The ISPRS Congress 2016 Experience
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I attended the XXII International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) Congress last July 12 – 19, 2016 in Prague, Czech Republic. I was selected to be one of the recipients of White Elephants’ “Kennert Torlegård Travel Grant” Fund thru the ISPRS Foundation. I served as a board member of the ISPRS Student Consortium from 2013 to 2016 and I participated in the ISPRS Congress to present my technical work as well as to support the student activities.

The ISPRS Congress was very well organized and was a great opportunity to meet old friends as well as meet fellow researchers, professors and experts in the fields of remote sensing, photogrammetry and other geospatial information sciences. I had 2 presentations in the ISPRS Congress – a poster presentation of the paper I co-authored with the other board members of the ISPRS SC, entitled, “The Latest Developments of the ISPRS Student Consortium,” and an oral presentation during the Youth Forum, entitled “Synergy of Optical and SAR Data for Mapping and Monitoring Mangroves,” which was one of the several technical outputs of our conservation geomatics team under the Fauna and Flora International – Philippines Programme (FFI-PH).

The ISPRS SC activities during the Congress included the Youth Forum, divided into sessions chaired by the board members. We also conducted an evaluation of the papers submitted for the Youth Forum Best Paper Awards. During the Panel Discussion, we invited several distinguished speakers who can share their experiences and insights about the many challenges that students and young researchers often encounter during their academic and early career. The General Assembly was also an opportunity for the ISPRS SC board to report an overall summary of the achievements of the organization for the term 2012 – 2016. Prior to the ISPRS Congress, I decided to continue my work in the ISPRS SC and applied for the position of Chair, for the term 2016 – 2020. My application was approved, and I am now working with the new board members as well as the Working V/5 and with the supervision of our technical commission, TC V, “Education and Outreach.” I was also able to briefly discuss the future plans of the ISPRS SC with our TC V President, Dr Senthil Kumar of the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing during the meetings of the Congress.

As a young researcher and now that I am pursuing my doctorate studies, the ISPRS Congress had greatly contributed to my professional and scientific experiences. I was given the chance to meet people whose works I only read in journal articles and to get a full grasp of the most recent advances in our profession. Being part of the ISPRS through the ISPRS SC also enabled me to learn more about a variety of issues and how the student organization can further be improved and how it can take a step forward in keeping up with the rapid pace of progress in terms of technology as well as the changing perspectives of students, young researchers and people who are involved and had greatly contributed to the organization. Through the White Elephant travel grant award, I was privileged to attend this quadrennial event, gain bigger and more comprehensive perspectives about the profession and to learn from highly respected individuals on how I can further contribute to ISPRS as part of its student organization.