
Subito! E-Newsletter #5: May 2018

1 Introduction

Welcome to the 5th SUBITOP newsletter. In this edition you can read about the experience of ESR's at the EGU2018 in Vienna. You will also find information about the mid-term review which was essential for the life of the SUBITOP-ITN. We also included private and academic partners' experiences for ESRs since the last edition of the SUBITO! newsletter published last January.

2 European Geosciences Union (EGU2018)

From the 8th to the 13th of April 2018, 14 out of 15 ESRs and several PIs attended the general assembly of the European Geosciences Union (EGU) in Vienna (Austria). This general assembly was again a great success with participation of 15000 researchers, as well as experts in science communication such as journalists, from 106 countries around the world. The EGU is organized in 22 divisions, covering a wide range of scientific purposes from Atmospheric sciences to Biogeosciences. Most importantly, this conference was a great opportunity to discuss about our work with other researchers during breaks, dinner or even during the evening around a drink. We got new perspectives for our projects and could think about some collaborations or simply get in touch with researchers interested in our work.



Figure 1: *SUBITOP group photo at EGU2018.*

This year, Malwina San-José (ESR13), Manar Alsaif (ESR10), Jessica Munch (ESR4), Carlos Fernandez (ESR3), Joost van den Broek (ESR9) and Nico Schliffke (ESR8) organised the session **'Actio – Reactio: From Subducting Slabs to Shaping the Surface'** ([TS4.1/GD5.3/GM4.9](#)). As the title hints, the session was focused on understanding dominant processes contributing to surface topography in subduction zones as well as the interplay between shallow and deep processes and surface deformations. This session was a great success, and also increased the exposure of, and served as good publicity for the SUBITOP-ITN.

3 Mid-Term review (May 2018)

3.1 Content of the Mid-Term meeting

The SUBITOP-ITN held its mid-term evaluation meeting in Rome from the 5th to the 9th May, 2018. This event was very crucial for the SUBITOP-ITN. The main focus of this event was to take note on the progress and health of the network by a representative from the European Union. It involved reporting on individual ESR projects, academic and industrial partner interactions, in the form of 10 minutes presentation from each ESR project, followed by 2-3 minutes discussion. Since the network is already in its half life and ESRs have first results from their project, the meeting helped in identifying potential collaboration among the ESRs. Selected ESRs gave presentations on their academic and industrial secondment to give the flavour of SUBITOP's unique features. Overall the network is doing well and we passed the mid-term review.

This event also included two short workshops. The first workshop focused on industrial partners where two of the industrial partners, StatOil (now called Equinor) and CGG, gave presentations on selection, training and management of scientific projects. It was helpful for ESRs to assess and prepare themselves for a possible career in the industry. The second workshop was focused on scientific communication. Bárbara Ferreira (Media and Communications Manager of the EGU), discussed "Communicating your science to various audiences" with hands-on experience on communication of science to the general public, media and in social events. ESRs motivation for the course ranged from explaining science to their grandparents to in a social gathering (party).



Figure 2: ESRs presentations and scientific communication workshop.

3.2 Project coordinator's impression on the mid-term review

Niels Hovius (Project Coordinator), expresses his views on the mid-term review *"First, the mid-term review was a great success for the network. The designated EU monitor, Prof. Francisca Martínez Ruiz, has congratulated us on 'the outstanding project' and found that 'the ESRs made excellent presentations'. Her positive feedback will go to the EU Project Officer Giuliana Donini, and we hope that it will trigger the release of the second tranche of funding for our network. This is an essential step towards completion of our project and it secures continued support for all SUBITOP ESRs."*

He further stresses the importance of the mid-term review meeting for ESRs and the network in general *"So, this is an important job well done, but for me, the mid-term meeting was also about knitting our network even tighter by finding the important connections between ESR projects. All projects have now advanced to the point where questions have crystallized, approaches tried and tested, data accumulated, and ideas and interpretations stated. By reviewing progress in all projects, we have seen the parallels and complementarities, but also the missing pieces and the overlaps. We now have time to fill the space between the ESR projects with bridges, shared tools and data, joint approaches and discussion about common interests and relevant findings. This is the process that will eventually yield the special scientific contribution of the network. For me, Rome was about driving that process."*

He is glad about the network's functioning and ESRs performance. He says *"I was delighted to see a series of well considered and articulated scientific talks by the ESRs. This confirmed to me that we have been particularly good, but also lucky in selecting our ESRs from the large pool of applicants, and that we have been good at supporting them on the way to becoming skilled scientists. Many Training Networks have a rather more varied ESR quality, and this is often a major criticism of what is one of the principal ways in which Europe supports science. I think that we demonstrate that Training Networks can assemble real talent and deliver great science."*

He also adds words from Julia Morgan, one of the external members of the Supervisory Board *"I will say, I am quite impressed with the structure of the training networks. The team based approach, and combination of primary research and academic and industry secondments ensures broad student training, and further, allows students to develop strong collaborations - within and beyond their cohort. The field trips and intermittent workshops solidifies those relationships, while encouraging students to produce and present top notch results. I could see this model carrying well into the US educational system, although we don't have a direct funding analog at NSF."*

And looking towards the second half of the network he says *"All this makes me look forward keenly to the second phase of our project, in which we'll see our eggs hatch."*

4 Academic and Industrial partnerships



Figure 3: *Ajay Kumar (ESR7) academic secondment.*

Ajay Kumar (ESR7) started his academic secondment with his academic partner, Università Degli Studi di Roma Tre (UniRoma3), in mid-April, with a focus on learning analog modelling for subduction processes. "It is an excellent opportunity to learn about analog models that complement the numerical models related to the geodynamic processes in a subduction system", says Ajay, who remembers that "the last time I did experiments in the laboratory was in 2014 and it is a great experience to work in the lab again".

Malwina San-José (ESR13) went to ETH Zurich (SUBITOP academic partner) last year from May to August for geochemistry analysis of thermochronology samples collected in Italy during spring. Malwina San-José finally ended up staying in ETH Zurich until December 2017 to work on an additional project (paleoaltimetry) that bloomed during her initial secondment project. "It was the opportunity to work in very interdisciplinary research groups (Earth surface Dynamics and Biogeoscience), learn new skills in fields I had never even heard about, and discover a completely different living environment (yay! Mountains!) :D " says Malwina San-José (ESR13).

5 High school interactions



Figure 4: *Kittiphon Boonma (ESR5) and Ajay Kumar (ESR7) at Institut Montserrat, Barcelona, Spain.*

Kittiphon Boonma (ESR5) and Ajay Kumar (ESR7) visited Institut Montserrat, Barcelona last year in October, where they performed a seismic wave propagation activity. High school students took part as molecules and transferred seismic waves through them. It was a good learning and fun experience for the students.

Manar Alsaif (ESR10) visited her high school Lycée Joffre, Montpellier, France, where she talked about the importance of fundamental research in science. The motivation for this talk came from her last visit, about different career paths and students were more interested in technology and travel. So to give them an idea about a career in fundamental research, Manar Alsaif came up with a challenging activity where she split them into groups and asked them to choose a landscape on Earth which they thought is not affected by plate tectonics. Then she explained them, through an interactive discussion, how the landscape they chose (landscapes chosen were: the beach, the desert, the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls and Corsica) is affected (directly or indirectly) by tectonics. Manar Alsaif thinks that her students now have an idea about the importance of fundamental research.



Figure 5: *Manar Alsaif (ESR10) at high school Lycée Joffre, Montpellier, France.*

6 Upcoming events

- **EGU Galileo Conferences: Exploring new frontiers in fluid processes in subduction zone**, June 24th to 29th 2018; Liebnitz, Austria.
- **50 Years of Plate Tectonics: Then, Now and Beyond**, June 25th-26th 2018; Paris, France.
- **German-Swiss Geodynamics Workshop**, August 19th-22th 2018; Kiel, Germany.
- **GeoMod**, October 1st to 4th 2018; Barcelona, Spain.

7 Contacts and further information

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Further information on the intranet

(requires login - please contact Micha Dietze if you are missing login credentials)

- Grant and Consortium Agreements
- Information and details on the entire SUBITOP Team (ESRs, PI's, Private Partners, Partner Schools)

- Newsletters and further official documents
- Information on SUBITOP workshops and short courses
- SUBITOP logo and document template files

8 The SUBITOP Group



Newsletter by Ajay Kumar, Arthur Briaud in collaboration with other ESRs.