

7th FIG Regional Meeting

The 7th FIG Regional Meeting, entitled “Spatial Data Serving People: Land Governance and the Environment” Building the Capacity™, was held in Hanoi (Vietnam) from 19 to 22 October 2009. The Conference was co-hosted by the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) and the Viet Nam Association of Geodesy, Cartography and Remote Sensing (VGCR).

The objective of the conference was to bring regional (South-East Asian) and international focus to the role of the surveying community in supporting spatial data infrastructure (SDI) for improving land (including submerged land) governance and environmental protection. The technical sessions also focused on demonstrating the importance of building institutional capacity as a means of implementing an effective SDI. The relevance for FIG Commission 4 (Hydrography) was within the scope of our present work plan.

Technical Sessions

Three technical sessions were offered. The first session, ‘Coastal Zone Issues’, focused on the measurement and mapping of oil spills in Vietnamese waters. The session also included a presentation on the development of a prototype marine cadastre in which one could note the importance of implementing a system for managing marine/land rights, especially where environmental threat by oil pollution appears to be a serious concern. With a marine cadastre, Vietnam would, as any other coastal state, have the ability to map marine environmental threats against specific land use rights as a means to measure the impact within a spatial context.

In the second session, ‘Economic Benefits of Hydrography’, several case studies demonstrated the economic benefits of hydrography from Cameroon to Ireland to the Canadian Arctic, as well as the economic benefits of appropriate education in hydrography. Papers from this session will be compiled and published within a future FIG report.

The third session, ‘Capacity Building’, included a contribution from the International Hydrographic Organization, a presentation on the development of a hydrographic office in Croatia, and a focus on building capacity in small island developing states. The latter touched on past failures of past ‘north-south’ initiatives to develop and maintain hydrographic capacity in Jamaica and Trinidad and proposed alternatives for an ‘east-west’ (Caribbean) solution for the region. Proceedings of this conference can be viewed or downloaded from the FIG web site (81).

Commission 4 General Meeting

A general meeting was held to discuss the proposed technical programme for Sydney, the development of FLASH sessions (shortened presentations of 4-5 slides) in lieu of poster presentations, specific objectives for working group 4.1 - Hydrographic Surveying in Practice, and proposed final publications for all Working Groups. Minutes of this meeting are posted on the Commission 4 website (2).

2010 FIG Congress and Working Week

Commission chairs and chairs-elect also met in Vietnam to review abstracts and prepare the technical programme for the 2010 FIG Congress and Working Week in Sydney (Australia). Fifty abstracts - of which three have been submitted for peer review - have been entered thus far, which may amount to 8 or 9 hydrographic sessions. Joint commission sessions will include work on vertical reference frames (datums), positioning at sea, and coastal zone issues in small island developing states.

Nominations for Chair-elect 2011-2014

According to new FIG rules and guidelines, the Commission's chair-elect shall be required to serve the entire four-year term prior to his/her term as chair. This represents a change from our previous system whereby chairs-elect were to be nominated two years prior to their subsequent term as chair. Members wishing to nominate the next chair for Commission 4 (for the term 2011-2014) please contact the FIG office.