Geothermal energy and the dissemination of information: the role of the International Geothermal Association

Adele Manzella[1,2], Marnell Dickson[2]

[1] Information Committee of the International Geothermal Association
[2] CNR - Istituto di Geoscienze e Georisorse, Via Moruzzi 1, 56124, Pisa

Abstract
The International Geothermal Association (IGA), founded in 1988, is an international, worldwide, non-profit and non-governmental association whose objective and mission is to promote the research and utilization of geothermal resources, through the compilation, publication, and dissemination of scientific and technical data and information. The Information Committee (IC) of the IGA is responsible for advising the IGA Board on policies concerned with the collection, compilation, publication, exchange and dissemination of geothermal information, including information on utilization, development, technical findings, scientific research, meetings, publications and Association activities. The Committee is also responsible for the implementation of information policies determined by the Board.

Keywords: geothermal energy, Information

Introduction

The IGA is a scientific, educational and cultural organization established to operate worldwide. Its main objective is to encourage the research, development and utilization of geothermal resources worldwide through the compilation, publication and dissemination of scientific and technical data and information, both within the community of geothermal specialists and between geothermal specialists and the general public. It is in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and a Partner of the European Union for Renewable Energies.
Among the various Committees of the Association, the Information Committee (IC) is in charge of advising the IGA Board on policies concerned with the collection, compilation, publication, exchange and dissemination of geothermal information, including information on utilization, development, technical findings, scientific research, meetings, publications and Association activities. The Committee is also responsible for the implementation of information policies determined by the Board. The activities of the IC include the soliciting of articles and news for the IGA Newsletter, published quarterly, and its editorial coordination, with the aim of providing timely general information on geothermal matters to the geothermal community and the public at large; the IC has also set up and is currently running an IGA website on the Internet, where visitors can find a wealth of information on the Association in general, as well as sectors on geothermal energy, its distribution worldwide, and its various forms of utilization. The website also provides updated info on the major geothermal conferences and congresses, particularly the events organized by the IGA. There is also a long list of links to geothermal energy-related topics, organizations and companies.
Finally, the IC produces leaflets and brochures for publicity purposes, directed at obtaining new members, and at informing the public at large of the nature and benefits of geothermal energy.

Activities

The IGA is active in the dissemination of geothermal information, the organization of scientific and technical exchanges and meetings, and the promotion of specialist and non-specialist geothermal-related courses, including the publication of relevant manuals.

A World Geothermal Congress, sponsored by the IGA, is held every five years. The most recent World Geothermal Congress (WGC2000) was held in Japan in June 2000, and attended by 1800 participants. In 1995 the World Congress took place in Florence, with 1451 participants. The proceedings of these congresses are edited and published by the Association. The next World Geothermal Congress is scheduled to be held in Turkey in 2005.

A General Meeting is held annually, and preferably in concomitance with an international geothermal conference or meeting. In the past the AGM have been organised in Italy (Larderello, 1989; Pisa, 1998 and 2000), the USA (Kona, Hawaii, 1990; Salt Lake City, Utah, 1994; Lakeport, California, 1997; Reno, Nevada, 1999), Mexico (Cuernavaca and Guadalajara, 1996), Iceland (Reykjavik,1992), New Zealand (Auckland, 1993, 1995 and 2002), and Turkey (Izmir, 2001).
The IGA Newsletter (*IGA News*) is published four times a year. It provides general information on geothermal matters, and lists the main congresses and courses; it is mailed out to all IGA members.
The main information vehicle of the IGA, however, is its web site, which can be viewed on the Internet at www.geothermal-energy.org . A sub-sector of the site is reserved for IGA Board Members only, and accessible by password. The original IGA web site was launched in 1994, and was intended to act as a "collecting-house" for geothermal data sent in regularly by geothermal colleagues throughout the world, as well as information of a general nature on the Association. However, this objective was never fully attained, and the IC had to take over the compilation and updating of the site. The main contents are:
- IGA -*All About Us*, containing documents on the IGA, its scope, mission and structure, and general information on geothermal energy and its benefits.
- the *Interactive World Map*. Through this page visitors can view all the geothermal countries on a World Map and, clicking from continent to country, can access the geothermal information currently available for each. Members of the geothermal community in each country are encouraged to send in updates for these pages.
- *Electricity Generation*. This page lists the countries now using geothermal energy to produce electricity, and their installed generating capacity in the years 1990, 1995, and 2000, so as to give some idea of the evolution of geothermal production over the last decade. Again, by clicking on the countries listed on the left of the page, the visitor can access all the geothermal information available for each country, as in the case of the Interactive World Map.
- *Direct uses*. This page lists the countries that utilize geothermal resources in direct applications, giving their installed power and energy production for the years 1995 and 2000. Again, by clicking on the countries listed in the column on the left, the visitor can access all the geothermal information available for each.
- *Geothermal Energy*. This page contains articles describing the nature, distribution and utilization of geothermal energy, a sector with FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions), and a list of journals of geothermal interest.
- *Conferences, Congresses …* Here the visitor can find all events of geothermal interest scheduled to take place in various parts of the world. The first list refers to events organized by the IGA, followed by a more general one. These lists are interactive, so, by clicking on the various titles, the visitor can access the home page of an event or type up an e-mail to the relevant contact person. The events list is updated on a regular basis.
- *IGA Newsletter*. This page can be used to access current and recent back issues of the IGA Newsletter in pdf format, and to search for specific articles in the IGA Newsletter archives.

- *Photo Gallery*. The geothermal photographs posted on this page are provided by IGA members or geothermal colleagues and are organized by country. Again, input from geothermal colleagues is most welcome.
- *Various Geothermal Links*. Through this page the visitor can access all the main web sites related in some way to geothermal energy and to renewable energies in general.
- *Forum*. The minutes and other documentation relative to the latest IGA Annual General Meetings can be accessed on this page. A separate section is reserved for members of the IGA Board of Directors only, and is accessible only by password.

From the homepage it is also possible to contact the IGA Secretariat for information and registration. A number of geothermal experts from all over the world have volunteered to serve on the IGA Discussion Group, which replies to queries on matters related to geothermal energy.