

COMMISSION 15: PHYSICAL STUDIES OF ASTEROIDS AND COMETS

(L'ETUDE PHYSIQUE DES ASTEROIDES ET COMETES)

PRESIDENT: Vincenzo Zappalà
VICE-PRESIDENT: H. Uwe Keller
SECRETARY: Karri Muinonen

1. Meeting Opening

The President opened the Business Meeting, welcoming members, consultants, and other interested audience. There were 15 in attendance. The agenda as presented by the President was adopted.

2. Deceased Members

The members stood for a moment in silence in honour of the six distinguished members of the Commission that had died: D. Beard, F. Dossin, P. Farinella, S. Grudzinska, G. Herzberg, and F. Miller.

3. New Commission Officers

The Commission elected the following officers for the new triennium: President - H. U. Keller (Germany), Vice-President - E. Tedesco (USA), Secretary - Gabriele Cremonese (Italy), Chair of the Working Group for Comets - W. Huebner (USA), Chair of the Working Group for Asteroids - A. Cellino (Italy), and Members of Organizing Committee - M. T. Capria (Italy), A. Harris (Germany), N. Kiselev (Ukraine), L.-A. McFadden (USA), K. Meech (USA), T. Michalowski (Poland), K. Muinonen (Finland), M. V. Sykes (USA), J. Watanabe (Japan), and R. M. West (Germany).

4. New Members and Consultants

The Commission elected 28 new members: K. Altwegg (Switzerland), I. Belskaya (Ukraine), P. Colom (France), G. Cremonese (Italy), J. Davies (USA), C. De Sanctis (Italy), E. Dotto (Italy), M. Grady (UK), P. Gronkowski (Poland), D. Hestroffer (France), M. Kaasalainen (Finland), M. Kidger (Spain), J. Klacka (Slovak Republic), P. Korsun (Ukraine), P.-O. Lagage (France), M. Lazzarini (Italy), G. Longo (Italy), J. Luu (Netherlands), W. Merline (USA), J. Piironen (Finland), S. Russell (UK), N. Samarashinha (USA), R. Schultz (Netherlands), Y. Sizonenko (Ukraine), J. Tao (China PR), G. Tozzi (Italy), P. Vazquez Sada (Mexico), and J. Yang (Korea PR). The Commission further elected six new consultants: J. Benkhoff (Germany), W. Bottke (USA), P. Israelevich (Israel), S. Kim (Korea), R. Orosei (Italy), and P. Tanga (Italy).

5. Rules for Triennial Report

The Commission decided to prepare the Triennial Report as earlier: the research descriptions will be included in the printed version, while the references will be made available on the Commission WWW-site.

6. Commission Working Groups

6.1. Working Group for Asteroids

As proposed by E. Tedesco (chair), the name of the ‘Working Group for Minor Planets’ was changed to ‘Working Group for Asteroids’ (WGA). WGA is formed by voluntary membership by those, who, e.g., wish to contribute to the Triennial Report. The chairman suggested a possible waveband change of the asteroid absolute magnitude system from V to R: a preliminary vote was in favor by 12 to 0, with three abstentions. A. Cellino (new chair) and E. Tedesco agreed that the WGA web site would remain at http://www.terrasys.com/SSRD/IAU_C15_WGA/.

6.2. Working Group for Comets

The Working Group for Comets (WGC), chaired by W. F. Huebner, compared water gas production rates from different telescopic observations ranging from the microwave through the IR, visible, to the UV (i.e., H₂O, OH, etc. observations) of Comet Hale-Bopp (C/1995 O1) over large heliocentric distance ranges. The conclusion, based on the sum of pre- and post-perihelion observations, is that all observations are in reasonable agreement. Thus, no special calibration appears to be necessary. The study will be continued to investigate the pre- and post-perihelion observations separately, as the full complement of data becomes available.

7. Other

The restructuring of Commissions 15 and 22, i.e., transferring meteorites from the former to the latter and the resultant change in the name of Commission 15 to ‘Physical Studies of Asteroids and Comets’ were approved at the Division III Business Meeting provided the Commission 15 members approved these changes at their Business Meeting. Commission 15 Business Meeting unanimously approved the changes.

P. Feldman presented new HST images of the disrupted Comet LINEAR, and called for increased scientific activity for the Commission during the forecoming triennium, with the possibility of organizing IAU Colloquia/Symposia on topical themes. H. U. Keller requested that the Commission members contact him with ideas how this could be accomplished. R. Schultz pointed out the forecoming second Comet Hale-Bopp meeting on Canary Islands, and G. Tancredi brought up South-American meetings on asteroids and comets. E. Tedesco requested that, in the future, Commission 15 and 20 Business Meetings not be organized in parallel. Furthermore, Division III Business Meeting should take place after the first Commission Business Meetings.