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# Q5 International Meeting. The Quaternary: boundaries and particularities

Paris, 2006, 1-3 February

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# *Q5 International Meeting. The Quaternary: boundaries and particularities*

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- 1 The fifth international meeting organised by the French Quaternary community (Q5) “Quaternary: Boundaries and Particularities”, was held in Paris from 1st to 3d of February 2006. It was co-organized by the French National Committee of INQUA and the French Association of Quaternary Studies (AFEQ) with the assistance of the Muséum national d’Histoire Naturelle (MNHN) of Paris. The proceedings of the Q5 Colloquium will be fully published in the French journal *Quaternaire*, with several volumes planned in the year 2007.
- 2 Questions about the Quaternary (stratigraphic rules, rank and boundary, ICS proposition) were exposed in an introductory session. Six main sessions covering almost all the fields of Quaternary Research were proposed.
- 3 The meeting joined together more than 169 researchers with 100 communications (both oral and poster), originating from 11 countries (France, Algeria, Belgium, Chile, Deutschland, Italy, Peru, Portugal, Senegal, Spain, United Kingdom),
- 4 At the end of the meeting, a general discussion, attended by 82 participants, was devoted to the aim of the colloquium, and concerns the last ICS proposal (Leuwen, Sept.05).
- 5 The study of the Quaternary period is essentially interdisciplinary and has to combine many different chronological frames. The temporal resolution is remarkable and this field of research is the place where junction of data from geosciences, biosciences and human sciences can be done.
- 6 The impact of such studies in the knowledge of Present, both in terms of environment and human society, is no more to be demonstrated. The general discussion was extensive,

and finally we proposed to vote about one of the options shown in the paper of B. Pillans & T. Naish (2004).

- 7 A clear consensus arose that the ICS proposition is unacceptable for our community. Option 4 was unanimously chosen (only one abstention), by international participants to the Q5 Meeting.
- 8 Thus:
  1. The Quaternary is a formal chronostratigraphic/geochronological unit, expressed at least as a full System/Period
  2. The Quaternary must be placed above the Neogene. This follows the stratigraphical rules stating that a higher unit cannot be included in a lower unit.
  3. The lower chronological limit of the Quaternary is to be fixed at e.2.6 M.a. (i.e., coincident with the Gauss- Matuyama boundary)
  4. The base of the Quaternary must be the base of the Pleistocene. Thus, following the rule of the ICS we formerly asked the redefining of the base of the Pleistocene from the GSSP at Vrica (1.8 Ma) to the GSPP at Monte San Nicola (Gelasien, 2.58 Ma).
- 9 Results of this consultation were sent to the President of INQUA, John Clague, on February the 10th 2006. In any case, it seems that such a decision about the status of Quaternary has to be taken during the next International INQUA meeting in 2007, and no compromise can be accepted before.
- 10 Special investigations and a wide participation are necessary to guarantee a global agreement among our important and dynamic international community.