIPEA-sponsored clay conferences, research grants, and travel grants (to attend AIPEA-sponsored conferences). The first recipients of AIPEA ECCS research grants are Dr. Jemaa Amikrane and Dr. Javier García Rivas, and their projects are the subject of this installment of AIPEA society news.

The research of **Dr. Javier García Rivas** (Department of Mineralogy and Petrology, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain) involves detailed mineralogical characterization of clay-rich rocks from different locations within the Tajo Basin of central Spain. The goal is to employ X-ray (XRD, XRF) and infrared (VNIR-SWIR) analysis to obtain mineralogical and chemical data that will serve as a basis for future remote sensing analysis. It is expected that the distinct differences in mineralogy (see comparative spectra of clay formations) will be evident in remote sensing data, thus enhancing potential for exploration of clay mineral resources. The ECCS funding facilitated fieldwork to collect samples and helped to offset costs of XRD and VNIR-SWIR analyses.



IR spectra of clay formations

Dr. Jemaa Amakrane's research project was carried out as part of a collaboration between the Laboratory of Applied Geosciences, Oujda (Morocco), and the Laboratory of Argiles, Géochimie et Environnements Sédimentaires, University of Liège (Belgium). Dr. Amakrane's project includes detailed mineralogical analyses of the bulk and clay (< 2 micron) fractions of two stratigraphic sections from eastern Morocco, one in the northeastern High Atlas (Anoual region) and another in the southern High Plateaus (Tendrara region). By characterizing the clay mineral assemblage of various units of the "red beds," the goal is to reconstruct the climate evolution during deposition of this sequence from Middle Jurassic to Upper Cretaceous. Funding enabled fieldwork to map lithofacies and collect samples for instrumental analysis.

Red beds and marl.