



# International Association of GeoChemistry

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## AIG-9 AWARDS CEREMONY IN TARRAGONA, SPAIN



IAGC President Clemens Reimann (RIGHT) presents Fellows certificates to Avner Vengosh (TOP) and Shaun Frape (BOTTOM)

In addition to the Faure Awards presented to Geneviève Bordeleau and Stefan Cretnik (profiled in the last issue of *Elements*), the annual IAGC awards were presented to recipients in attendance at the Applied Isotope Geochemistry (AIG-9) meeting in Tarragona, Spain. IAGC Fellow status was awarded to Avner Vengosh (Duke University, USA) and Shaun Frape (University of Waterloo, Canada) for their important contributions to the field of applied isotope geochemistry. Both new Fellows received their certificates during the conference dinner.

## GEOCHEMISTRY CONFERENCES IN 2012

### BIOGEOMON 2012 – 7<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Ecosystem Behavior

BIOGEOMON 2012, hosted by the University of Maine, will be held on 15–20 July in Northport, Maine, USA. BIOGEOMON's emphasis is on biogeochemistry as an evolving and integrated discipline, including research at watershed, landscape, ecosystem, and global scales. The primary goals of this conference are to provide a forum for the dissemination and discussion of recent research findings, to explore future directions for biogeochemical research, and to foster interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers of all ages. The themes of the conference are:

Long-term integrated monitoring and modeling • Biosphere–atmosphere interactions • Extreme events in ecosystem biogeochemistry • Linkages among biogeochemical cycles • Critical unknowns in nitrogen dynamics • Biogeochemistry of peat lands • Carbon cycling in poorly and well-drained soils • Experimental manipulations of ecosystems • Trace element biogeochemistry and ecosystem impact • Applications of isotopes and tracers • Bio-energy production impacts in forested systems • Biogeochemical aspects of ecosystem restoration and rehabilitation • Ecosystem services and management

Conference web page:  
[www3.villanova.edu/conferences/biogeomon/](http://www3.villanova.edu/conferences/biogeomon/)

### 9<sup>th</sup> ISEG – International Symposium on Environmental Geochemistry

The 9<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Environmental Geochemistry will be held at the University of Aveiro, 15–21 July 2012, in Aveiro, Portugal. This international event is being jointly organized by the GeoBioTec Research Center and the CESAM Associated Laboratory, and is supported by the IAGC, the Society of Environmental Geochemistry and Health, and the International Medical Geology Association.

As with previous ISEG meetings, contributions from all fields of environmental geochemistry and health are welcome. However, the main themes of the conference are:

- Geochemical records of environmental changes: climate changes and human activities
- Sustainability in mining and related environmental issues
- Geochemistry and health & medical geology
- Environmental toxicology & epidemiology
- Environmental contamination and remediation
- Water resources and aquatic environments
- Biogeochemistry of trace elements, organic pollutants, and radionuclides
- Environmental analytical geochemistry
- Modeling environmental systems: GIS platforms and data analysis
- Perception and communication of environmental health risks and social inequality

Conference web page:  
<http://9iseg.web.ua.pt/web/index.php>

## APPLIED GEOCHEMISTRY STUDY ON EARTH ACIDIFICATION MAKES AN IMPACT

A recent paper in the Association's journal, *Applied Geochemistry*, titled "Acidification of Earth: An assessment across mechanisms and scales"<sup>1</sup> and published online in September, has led to widespread coverage, most prominently in *USA Today*. The paper was authored by Karen Rice (U.S. Geological Survey) and Janet Herman (University of Virginia). Karen Rice has said: "We believe that this study is the first attempt to assess all of the major human activities that are making Earth more acidic."

*USA Today* (23 October 2011): "Human use of the Earth's natural resources is making the air, oceans, groundwater, freshwater streams and soils more acidic and posing sustainability problems ... The mining and burning of both coal and metal ores as well as the use of nitrogen fertilizer are the major generators of acidity on the Earth's surface because they increase carbon dioxide in the atmosphere ..."

*EarthFix* (Oregon Public Radio, 28 September 2011): Rice's coauthor, Janet Herman points out: "We know that during periods of time in the past, our planet was quite different than it is today. There were periods of intense volcanic eruptions in which [strong acids] were released to the atmosphere ... Also geologically over time there have been periods of high carbon dioxide content in the atmosphere, and the rock record tells us that the ocean was more acidic at certain times in the past relative to now. But what we were able to focus on was this dramatic impact of human resource exploitation that goes beyond any sort of natural phenomenon ... The potential consequences are dire, and we need a more cooperative international look at appropriate regulations for these human activities."

1 Rice KC, Herman JS (2012) Acidification of Earth: An assessment across mechanisms and scales. *Applied Geochemistry* 27: 1-14