

## International Mountain Science Conferences

PERTH 1: Global Change in Mountains Regions – October 2005

PERTH 2: Global Change and the World's Mountains – October 2010

PERTH 3: Mountains of Our Future Earth – October 2015

In October 2005, the first conference to take place at the Perth Concert Hall was an international event bringing together 210 scientists from 41 countries. Its main aims were to permit participants to present and discuss their research on all aspects of global changes in mountain areas – from climate change to global trends in tourism – and to develop a global strategy for mountain research. The conference was organised by the Centre for Mountain Studies (CMS) at Perth College, University of the Highlands and Islands, with funding from the European Commission and UNESCO.

Building on the success of the 2005 conference, the CMS organized a second conference on a similar range of themes in September 2010, this time in collaboration with the global Mountain Research Initiative (MRI), based in Switzerland. Additional objectives of this conference were to review progress with the strategy prepared in 2005 and to evaluate and synthesise progress in understanding of global change in relation to mountain regions. The conference led to a special issue of the pre-eminent mountain science journal, 'Mountain Research and Development'. Funding was provided by Perth and Kinross Council, The Scottish Government, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Austrian Academy of Sciences, and UNESCO. A total of 450 people from 60 countries attended – the then Provost commented that this was the most internationally diverse event ever held in Perth.

In both 2005 and 2010, many delegates commented on the high quality of the facilities at the Perth Concert Hall including modern AV systems and technical support. Furthermore, the Concert Hall's spacious foyer area created a superb bright and airy exhibition area to display the research poster abstracts, which were available for delegates to view during all lunch and refreshment breaks. Close to the Concert Hall are Perth Museum & Art Gallery and the Royal George Hotel which were able to accommodate the numerous parallel sessions essential to the running of the programme.

Delegates enjoyed field trips to the Atholl estate and other parts of the Scottish Highlands, allowing them to see and develop an understanding of the landscape – and to visit a distillery and sample Scotland's most famous mountain product as well! Organisers also liked that delegates could also meet up in a wide choice of restaurants and bars in the city centre. Moreover, Perth offered a wide range of hotels and B&Bs to suit the various budgets of the individual delegates.

A third conference will take place in October 2015, organised by the CMS, MRI and the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment and funded by the same organisations and also VisitScotland. Following the submission of 620 abstracts from 70 countries, it is anticipated that the number and diversity of participants will be similar to 2010. This conference will bring together the research from the previous two conferences and contribute to the global Future Earth Programme, a 10-year international research initiative.