

Minutes

On 22 October, 2020, the SPS Chair Lucia Angiolini and Vice-Chair Mike Stephenson organized a zoom webinar for the voting members. In total, twelve voting members attended the webinar including Lucia Angiolini, Alexander Biakov, Valery Chernykh, Charles Henderson, Spencer Lucas, Ausonio Ronchi, Tamra Schiappa, Joerg Schneider, Shuzhong Shen, Mike Stephenson, Yue Wang, and Yichun Zhang.

The agenda of the meeting comprised the following topics, after an introduction:

- Terms of Reference of the voting members;
- towards the completion the Permian System: the base-Artinskian GSSP at Dal'ny Tulkas section, Russia and the base-Kungurian GSSP at Mechetlino, Russia;
- SPS Working groups;
- the Permian community webinar on 13 November 2020.

During the introduction all the attendants introduced themselves, then Mike Stephenson presented to the officers suggestions for the voting members' Terms of Reference, that is the rules of engagement, how voting members should work together, what their purpose is, and what is expected of them as voting members. In the discussion that followed, several main themes emerged:

- contributing and finding contributions to *Permophiles*, “a great place for ideas”;
- trying to increase the numbers of the Permian community especially reaching out to students and early-career researchers-maybe by preparing a short and effective video on the Permian;
- facilitating the development of the Permian timescale in order to finish it and then starting to fit the events of the Permian world into that framework;
- also, participation in webinars by the voting members was considered a very important commitment to undertake.

Later, on behalf of Valery Chernykh, Lucia Angiolini presented the Dal’ny Tulkas Section (a potential candidate section for the base of the Artinskian Stage) and the Mechetlino Section (a potential candidate section for the base of the Kungurian Stage).

The contents of these presentations, prepared by Valery Chernykh, are published in the current issue of *Permophiles* #69 at p.9 and p.14 were sent in advance to all voting members, with the request to prepare and pose questions on the candidate sections. So, after the presentation, Lucia Angiolini showed the questions raised by the voting members and Valery’s answers. The questions included the topics (1) radiometric dating of ash beds in Dal’ny Tulkas and Mechetlino; (2) correlations of the Ural sections beyond Russia; (3) whether the fossils in the Mechetlino

section are enough for defining a GSSP section. The answers were as follows: there are U-Pb zircon ages for the ash beds in Dalny Tulkas, but not yet for Mechetlino; correlation is possible with North and South America and China; the distribution of conodonts, ammonoids and foraminifers suggests that the Mechetlino section is continuous enough and has sufficient fossils to define a GSSP. However, it appeared that the correlations need to be worked out more. In fact, the question about the correlations was followed by a deep discussion which mainly concerned the concept of the conodont species *Sweetognathus whitei*, the marker to define the base of the Artinskian Stage. Charles Henderson presented the work of his team, emphasizing that the type *S. whitei* from Wyoming is late Asselian rather than Artinskian and that the species of *Sweetognathus* from Dalny Tulkas is not *S. whitei*, but nevertheless is correlatable worldwide (see the contribution of Charles Henderson in *Permophiles* #69 at p.23). Spencer Lucas, Shuzhong Shen and Lucia Angiolini pointed out that this debate about “two *S. whitei* species” has been going on a long time, and an agreement among conodont specialists should be reached before defining the base of the Artinskian GSSP section. Consequently, Lucia Angiolini suggests another more restricted webinar to be held in November between Valery and Charles to move forward and solve this conodont conundrum.

Then, Lucia Angiolini discussed the working groups of SPS with the

voting members. Charles Henderson and Joerg Schneider reported the progress of the working groups they are chairing on behalf of their group. They all agreed to reconvene the working groups with the suggestion to convert the working group on the 'Guadalupian Series and Global Correlation' into a working group on 'Correlation Marine and continental Guadalupian'. Finally, Mike Stephenson presented plans for an SPS corresponding members' webinar to be held on 13 November 2020 with the main aim of engaging corresponding members in an inclusive way and to make the SPS mission and activities clear to all the Permian community. But this is another story and we will report about it in the *Permophiles* #70.