



## **9.1 Report of ISPRS President**

Chen Jun

**Distinguished Delegates, Representatives, Advisors, Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

During the past four years, I worked closely with ISPRS Council members, Technical Commission Presidents (TCPs) and all the other ISPRS officers, to serve our society. Efforts have been devoted to enhance ISPRS's scientific leadership, to improve services for our members, and to strengthen multi-disciplinary collaboration with other organizations. Now I am very pleased to present a summary report here.

### **1. Enhancing ISPRS Scientific Leadership**

As a leading international society in the field of photogrammetry, remote sensing and spatial information sciences (P&RS&SIS), ISPRS is entering a new phase with more opportunities, big challenges and strong competitions. Following the ISPRS strategic plan adopted in 2010, several actions have been taken to increase the visibility and the impact of our discipline and of our society, such as the preparation of an overarching scientific vision paper and a declaration for Prague Congress, as well as the improvement of our scientific publications.

#### **Publication of an ISPRS Scientific Vision Paper**

ISPRS has a long tradition in developing and presenting scientific vision to its members and communities, such as the formulation of Congress resolutions and Technical Commission's TORs. In December 2012, Council decided to prepare an overarching scientific vision paper through close collaboration with TCPs, ISAC and IPAC. It was completed in the middle of 2015 and has been published as an original article with a title 'Information from imagery: ISPRS scientific vision and research agenda' in the ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry & Remote Sensing (May 2016, 115(3–21), doi:10.1016/j.isprsjprs.2015.09.008).

This final 19-page vision paper examines the significant challenges currently facing ISPRS and its communities, reviews the state-of-the-art in ISPRS related research, development and trends, and identifies the research topics for future work. At the same time, a special issue 'The state-of-the-art of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing' with 10 review/overview papers has been prepared and published in the ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry & Remote Sensing (Volume 115, May 2016). We hope that this scientific vision paper and the special issue will encourage more innovative research and development activities in this field, and also support the preparation of 2016 Congress Resolutions, TORs of Technical Commissions, and the formation of new working groups.

#### **Preparation of Prague Declaration**

Deriving scientific evidence from imagery in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and ICSU's Future Earth initiatives is a hot topic and has been discussed largely by international communities. Clearly, this requires not only technological innovations, but also a closer multi-disciplinary and cross-board collaboration within the P&RS&SIS community and with other communities. To address this challenge, ISPRS council proposed to support Future Earth with global

geo-information as a response or a voice from the P&RS&SIS community. The issues related to its concept, implementation and collaboration were discussed in an ISPRS workshop held in Beijing, June 9-10,2015 [ISPRS e-Bulletin, Issue No 3 – 2015].

On the basis of this workshop, an ISPRS declaration was drafted by Council and ISAC, and sent to JBGIS for comments. This declaration emphasizes the ISPRS commitment to realize the full potential of information from imagery through research and development, scientific networking, international co-operation, inter-disciplinary integration, education and training. It calls on international communities to work together towards providing reliable geospatial information to support societal transformations for global sustainability. In particular, this declaration proposes advancement of a global geospatial information framework to be formed through collaboration between ISPRS and international communities. This draft declaration will be presented to this ISPRS General Assembly in Prague for comments and approval.

### **Improvement of Scientific Publications**

Maintaining and improving the quality of scientific publications (Journals, Book Series, Annals and Archives) is one of the strategic tasks for ISPRS Council. Firstly, the collaboration with the chief-editors of the two journals (ISPRS J. P&RS and ISPRS J. GIS) was enhanced during the last four years, especially on the preparation of the Strategic Plan for ISPRS Publications and the organization of special issues. The SCI impact factor of ISPRS J. P&RS has increased to 3.1 in 2015. ISPRS J. GIS has also been included in SCI index. Secondly, a transformation from edited books to authored books for the ISPRS Book Series was proposed and approved by Council, as the original function has been replaced by the newly created ISPRS Annals. As a result, the first authored book, “Spatial Context” authored by Prof. Chris Gold, has been published and will be presented to the Prague Congress. Thirdly, ISPRS Annals and Archives have both been included in the Web of Science which may encourage more submissions.

## **2. Improving Services to Members and the Community**

ISPRS has a very good reputation in its services to members and the community, but is also facing some challenges nowadays. While maintaining those good traditions, a number of efforts have been devoted to improve the existing service or create new services.

### **The Re-structuring of Technical Commissions**

ISPRS have eight Technical Commissions (TCs) responsible for the scientific and technologic activities of the society through their nominated Working Groups (WGs). Some ISPRS scientists and officers identified various problems of the current TC structure, such as publications between some TCs with a substantial amount of duplicated activities, minimal participation in some TC’s symposium, and difficulty to motivate more ordinary members for bidding for the TCs. The possibility of the re-structuring had been explored by Council since 2013 and ISPRS members were invited to contribute their ideas and opinions throughout 2014, especially at all the eight TC Symposia and with ISAC and IPAC. A new TC structure was proposed by the ISPRS Council and accepted by ISPRS Ordinary Members with an overwhelming majority through a postal ballot in early 2015. The new TC structure has five new TCs: Commission I- Sensor Systems, Commission II- Photogrammetry, Commission III- Remote Sensing, Commission IV- Spatial Information Science, Commission V- Education and Outreach. The TOR of the five new TCs are also formulated and will be presented to the General Assembly for discussion in Prague.

### **The New ISPRS Conference Structure**

The former ISPRS conference structure during a four year period consists of a quadrennial congress (Year 1), mid-term symposia (Year 3), and a number of workshops and conferences in all the four years (Year 1 to Year 4). Council received some critic from ISPRS members, such as too many smaller conferences/workshops and no visible ISPRS annual conference in the odd years (Year 2 and Year 4). It was proposed to organized an ISPRS Geospatial Week (GSW) biennially in odd years with a bundle of different workshops held at the same time and at the same place. The first GSW was organized in 2013 by Filiz Sunar in Antalya, Turkey. The second one was held in 2015 by Nicolas Paparoditis in Montpellier, France. Both meetings attracted a large number of participants and

provided high level scientific contributions. It seems that these GSWs have increased the possibility of communication between the different workshop communities and increased the visibility of ISPRS through a large event in odd years. This has led to a new ISPRS conference structure with an annual cycle of ISPRS events, i.e., Congress, GSW, Symposia, GSW, and Congress. The third GSW will be held in Wuhan, China from Sept. 18 to 22 in 2017.

### **Membership Development and Services**

After lengthy discussions and the approval of Ordinary members by a postal ballot, the ISPRS Individual membership was implemented at the beginning of 2014. The establishment of Corporate Sustaining Members and an International Industrial Advisory Committee were also proposed to encourage more geospatial companies and industrial players joining ISPRS.

National Mapping and Cadastre Agencies (NMCA) are significant players in the field of P&RS&SIS and many of them are ISPRS Ordinary members. In order to highlight their important role and increase their visibility, the First ISPRS and UN-GGIM National Mapping Forum during Prague Congress was proposed. It will be organized in conjunction with a Space Agency Forum. This will provide NMCA a good platform to discuss scientific and technical issues in cadastral and topographic mapping with international colleagues, to share their experience in operational mapping and services, and to explore further collaborations with space agencies.

### **Scientific Initiative**

During the autumn of 2013, ISPRS launched a call for participation in the Scientific Initiatives (SIs) with a 2014 budget of CHF 40,000 Swiss Francs. In order to benefit all ISPRS members, Working Group officers were invited to submit project ideas to support scientific and other initiatives with the aim to further improve the international status of ISPRS in the field of the photogrammetry, remote sensing and spatial information sciences. Eleven teams of researchers across six of the eight TCs submitted cases for support. Comment was sought from the relevant TCPs, and a sub-committee of three Council members was convened to independently review the proposals on the basis of scientific excellence. During the meeting in Antalya, six projects were selected and were funded at a maximum of CHF 10,000, per year. See [www.isprs.org/news/announcements/131117-ISPRS-Scientific\\_Initiative-summaries.pdf](http://www.isprs.org/news/announcements/131117-ISPRS-Scientific_Initiative-summaries.pdf)

In October 2014, a new call for ISPRS SIs was issued and 11 researcher teams across all of the eight ISPRS TCs submitted applications. An ad-hoc committee with three members reviewed these applications and seven projects were funded to a total of CHF 33,000 Swiss Francs. Recently, ISAC gave a positive review of the results of these tendencies and suggested to continue the SIs with a few valuable recommendations. On the basis of the results, it is planned to continue issuing calls for the SIs in odd years, subject to availability of resources.

## **3. Strengthening Collaboration with other Organizations**

During the last four years, we have strengthened the collaboration with other international and regional organizations through inter-disciplinary research, joint workshops and other activities of common interest. This responsibility was shared by council members and other ISPRS officers. Here, I mention GEO and UN-GGIM as examples. The collaboration with other organizations will be reported by the Secretary General and other council members.

### **Collaboration with GEO**

As a participating organization, ISPRS has been collaborating with GEO on global land cover mapping and service which is a common interest. Three workshops and two side events at GEO plenaries were organized (Geneve, January 14, 2013; Beijing, April 24-26, 2013; Shanghai, June 6-7, 2015; Beijing, June 9-10, 2015; Mexico City, Nov.9, 2015). A theme issue on Global Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring was published in the 2015 May issue of ISPRS J. P&RS ([www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/09242716/103](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/09242716/103)). A research initiative on Collaborative Global Land Information Platform was proposed and will be included as a GEO Initiative of 2017-2019.

## Collaboration with UN-GGIM

As the representative of ISPRS to UN-GGIM, I attended the 3rd and 5th session of the UN-GGIM (Cambridge, July 24-26, 2013; New York, August 5-7, 2015) and the 3rd and 4th UN-GGIM High-level Forum (Beijing, Oct. 22-24, 2014; Addis Abeba, April 20-22, 2016 ). With UN-GGIM, two training workshops on GlobeLand30 and its applications were organized jointly for developing countries (Beijing, June29-July 2, 2015; Addis Abeba, April 18-19, 2016). The next joint event is the National Mapping Forum to be held from July 14 to 15 during the Prague Congress.

A UN-GGIM&ISPRS project "Global Status Of Mapping" has been conducted by Gottfried Konecny and supported by Hannover University. The project started at the end of 2012 and was completed mid 2015. A questionnaire was sent out by the UN-GGIM Secretariat to the UN Member States requesting information on the current state of authoritative topographic mapping data at the scale ranges of 1:25 000, 1:50 000, 1:100 000 and 1:250 000 and the age of these datasets. Altogether, 115 from 193 UN member countries have answered the questionnaire. An assessment of the global coverage and the age of the data was completed and printed in a 64 page publication, which is available on the websites of UN-GGIM and ISPRS.

## 4. Administration and Operational Matters

### Organizing ISPRS Business Meetings

With the strong support from the Secretary General and ISPRS Headquarters, more than ten council meetings/joint meetings and 6 tele-meetings were organized. Minutes of these formal meetings have been published on the ISPRS website. Details of the Council and Joint Meetings will be reported by the SG.

Table 1. ISPRS business meetings organized

No.	Dates	Council Meeting	Joint Meeting	Tele-Meeting	Venue ( Conference combined)
1	Sept. 2, 2012	√	√		Melbourne, Australia (ISPRS XXII Congress)
2	Oct. 9, 2012			√	
3	Dec. 3-7, 2012	√	√		Chengdu, China
4	March 7, 2013			√	
5	May 9-11, 2013	√			Hannover, Germany
6	August 6, 2013			√	
7	Nov. 10-14, 2013	√	√		Antalya, Turkey (ICSU GeoUnions Meeting)
8	Feb. 12, 2014			√	
9	April 15-17, 2014	√			Novosibirsk, Russia (Interexpo Geosiberia 2014)
10	Dec. 8-11, 2014	√	√		Hyderabad, India (ISPRS TC VIII Symposium)
11	March 30-April 2, 2015	√			Newcastle, UK
12	April 24, 2015			√	
13	July 7-10, 2015	√	√		Prague, Czech Republic
14	Jan. 7-9, 2016	√			Beijing, China
15	Feb. 17, 2016			√	Munich, Germany
16	March 15-18, 2016	√	√		Dubai, UAE

During the four year period, the eight TCPs have done excellent jobs organizing the scientific activities of ISPRS, including symposia, conferences, special issues and benchmarking etc. Most working groups have organized at least one meeting.

### Representing ISPRS at other Conferences

During the past four years, I have represented ISPRS at more than 40 conferences or meetings organized by ISPRS or other international organizations, as listed in Table 2. It gave me a good opportunity to learn from our members and to meet representatives from other countries/organizations.

Table 2. Other conferences attended in the name of ISPRS (selection)

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Conferences</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Role</b>
Nov. 22-23, 2012	GEO-IX Plenary Session	Foz de Iguacu, Brazil	ISPRS Statement and Presentation
Nov. 26-30, 2012	ACRS 2012	Pattaya, Thailand	Keynote Presentation
March 24-28, 2013	ASPRS Conference 2013	Baltimore, USA	Greetings at the Opening
April 21-26, 2013	ISRSE Meeting	Beijing, China	Greetings at the Opening
May 14, 2013	Annual Conference of French Society	Paris, France	Greetings at the Opening and Keynote Presentation
July 24-26, 2013	UN-GGIM Forum (Cambridge conference)	Cambridge, UK	Presentation
Sept. 2-6, 2013	CIPA Conference	Straßbourg, France	Welcome Speech and Presentation
Sept. 9-13, 2013	54 <sup>th</sup> Photogrammetric Week	Stuttgart, Germany	Welcome Speech
Sept. 20-22, 2013	23rd UN/IAF Workshop on Space Technology for Economic Development	Beijing, China	Presentations
Nov. 11-17, 2013	ISPRS GeoSpatial Week	Antalya, Turkey	Welcome Speech and Plenary Presentation
Nov. 6-7, 2013	Symposium on Satellite Mapping Technology and Application	Nanjing, China	Welcome Speech and Plenary Presentation
Dec.5-6, 2013	ISPRS/ IGU/ICA Workshop on Borderlands Modelling and Understanding	Beijing, China	Welcome Speech and Plenary Presentation
Jan. 16-18, 2014	GEO-X Plenary Session and Ministerial Summit	Geneva, Switzerland	ISPRS Statement and Presentations at side events
April 11-12, 2014	1st Union Commission on Climatic and Environmental Change (CCEC) Workshop	Beijing, China	Presentation
April 16, 2014	Interexpo GEO-Siberia	Novosibirsk, Russia	Welcome Speech and Presentation
May 14-16, 2014	ISPRS TC IV Symposium	Suzhou, China	Welcome Speech and Plenary Presentation
May 19-21, 2014	ISPRS TC VI Symposium	Wuhan, China	Welcome Speech and Keynote Presentation
July 1-3, 2014	AfricaGEO	Cape Town, South Africa	Keynote Presentation
June 3, 2014	ICSU Workshop on Future Earth	Beijing, China	Presentation

Aug. 28-Sept. 3, 2014	31st ICSU General Assembly	Auckland, New Zealand	Statement
Sept. 5-7, 2014	ISPRS TC III Symposium	Zurich, Switzerland	Welcome Speech
Oct. 20-24, 2014	Racurs Conference 2014	Hainan, China	Opening Speech and Keynote Presentation
Oct. 20-24, 2014	Third UN-GGIM High Level Forum	Beijing, China	Plenary Presentation
Oct. 27-31, 2014	ACRS 2014	Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar	Welcome Speech and Keynote Presentation
Nov.1-5, 2014	12th ISPRS Student Consortium and WG VI/5 Summer School	Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar	Welcome Speech and Lecture
Nov. 27-28, 2014	39th ISO/TC 211 plenary	Shenzhen, Chin	Presentation
Dec. 9-12, 2014	ISPRS TC VIII Symposium	Hyderabad, India	Welcome Speech and Keynote Presentation
May 25-29, 2015	Geospatial World Forum 2015	Lisbon, Portugal	Oral Presentation
June 5-7, 2015	ISPRS/GEO/ICA workshop on Trust in Spatial Data	Shanghai, China	Welcome Speech and Keynote Presentation
June 9-10, 2015	Workshop on Supporting Future Earth with Global Geo-information	Beijing, China	Welcome Speech and Presentation
June 15-19, 2015	35th EARSeL symposium	Stockholm, Sweden	Plenary Presentation
August 5-7, 2015	Fifth session of UN-GGIM	New York, USA	ISPRS Statement
Nov. 9-13, 2015	GEO-XII Plenary Session and Ministerial Summit	Mexico City, Mexico	Statement and Presentation
Dec. 5-6, 2015	ISPRS Workshop on Mobility and Land Cover Change Mapping	Changsha, China	Plenary Presentation
April 20-22, 2016	UN-GGIM Forum	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	Giving Lectures at side event
May 23-27, 2016	Geospatial World Forum	Rotterdam, The Netherlands	Presentations

### Reporting to the Society through various Media

Reporting on the activities of the society through the ISPRS e-Bulletin and other media has been shared by Council members and other ISPRS officers. Table 3 gives some of the editorials and reports that I wrote in the last four years.

Table 3. Reports publicized in ISPRS e-Bulletin and other Media

Magazines	Issue/Date	Article Title
ISPRS e-Bulletin	Issue 5- Nov., 2012	Editorial: Stronger scientific voice and better service
	Issue 1- Feb., 2015	Editorial: Supporting Future Earth with Global Geo-information
	Issue 1- March, 2016	Editorial: Towards an Advanced Geospatial Computing Platform
GIM Page	October, 2012	ISPRS under new Leadership
	August, 2013	Supporting Future Earth with Global Land Cover Information

		GIM International Business Guide 2016 – Interview questions
Geoinformatics Page	April, 2014	Global Land 30: first Global Land Cover data at 30 meters resolution
Geospatial World	Feb. 2015 / 42-43	GlobeLand30 is a reliable dataset for Sustainable Development
Annual Report	2012-2013 Biennial Report	Message from the President
	2014-2015 Biennial Report	Message from the President
PE&RS	Nov., 2014	Letter from ISPRS President

## 5. Acknowledgements

The abovementioned achievements could not have been accomplished without the good team work of ISPRS officers, members and supporters. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to them.

First of all, I would like to thank my fellow council members, Secretary General Christian Heipke, 1st Vice President Orhan Altan, 2nd Vice President Marguerite Madden, Treasurer Jon Mills, and Congress Director Lena Halounová. They have not only provided me with brilliant ideas and strong support, but also made significant contributions to the areas where they take responsibility.

Secondly, I would thank all the TCPs, Working Group officers, ISAC, IPAC and the other committees, Journal and Book series editors, Regional Representatives, Web Master, Headquarter Staff, and all other ISPRS officers. They have done excellent jobs, which supported the successful operation of the whole society.

Thirdly, I want to express my gratitude to our Ordinary Members, Honorary Members, Regional Members, Sustaining Members, Associate Members, Fellows and many others. They gave us generous support and valuable suggestions. Some of them have hosted ISPRS conferences, meetings, and / or provided support to other ISPRS related activities.

Finally, I should thank my own organization (National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geo-Information and National Geomatics Center of China) and Chinese Society of Geodesy Photogrammetry & Cartography. They have provided me with long-term financial and personnel support for my ISPRS related activities.