

UN International Year of

**GLOBAL**



*understanding*

**IYGU**

An Initiative of

**The International Geographical Union (IGU)**

UN International Year of

# **GLOBAL** *understanding*

**IYGU**

An Initiative of  
The International Geographical Union (IGU)

**Prof. Benno Werlen**  
**Executive Director IYGU**  
**Friedrich-Schiller-University of Jena (Germany)**

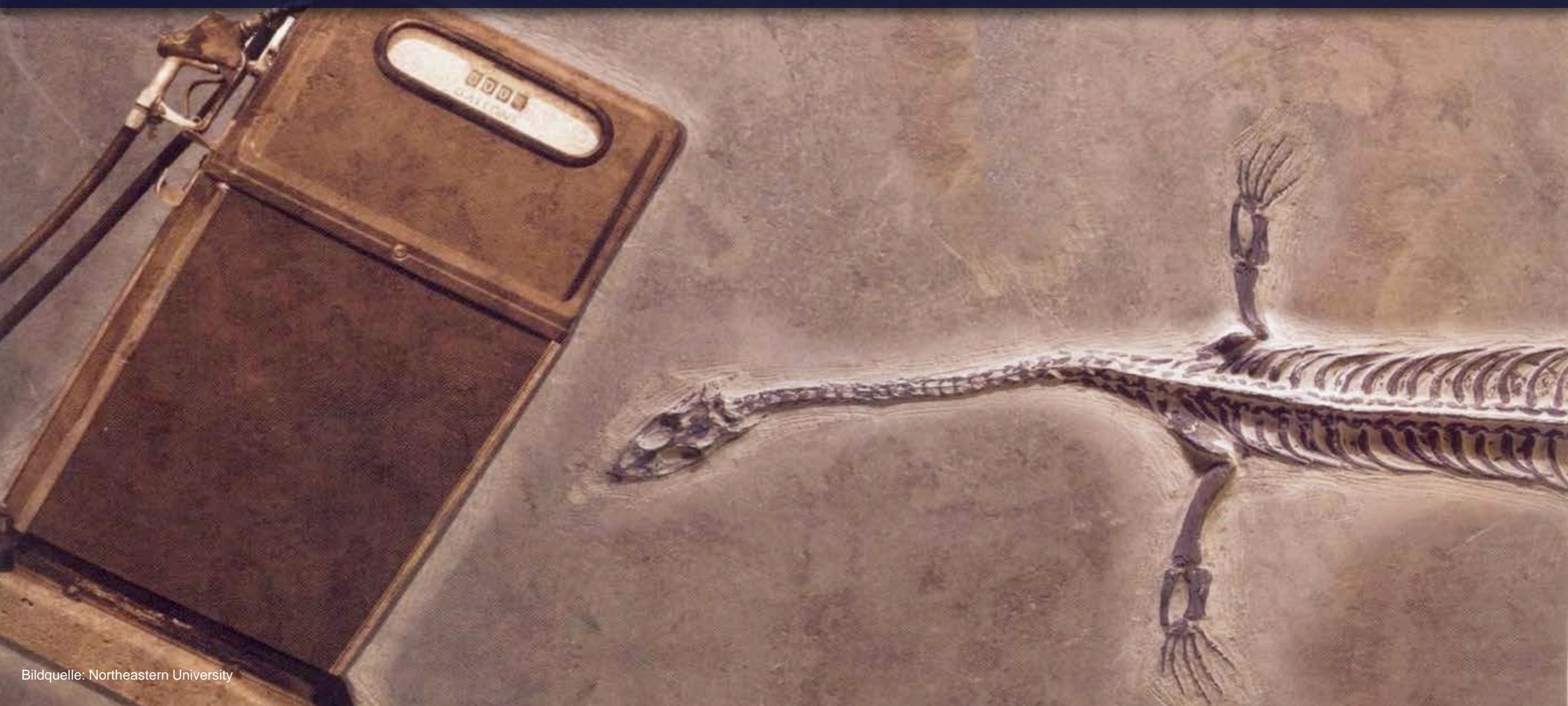


# Why Global Understanding?

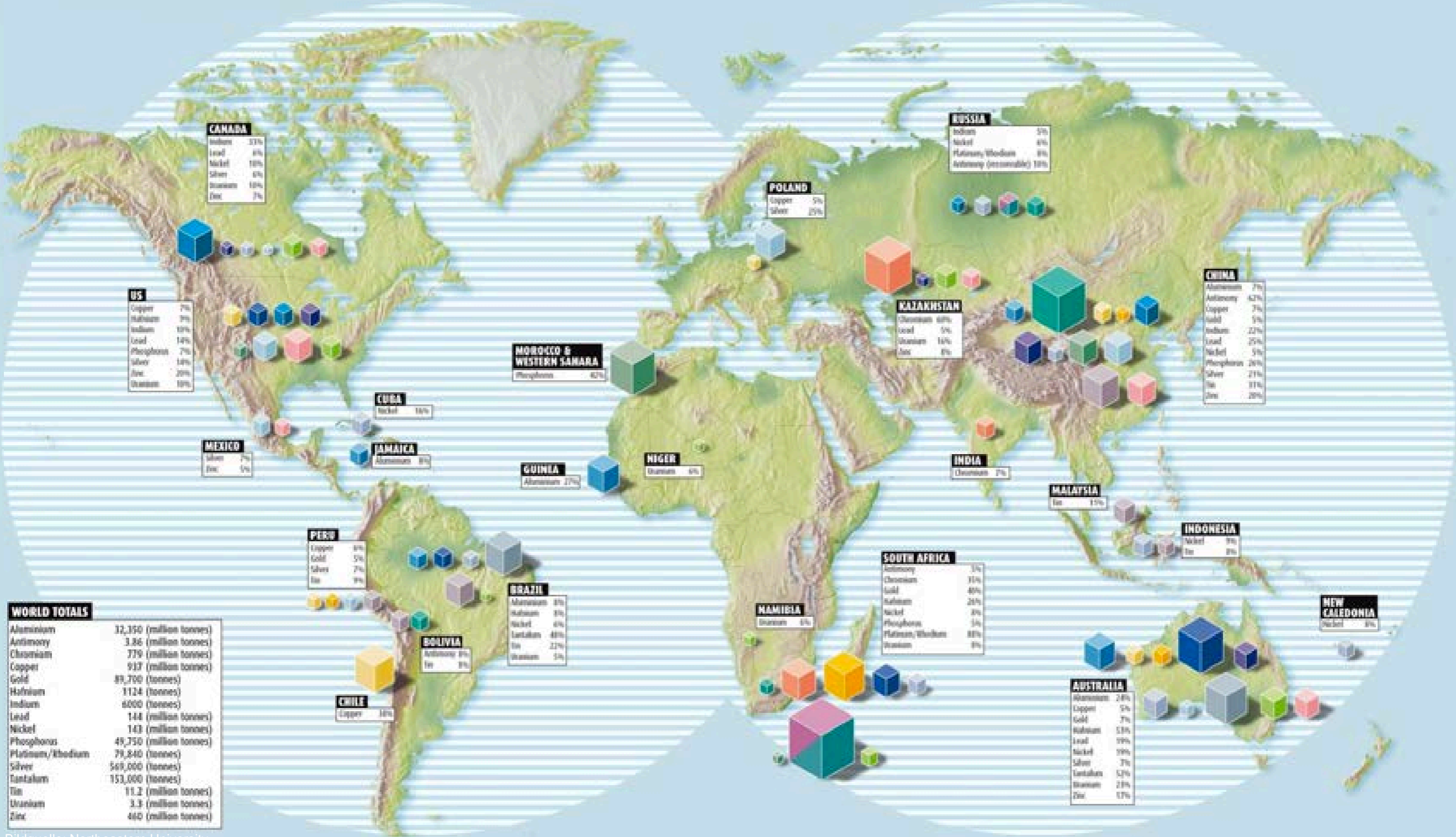


# Example: Globalized Geography of Strategic Resources

Prof. A. Reller (Scientific Panel of IYGU)

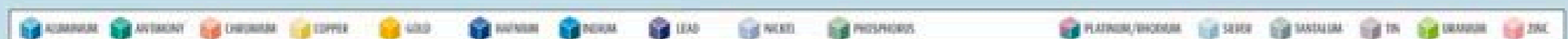


# Where the Minerals are



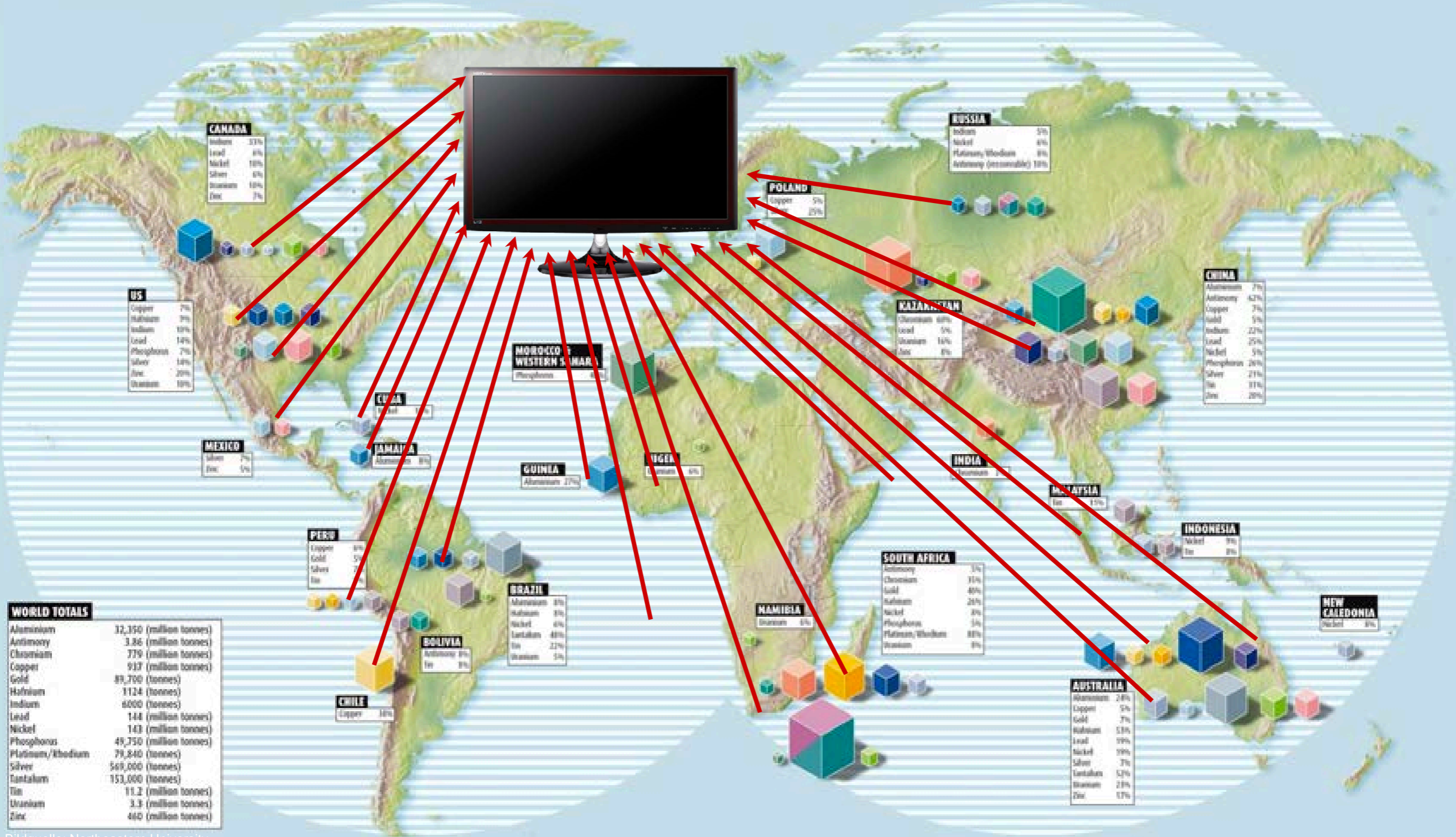
WORLD TOTALS	
Aluminium	32,350 (million tonnes)
Antimony	3.86 (million tonnes)
Chromium	779 (million tonnes)
Copper	917 (million tonnes)
Gold	89,700 (tonnes)
Hafnium	1124 (tonnes)
Indium	6000 (tonnes)
Lead	144 (million tonnes)
Nickel	143 (million tonnes)
Phosphorus	49,750 (million tonnes)
Platinum/Rhodium	79,840 (tonnes)
Silver	569,000 (tonnes)
Tantalum	153,000 (tonnes)
Tin	11.2 (million tonnes)
Uranium	3.9 (million tonnes)
Zinc	460 (million tonnes)

Bildquelle: Northeastern University



Figures refer to proportion of world resources available for extraction given current technology, whether economic or not. Resources below 5% not shown.

# Where the Minerals are



Bildquelle: Northeastern University

Figures refer to proportion of world reserves available for extraction given current technology, whether economic or not. Reserves below 5% not shown.

# Resource Consumption

per head/year in tons

Gatherer/Hunter

Agrarian Society

Industrial Revolution

Industrial Age

Sustainable Age

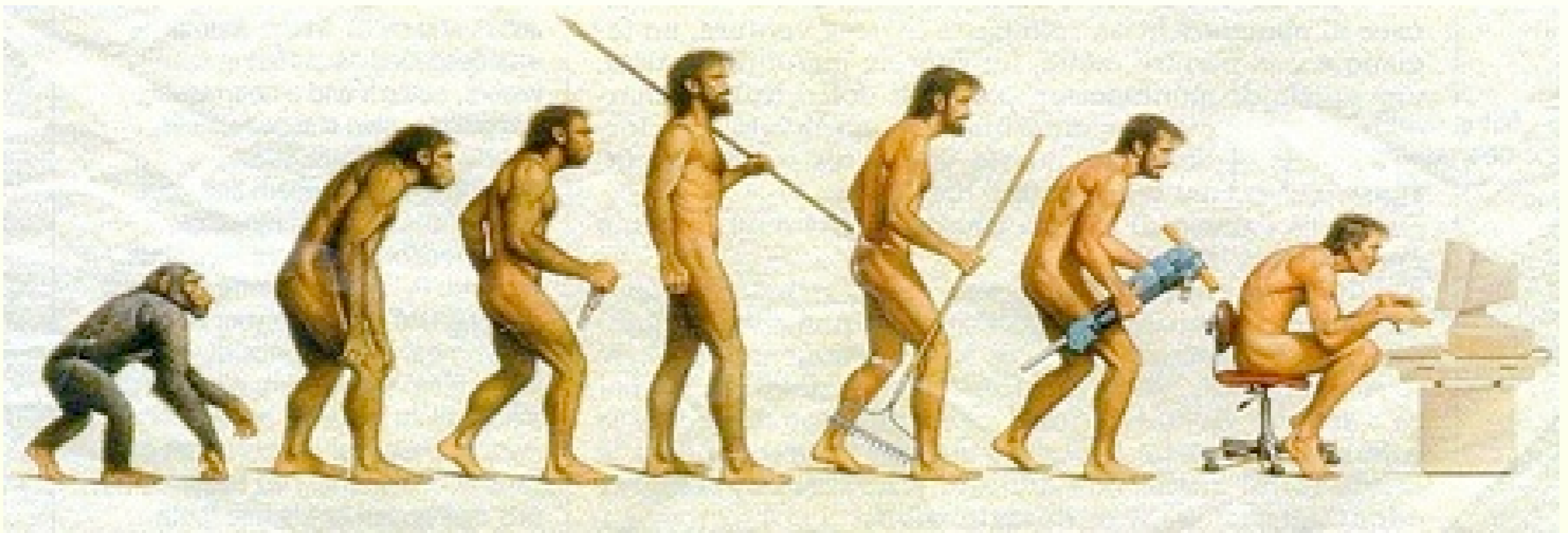
0.1t

3 – 5 t

Fossil Energy

10 – 35 t

?



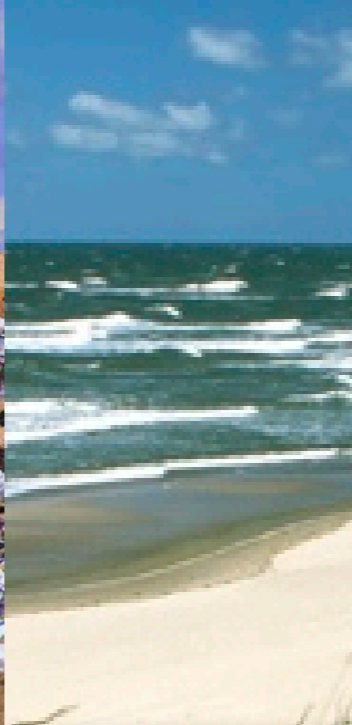


# Garbage

Ex. by Prof. Gordon McBean (Steering Committee of IYGU)

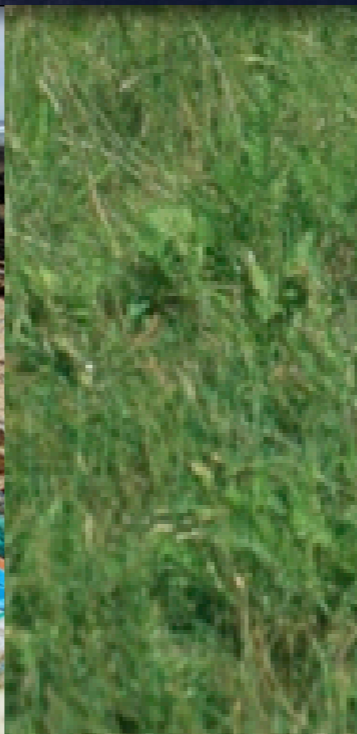






# Garbage

Ex. by Prof. Gordon McBean (Steering Committee of IYGU)



**Smog air pollutants – in atmosphere only some (5 – 10) days**

**Smog pollution is mainly a regional problem**

**Smog pollutants**

**In 2013, more than 2 Mio persons died from the effects of air pollution.**

**Carbon dioxide: in atmosphere about 100 years**  
**In 2 – 4 years: mixes around the globe**

**Carbon dioxide**

***Our local garbage becomes GLOBAL GARBAGE!***

# Global Understanding: An essential Human Condition



# Global Understanding: An essential Human Condition



**In the face of global social and climate change,  
we must think globally.**

**But global thinking presupposes global understanding.**

**IYGU**

**clarifies connections between the local and the global.**

# Global Understanding: An essential Human Condition



**The IYGU's main goal is to promote global understanding.**

**Actions and decisions shall yield sustainable outcomes,  
every day,  
all over the world.**

# Global Understanding: An essential Human Condition



**Global climate change is human-induced/produced, unintended; and (partly) unpredictable.**

**Global change involves the unintended consequences of 19th and 20th century problem solutions.**

**Global  
Sustainability**

**Biophysical  
(Causality)**

Magnitude

Pace

**GLOBAL**  
*understanding*

**Socio-cultural  
(Contextuality)**

Globalization

Acceleration



# Global Understanding: An essential Human Condition

The background of the slide features two globes. The globe on the left is positioned to show the Middle East and surrounding regions, with labels for countries like Syria, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and others. The globe on the right is positioned to show North America, with labels for cities like Chicago, New York, and Atlanta. The globes are set against a dark blue background with a subtle grid pattern.

**Global Understanding is a bridge builder ...  
... between the local and global,  
social and natural,  
science and everyday life.**

**Focusing on local action for global sustainability.**

# Global Understanding



# Global Understanding

**Emphasizing the cultural dimensions of sustainability.**

**Global interconnectedness and peacekeeping.**

**Territorial conflicts are no solution  
for global challenges.**



# Global Understanding

**Making visible impacts of local actions.**

**Empower bottom-up movements.**

**Moving from knowing about sustainability  
to living sustainably.**



# Global Understanding

**Three Interfaces**

**Local || Global**

**Social || Natural**


**Everyday || Sciences**



# People's Politics



# People's Politics

A top-down view of a diverse group of people, including men and women of various ethnicities, with their hands stacked in a circle in the center. The background is a dark blue gradient with a faint image of the same group of people.

**Everyday decisions depend on lifestyle.**

**All lifestyles are culturally  
differentiated.**

# People's Politics



**Local, individual choices shape global change.**

**Change must come from the bottom up.**



# Science and Everyday Life



# Science and Everyday Life

**Research focuses on the logic behind everyday activities.**

**Basis for transdisciplinary approach....**

**... including the humanities, social and natural science research.**

# Focus on everyday activities



Eating/Drinking//  
Surviving



Moving/Staying//  
Belonging



Housing/Working//  
Urbanizing

# Focus on everyday activities



Wasting/Recycling//  
Preserving



Communicating/Networking//  
Interacting



Sports/Entertaining//  
Recovering

# How to do it?



# How to do it?

## Three Action Levels

### *Research*

Bringing together social and natural scientists

### *Education*

Bringing research results at all levels in classrooms throughout the world

### *Information*

Print media, computer games, social networks, internet platforms ([www.global-understanding.info](http://www.global-understanding.info)) and TV programs.

# Organization of IYGU



# Organization of IYGU





# Organization of IYGU

## ***Patrons***

***Yuan-Tseh Lee***

Nobel Prize Laureate in Chemistry and President of ICSU

***Klaus Töpfer***

Former director of UNEP

***Matthias Kleinert***

President of the German Research foundations (DFG)

## ***Advisory board***

***Bruno Messerli***

(Director of UN-International Year of Mountains)

***Ed de Mulder***

(Director of UN-International Year of Planet Earth)

***Rupert Maclean*** (UNESCO)

# Organization of IYGU

## ***Steering Committee***

***Gordon McBean (Canada): President-Elect of ICSU;***

***Steven Wilson (UK): ICSU Executive Director;***

***Gudmund Hernes (Norway): Past-President of ISSC;***

***Heide Hackmann (South Africa): Executive Director of ISSC;***

***Adama Samassékou (Mali): President of CIPSH;***

***Anantha Duraiappah (Malaysia): Director of IHDP;***

***Vladimir Kolossov (Russia): President of IGU;***

***Ron Abler (USA): Past-President of IGU.***

***Ulrich Beck (Germany); Deliang Chen (P.R. China); Lord Anthony Giddens (UK); Sebastian Lentz (Germany); Robyn Longhurst (New Zealand); Lindisizwe Magi (South Africa); Manasse Mbonye (Rwanda); Margaret Robertson (Australia); Ebrima Sall (Senegal); Lukas Sosoe (Ghana); Shangyi Zhou (P.R. China)***

# Organization of IYGU

## ***Scientific Board***

***Ibidun Adelekan (Nigeria); Irasema Alcántara-Ayala (Mexico),***

***Habib Ben Boubaker (Tunisia); Georg Gartner (Austria);***

***Yukio Himiyama (Japan); Alik Ismail-Zadeh (Russia);***

***Peter Jackson (UK); Jacques Lévy (France);***

***Reinhard Mechler (Austria); Chipso Plaxedes Mubaya (Zimbabwe);***

***Luiz Oosterbeek (Portugal); John Pickles (USA);***

***Armin Reller (Germany); Lauren Resnick (USA);***

***Saskia Sassen (USA); Allen J. Scott (USA);***

***Mathis Stock (Switzerland); Farhana Sultana (Bangladesh);***

***Peter J. Taylor (UK); John Urry (UK) ...***

# Organization of IYGU

## *Outreach*

*Rupert Maclean (UNESCO)*

*Joël Ndoli Pierre (Rwanda)*

*Margret Robertson (Australia)*

*Ingelore Scheunemann (Brazil)*

*Karl Donert (GB)*

*Po Keung Eric Tsang (P.R. China)*

*Lauren Resnick (USA)*

# Organization of IYGU

## ***Regional Action Centers (RAC)***

***Africa*** Kigali (Rwanda) – National University of Rwanda

***America:*** North: Los Angeles (UCLA) (in negotiation)

Central: Mexico City (Mexico) – Ciudad Universitaria

South: Brasilia – CNI (in negotiation)

### ***Arabic Countries***

Tunis (Tunisia) – ALECSO (in negotiation)

***Asia*** East: Beijing (China) – Geographical Society of China & Ministry  
of Science and Technology

Tokyo: National Academy of Science

***Europe*** North: Nijmegen (The Netherlands): Radboud University

South: Lausanne (Switzerland) – Department of Geography

East: (?)

West: Coimbra/Maçao – Lisbon (Portugal)

***Oceania*** Hamilton (New Zealand) – (in negotiation)

# Organization of IYGU



# The Brochures

Arabic



Chinese



English



French



Russian



Spanish



# Where we are

## 2013 UNESCO

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| April    | Agenda of the Executive Board          |
| October  | Executive Board (59 member states)     |
| November | General Conference (195 member states) |

## 2014 UN

- |         |                                       |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| April   | Agenda of the ECOSOC/General Assembly |
| October | General Assembly (192 member states)  |



# The Documents



**Executive Board**  
Hundred and ninety-second session

**192 EX/39**

PARIS, 14 August 2013  
Original: English

Item 39 of the provisional agenda

## **PROCLAMATION OF 2016 AS INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING (IYGU)**

### **SUMMARY**

This item has been included in the provisional agenda of the 192nd session of the Executive Board at the request of Djibouti on behalf of the Member States of the Africa Group.

The corresponding explanatory note together with a draft decision is attached hereto.

Action expected of the Executive Board: decision proposed in paragraph 18.

# The Documents



General Conference

37th Session, Paris, 2013

# 37 C

United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

37 C/63  
5 November 2013  
Original: French

Item 5.24 of the provisional agenda

## PROCLAMATION OF 2016 AS "INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING"

### OUTLINE

**Source:** 192 EX/Decision 39.

**Background:** By means of 192 EX/Decision 39, the Executive Board invited the Director-General to support all efforts leading the United Nations General Assembly to proclaim 2016 as international year of global understanding, and recommended that the General Conference at its 37th session adopt a resolution on the subject.

**Purpose:** The General Conference is invited to adopt a resolution concerning the proclamation of 2016 as international year of global understanding.

**Decision required:** paragraph 2.

1. By means of 192 EX/Decision 39, reproduced in annex hereto, the Executive Board welcomed the unanimous approval of the International Geographical Union (IGU), at its 2012 International Congress and General Assembly, with the support of the governing bodies of the International Council for Science (ICSU), International Social Science Council (ISSC) and International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS), of the proclamation of 2016 as international year of global understanding and its decision to play a lead role in coordinating and promoting geography-related activities at the national and regional levels around the world, and recommended that the General Conference at its 37th session adopt a resolution on the subject.

# The Documents

## Records of the General Conference

37th session

Paris, 5 – 20 November 2013

Volume 1

## Resolutions

### **70 Proclamation of 2016 as international year of global understanding (IGYU)**

*The General Conference,*

*Taking account of 192 EX/Decision 39,*

*Having examined document 37 C/63,*

*Noting that global understanding contributes to reducing the potential for regional conflicts, and helps to advance peace at the local, national and global levels,*

*Acknowledging that the core elements of the international year of global understanding objectives are research, education and information,*

*Being aware that the year 2016 provides an opportunity to highlight the need for international and transdisciplinary scientific collaboration to attain global sustainability,*

1. *Invites the Director-General to support all efforts leading the United Nations General Assembly to proclaim 2016 as international year of global understanding.*

*Resolution adopted on the report of the APX Commission at the 15th plenary meeting, on 19 November 2013.*

# Key Contents

## The International Year of Global Understanding will:

- establish a comprehensive global understanding and awareness of the natural and cultural embeddedness of all human action.
- contribute to changing ecologically harmful habits by designing culturally differentiated, exemplary alternative models of core everyday (best) practices.
- enhance awareness of the individual capacity and responsibility for everyday decision-making.

# Key Contents

## The International Year of Global Understanding will:

- mobilize social and natural scientists, as well as scholars in the humanities, to engage in transdisciplinary sustainability research.
- produce school teaching modules and study guidelines to be implemented at all educational levels – from primary to tertiary and post-experience education.
- serve as a catalyst for transdisciplinary cooperation and improve the culturally differentiated transfer of scientific insights to social practice.

# Key Contents

## Proclamation of 2016 as international year of global understanding (IYGU)

### The Executive Board,

- 1 Recognizing that global sustainability is grounded in a global understanding of our everyday activities,
- 2 Stressing that geographical education for global understanding is critical for addressing challenges such as global climate and social change, for providing sustainable sources of clean water, food and energy, and for maintaining an intact environment for the well-being of all people,
- 3 Considering that global understanding contributes to reducing the potential for regional conflicts helping to advance peace at the local, national and global scales,

# Key Contents

## **The Executive Board,**

5 Being aware that the year 2016 provides the opportunity to highlight the need for international and transdisciplinary scientific collaboration to reach global sustainability,

5 Having examined document 192 EX/39,

5 Welcomes the unanimous approval of the International Geographical Union (IGU), at its 2013 International Congress and General Assembly, together with the support of the Executive Boards of ICSU, ISSC and CIPSH to declare 2016 the International Year of Global Understanding and to play a lead role in coordinating and promoting geography-related activities at the national and regional levels around the world;

# Key Contents

## The Executive Board,

- 8 Invites the Director-General to support all efforts leading the United Nations General Assembly to declare 2016 the International Year of Global Understanding;
- 9 Recommends that the General Conference at its 37th session adopt a resolution on this subject.



# Key Contents

## Proclamation of 2016 as international year of global understanding (IYGU)

### The General Conference,

- 1 Taking account of 192 EX/Decision 39,
- 2 Having examined document 37 C/63,
- 3 Noting that global understanding contributes to reducing the potential for regional conflicts, helping to advance peace at the local, national and global levels,
- 4 Acknowledging that the core elements of the international year of global understanding objectives are research, education and information,

# Key Contents

## The General Conference,

- 4 Acknowledging that the core elements of the international year of global understanding objectives are research, education and information,
- 5 Being aware that the year 2016 provides the opportunity to highlight the need for international and transdisciplinary scientific collaboration to reach global sustainability,
- 6 Invites the Director-General to support all efforts leading the United Nations General Assembly to proclaim 2016 as international year of global understanding.

# Main Sponsors





**Thank you!**

UN International Year of

**GLOBAL**   
*understanding*

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The International Geographical Union (IGU)

[www.global-understanding.info](http://www.global-understanding.info)

