

PRESS RELEASE

30 October 2020

Professor appointed President of leading geoscience organisation

One of the world's largest scientific organisations has elected a Heriot-Watt University and Lyell Centre Professor as its new President.

Professor John Ludden is only the UK's second geoscientist to lead the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), which represents more than one-million geologists worldwide.

Founded in 1961, the IUGS promotes and encourages the study of geological problems, especially those of world-wide significance, and supports international cooperation in the Earth sciences.

Professor Ludden said on his appointment: "I am proud to be elected as President of the IUGS, an organisation that has earned tremendous respect in the international science community.

"In my new role, I intend to focus the IUGS around the need to address the climate crisis and ensure that we are able to provide resources for the planet and for the energy transition."

Director of the Lyell Centre, Dr Tracy Shimmield said: "I am delighted to hear that John will be taking on the role of President of the IUGS. He brings with him a wealth of geoscientific knowledge and experience, which will see him lead the IUGS expertly during his term of office.

"As John is based at the Lyell Centre, we look forward to supporting him with this role by contributing where appropriate. Many colleagues are members of the IUGS and I am sure that they will also be delighted to hear the news of John's new position within this renowned scientific organisation."

Adding his congratulations Professor Garry Pender, Deputy Principal of Research and Innovation at Heriot-Watt University, said: "Congratulations to John on his election and for being elected to this prestigious post.

"This appointment speaks to the depth of talent we have at this University and further promotes our expertise in geoscience on the world stage."

In 2019, Professor Ludden joined Heriot-Watt University as a Bicentennial Research Professor and is based at the Lyell Centre, a partnership between the University and the British Geological Survey (BGS). Prior to this he held a number of influential roles in geoscience including leading the BGS as its Chief Executive Officer and prior to this as head of the earth sciences directorate of the CNRS France.

In 2016, he was presented his CBE for Service to Geoscience and is a foreign member of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

ENDS

Media contact: Craig McManamon, Communications Officer on 07933 701003 or email mediaenquiries@hw.ac.uk

Photo of Professor Ludden available.

The Lyell Centre

The Lyell Centre is a strategic partnership between Heriot-Watt University and the British Geological Survey, funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), the Scottish Funding Council and Heriot-Watt University. The partnership enables them to work together combining their expertise in geoscience. Exploring themes ranging from geology and geophysics to marine ecosystems, the centre's combination of pure and applied expertise employs innovative methods and technologies to society's most important environmental science and energy challenges.

Twitter: [@lyellcentre](https://twitter.com/lyellcentre)