

Report summarising experiences at the ISPRS Mid-term Symposium of Technical Commission VII in Istanbul, Turkey

Charity Mundava
Department of Spatial Sciences
Curtin University
Perth, Western Australia

My name is Charity Mundava and I am a PhD student within the Department of Spatial Sciences at Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia. My PhD project is focused on developing tools that can be used for Above Ground Biomass assessment using remote sensing for the Kimberley rangeland area in the Northern part of the state of Western Australia. I would like to share my recent experiences at the ISPRS Mid-term Symposium of ISPRS Technical Commission VII. The Mid-term Symposium of ISPRS Technical Commission VII took place at the Istanbul Technical University from 29 September to 2 October 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey. Istanbul is a very rich historical city where Asia meets Europe with a lot of diversity (Plate 1). It was such a great opportunity to visit this lovely city. The title of the paper I submitted was 'Evaluation of vegetation indices for rangeland biomass estimation in the Kimberley area of Western Australia. The report is split into four parts: 1) a brief introduction, 2) a detailed summary of the symposium, 3) social events and 4) acknowledgements.



Plate 1: Overview of the Istanbul city with a view of the Bosphorus

The Symposium

The symposium was running under the banner of “*Thematic Processing, Modeling and Analysis of Remotely Sensed Data*”. It was opened with a welcome to country from Prof. Filiz Sunar who was also the symposium chair. During the opening session the two winners of the travel grants were presented with the awards, these were Chia-Hsiang Yang and myself (Plate 2). The conference was an excellent occasion for knowledge exchange, exploration and discussion with researchers from all over the globe on topics related to the advances of remote sensing, computer vision, image analysis and related fields. Summaries of the different sessions and my experiences are given below:



Plate 2: Receiving the ISPRS Foundation travel grants from Christian Heipke

Plenary session

The plenary sessions had speeches from internationally recognised keynote speakers such as Wolfgang Wagner (Vienna University of Technology), Deren Li (Wuhan University) Christina Heipke (Leibniz University, Hannover), Jixian Zhang (Chinese Academy of Surveying and Mapping) and Malcom Taberner (Plymouth Marine Laboratory) among many others. The plenary sessions were an eye opener and gave me an overview of the directions of future research in remote sensing.

Oral session

The technical programme was organised into different parallel sessions covering topics such as Image classification, LIDAR, Change detection, Hyperspectral data, Data fusion, Crop monitoring and Physical modelling and Signatures. Sitting in and listening to colleagues give their presentations gave me an overview of what they are doing and also inspired new ideas for my own work. There was an opportunity for me to give an oral presentation. The talk helped me gain confidence in articulating my research to a wider audience, a skill which is very necessary as a researcher. One of the main highlights for me was attending the White Elephant session. The topics covered during the session were how to write a thesis/paper, how to write a proposal and how to give presentations. Even though I have gone to many sessions that are offered by my university covering these topics, it was quite interesting to hear perspectives from researchers who have had a lot of experience in the field. I learnt a lot from their hands on experience.

Poster session

The poster session went well. It gave me a quick update of the current research from colleagues and I had a chance to strike conversations with the researchers as well as exchanging ideas.

Social Events

Besides the talks, there was a possibility of networking during coffee breaks, poster sessions and social events, I had a chance of catching up with old and new colleagues from around the globe (Plate 3). We exchanged emails and had some laughs on our research journeys to date. I have managed to keep contact with most of them, hopefully these will be lifelong networks.



Plate 3: Networking dinner with colleagues from the conference clockwise from left Shengye Jin, Kyoto University-Japan, Farhan Sfak, Karachi University-Pakistan, Mustafa Ustuner-Yildiz Technical University-Turkey, Kamil Faisal, Ryenson University-Canada, myself, Tessio Novack, Technical University of Munich- Germany and Peter Fischer, The German Aerospace Center-DLR-Germany

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