
Editorial

Creating the GISociety

GIS as a technology has come a long way, from the early adoption of technical wizardry to the ubiquitous, if unconscious use by the masses. The creation of the GISociety is on its way through technological development, theoretical and empirical scientific research and inclusion of technology into education with increasing pedagogical justification. Defining new dimensions of hard- and software, brainware and orgware are all needed to further develop the GISociety.

The Geoinformatics Forum (www.gi-forum.org) held in Salzburg from July 2-5, 2013, links into these research areas. We are pleased to present work by researchers who actively contribute to the creation of the GISociety in theoretical, technical, and educational terms. The conference hosted six prominent keynote speakers who addressed the main conference topic and encouraged further discussion. Sarah Elwood, Josef Strobl, Geoff Zeiss, Francis Harvey, Carmel Mbizvo and Xavier Lopez shared their insights into new developments in the field, and by doing so inspiring new research and cooperative initiatives.

The GIScience and -Technology as well as the Learning with GI conference tracks are again joined under a common organizational roof and in a common publication. This reflects our belief that a GISociety can only be created through close interaction among the domains of science, technology and education.

Beyond these content issues, the GI-Forum has become a host platform for national and international projects, to both discuss and disseminate project findings. In 2013, the Comenius projects SPACIT and digital-earth.eu as well as FP7 SPACE projects MS. MONINA and BIO_SOS funded by the European commission share their insights at the GI-Forum. These proceedings reflect this development by devoting specific sections, edited by specialists in the field, to the relevant projects. This project orientation allows readers to gain insight into recent project work in Europe. Presentations of course were open to an interested audience.

In another recent development, our traditional publisher Wichmann/VDE VERLAG now is sharing publishing duties with the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press. This co-edition allows us to provide you with hardcopy – which our readers are used to – as well as a professional and fully indexed online representation of the GI-Forum proceedings. We hope to provide an even more valuable research and publication outlet through this cooperation, and would like to thank both publishers for making it possible.

The GI_Forum has been jointly organised by the University of Salzburg Interfaculty Department for Geoinformatics – Z_GIS, the Commission for GIScience at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW-GIScience), and the Department of Sustainable Tourism and Regional Development at the German University of Technology in Muscat, Oman. The interdisciplinary GI_Forum has become an annual event for a vibrant GI community representing academia, industry, government, and education to advance the dialogue on progress in GIScience and to explore new research directions. The symposium is co-located with the

highly regarded annual German language conference on Applied Geoinformatics (AGIT, www.agit.at), celebrating its 25th edition in 2013.

Neither the conference nor this publication would have been possible without the help of many people quietly working in the background. We are deeply indebted to all those who contributed to the conference and supported us as editors through their work, effort, time and, above all, patience. We would like to mention, first of all, the authors who underwent a rather rigorous review process resulting in good quality publications. Secondly, we deeply appreciate work done by our Program Committee whose feedback lead to significant improvements in quality of this year's proceedings. Nicole Ferber & Robert Vogler (Salzburg) helped with layout and editing, and Simone Dürr, Anna Karnassioti, Daniela Weinhäupl, Bernhard Bretz and Bernhard Zigel (Salzburg) provided invaluable assistance with their competent handling of general conference affairs (from contribution registration to public relations). Finally, we thank Gerold Olbrich (Offenbach) who coordinated the final print at Wichmann publishers, as well as Herwig Stöger at Austrian Academy of Science Press for his support of the online publication.

We do hope that the conference events give a wide picture of current developments in GI-Science and GI-based learning in Europe and beyond, that the ideas presented here encourage further research, and thus foster development of powerful methods and tools as well as effective education strategies for the spatially enabled society.

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