

Report on the ISPRS Conference on “Serving Society with Geoinformatics” (SSG 2013) and conjoint ISPRS workshops

The ISPRS conference on “Serving Society with Geoinformatics” (SSG 2013, <http://isprs2013-ssg.org/>) was held in Antalya, Turkey, from November 11 to 17, 2013. The SSG 2013 was jointly organized by ISPRS’ Technical Commissions II, III, IV, and VII. The event included three ISPRS workshops which were scheduled to take place in the first part of the conference, namely ISA 13 - Image Sequence Analysis (11.11.13, <http://www.tnt.uni-hannover.de/isprs/isa13/>), CMRT 13 - City Models, Roads and Traffic (12.-13.11.13, <http://www.pf.bgu.tum.de/isprs/cmrt13/>), and Laser Scanning 2013 (11.-13.11.13, <http://www2.isprs.org/laser-scanning-2013/articles/l2013.html>). It was the first time, ISPRS organized such a large scientific meeting across multiple commissions in odd years.

The scientific programs of these three workshops were entirely based on a full paper double-blind peer-review process conducted by the related scientific committees. Accordingly, the papers were published in the framework of ISPRS annals (<http://www.isprs.org/publications/annals.aspx>). The quality of the oral presentations as well as the interactive poster sessions was of constantly high standard. The workshop schedules were organized in a manner that ISA 13 and CMRT 13 were held in succession and both took place in parallel to the Laser Scanning workshop. In order to facilitate inter-workshop change of the attendees according to their specific fields of interest, the workshop programs were harmonized; in particular, the keynote speeches were mutually embedded into the course of sessions of all workshops. This was a wise decision because even though they naturally focus on in depth treatment of a certain field of application all of them were of such high scientific and didactic standard that the audience could benefit from these talks. The list of the keynote speakers included Konrad Schindler (ETH Zurich, Switzerland): "Multiple object tracking by energy minimisation", Thomas Corpetti (University of Rennes, France): "Recent advances on data assimilation for the analysis of low and very high spatial resolution images: application to the monitoring of atmospheric flows and vegetation", Silvia Biasotti (National Research Council, Genova, Italy): "Modelling and analysing the shape of 3D data" and Nicolas Paparoditis (Director of MATIS at IGN, Paris, France): "Automated 3D data collection for 3D City Modelling from a NMA's point of view: some recent results, remaining locks and trends".

The ISA 13 was organized by ISPRS WG III/3 'Image Sequence Analysis' and supported by ICWG I/Vb 'Unmanned Vehicle Systems (UVS): Sensors and Applications', WG II/8 'Mobility: Tracking, Analysis and Communication', and WG III/1 'Orientation and Surface Reconstruction'. Besides the keynotes the workshop was further subdivided into three thematic sessions of three oral presentations each focusing at: remote sensing, tracking, and navigation and orientation.

The CMRT 13 was organized by WG III/4 '3D Scene Analysis' and WG III/VII 'Pattern Analysis in Remote Sensing'. The workshop was structured into 5 sessions dealing with: classification, cars and pedestrians, roads and mobile mapping, and building reconstruction (two sessions).

Finally, the workshop Laser Scanning 2013 consisted of eight oral sessions with four presentations each and one interactive session with 29 posters. A best oral presentation award was given to David Novák, ETH Zurich for his talk about "Approximate Registration of Point Clouds with Large Scale Differences". The best poster award went to Ahmad Kamal Aijazi, Paul Checchin, and Laurent Trassoudaine for the poster entitled "Detecting and Updating Changes in Lidar Point Clouds for Automatic 3D Urban Cartography".

An informal social event was organized in the evening of 12th of November which opened room for fruitful discussions in a pleasant atmosphere and environment.

The papers of the subsequent joint conference were selected on abstract basis and are published in the ISPRS archives (<http://www.int-arch-photogramm-remote-sens-spatial-inf-sci.net/XL-7-W2/index.html>). Overall 55 contributions were selected by a committee consisting of the presidents and working group chairs of the involved four Technical Commissions of ISPRS. In addition, seven invited papers were presented.

The event started in the afternoon of 13th of November. During the Opening Session, welcome addresses were given by Filiz Sunar, ISPRS Com. VII President and Conference Chair, Metin Kesap,

President of the Turkish National Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, and Chen Jun, ISPRS President followed by a keynote speech of Barbara Ryan, Secretarial Director, Group on Earth Observations (GEO). The detailed scientific program started on the following day with a plenary session consisting of three interesting overview talks given by George Vosselman (ITC, Netherlands) about "Point Cloud Segmentation for Urban Scene Classification", Batuhan Osmanoglu (NASA, USA): "Stunning Results from Outstanding Technologies: Where Do We Stand in Remote Sensing?", and Florent Lafarge (INRIA, France): "Surface Reconstruction From Point Clouds Using Geometric Primitives".

On Saturday, 16th of November a second plenary session took place again with three review presentations: "Big Data and Earth Observation - Challenges and Opportunities" by Gunter Schreier (DLR, Germany), "A Precise Classification Approach for Global Land Cover Mapping at 30 Meter Resolution" by Chen Jun (ISPRS President, China), and "Policy and Framework for Data Distribution of ALOS-1 and ALOS-2" by Masatoshi Kamei (RESTEC, Japan).

In between and afterwards 11 oral sessions and one interactive sessions of the joint event were held, which covered various aspects of the supporting Technical Commissions. On Friday, a workshop of ISPRS International Policy Advisory Committee (IPAC) entitled "Maximizing the Utility of Earth Observation Data in the Internet Age" was embedded into the programme, which consisted of three dedicated sessions plus one round table discussion.

The joint event took place in the comfortable ambience of Kremlin WOW Hotel close to Antalya, nicely located directly at the beach. In this agreeable environment some social activities were organised, for instance, an evening ice breaker at the pool. Furthermore, a superb conference dinner was organized for the evening of 15th November in a restaurant in downtown Antalya.

In summary, the joint conference was a very good success. In particular, the bundle of high quality workshops like CMRT, ISA, and Laser Scanning and the mix of science and more society related issues in SSG proved to be a good strategy for the future to gather excellent scientist from ISPRS domain to enable fruitful scientific exchange and, not to forget, to attract even more top level people from cognate disciplines like computer vision and pattern recognition.

Special thanks go to Filiz Sunar and her team, and to ISPRS 1st Vice President Orhan Altan for their never ending efforts to provide great hospitality, a perfect organisation of the event along with a relaxing atmosphere, stimulating scientific discussions. Based on this great success ISPRS will continue to organise multi-commission meetings in odd years - the next one will take place in Montpellier, France in 2015, and will be organised by Nicolas Paparoditis.

Uwe Soergel, Technische Universität Darmstadt, Chair of WG VII/2