



## Regional Member Activities



### Asian Association on Remote Sensing (AARS)

By *Shunji Murai, General Secretary, AARS*

#### The 20th Anniversary of ACRS

The AARS has celebrated the 20th anniversary of Asian Conference on Remote Sensing (ACRS) at the International Convention Center, Hong Kong, 22-25 November 1999. Distinguished guests who contributed to the past ACRSs were invited to the conference. Prof. John Trinder, Secretary General of ISPRS was also invited.

CRS Memorial Book has been published to commemorate past activities since the first ACRS held in Bangkok, Thailand in 1980. The 20th ACRS was successful with 370 full paying participants and 238 presented papers. The proceedings are available from Prof. Hui Lin, Chinese University of Hong Kong (E-mail:huilin@cuhk.edu.hk)

On this special occasion, Remote Sensing and GIS Association (RESGA) of Thailand awarded 12 outstanding persons who have contributed to the promotion of remote sensing in Asian region. The award is called Dr. Boon Indrabarya Gold Medal. Dr. Boon was a founder of remote sensing in Thailand at the very beginning in 1970's.

#### Decisions of General Conference

The General Conference was held in conjunction with the 20th ACRS. The following decisions were made.

- The host of the 21st and 22nd ACRS  
The 21st ACRS, Taipei, China Taipei; 4-8 December 2000  
Contact Person: Prof. A.J. Chen, Center for Space and Remote Sensing Research, National Central University, Fax: +886-3425-5535, E-mail: ajchen%csr760@twncu.ncu.edu.tw

The 22nd ACRS, Singapore, November 2000  
Contact Person; Dr. Lim Hock, Director, CRISP, National Singapore University, Singapore, E-mail: phylimh@leonis.nus.edu.sg

- New Membership  
Hong Kong Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, representing the Hong Kong Region, China was admitted as an ordinary member of AARS. Now AARS has 24 ordinary members.

- Election of General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary  
The following persons were re-elected for 1999/2000FY:  
General Secretary: Shunji Murai (Japan)  
Deputy General Secretary: Manu Omakupt (Thailand)
- Working Group on 1 km Land Cover Database in Asia  
The Working Group under the chairmanship of Dr. Ryutaro Tateishi (Japan) completed the task of the generation of the database and was dissolved. CD ROMs are available free of charge from Dr. Tateishi, Center for Environmental Remote Sensing (CeRES), Chiba University, Japan (E-mail:tateishi@ceres.cr.chiba-u.ac.jp)
- Development of RICESAT  
RICESAT for monitoring the growth of rice in tropical regions with multi-frequency (C and L bands) and multi-polarisation (HH and HV) has been endorsed by the AARS for promoting the design, development and fabrication, in co-operation with AARS member organisation and other space agencies and industries. Pre-design has been distributed to the General Conference. A committee will be formed.
- Asian Remote Sensing Information Network (ARSRIN)  
ARSRIN has been approved as a task force to publish Asian Journal of Remote Sensing and GIS, to exchange information and personnel among research institutions in Asia, and to promote networking of research activities among the members. Dr. Lim Hock, Director of CRISP, Singapore will be a co-ordinator.
- Dr. Boon Indrabarya Gold Medal Award  
The award has been authorised by AARS with the newly agreed governing rules for future selections. The award will be presented to one or more outstanding remote sensing scientists bi-annually starting from 2001 in the name of AARS with the sponsorship of Remote Sensing and GIS Association of Thailand.

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## European Association of Remote Sensing Laboratories (EARSeL)

By Lucien Wald, Secretary General, EARSeL

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### General Information

The Bureau and Council of EARSeL met twice in 1999, once in January in Paris and the second time in May in Valladolid, Spain, on the occasion of the Annual General Assembly and Symposium. At each of these meetings future activities are decided and strategy options discussed.

Apart from its fundamental role of co-ordination among members through its Special Interest Groups and the dissemination of information, EARSeL strategy is focused upon co-operation with the international agencies involved in Earth observation, ISPRS and the national remote sensing societies. Co-operation is developing with three European organisations: OEEPE, EUROGI and CERCO, that are more especially involved in mapping and geographic information dissemination policy issues. The goals are to better understand the aims of each organisation and to identify mechanisms for co-operation and joint actions in order to avoid the duplication of activities.

During the Council meeting held in May, the present Bureau were re-elected for a further term of two years :

Chairman	Dr. Robin Vaughan, University of Dundee, United Kingdom
Vice-Chairman	Prof. Dr. Eberhard Parlow, University of Basel, Switzerland
Secretary-General	Dr. Lucien Wald, Ecole des Mines de Paris, France
Treasurer	Dr. Peter Winkler, FÖMI Remote Sensing Centre, Budapest, Hungary
East/West relations	Dr. Tomas Benes, Lesproject Forest Management Institute, Brandys-nad-Labem, Czech Republic

### EARSeL Activities during 1999

1999 has essentially been a year of preparation for a very full programme of Workshops and conferences to be held in the year 2000. The theme of the EARSeL 1999 Symposium was also prospective: *Remote Sensing in the 21st century: economic and environmental applications*. This was followed by a Workshop on: *Fusion of sensor data, knowledge sources and algorithms for extraction and classification of topographic objects*, organised jointly by the EARSeL SIG on Data Fusion and ISPRS WG III/5, WG IV/11.2 and WG VII/4. This was very much appreciated by those who participated and after all expenses had been paid it generated funding for three students to attend the ISPRS Congress in the year 2000.

EARSeL also co-operated with ISPRS in organising a

joint session at UNISPACE III held in July in Vienna. The theme was: *Remote Sensing for the Detection, Monitoring and Mitigation of Natural Disasters*. Four papers were presented by speakers representing EARSeL and four representing ISPRS. These papers have been published in the ISPRS Archives. This theme will be developed in greater depth at the international meeting being organised by EARSeL and UNESCO, "RISK 2000" to be held in 2000 in Paris.

### Annual Symposium

At the annual symposium, held at the end of May at the University of Valladolid in Spain, keynote papers were given on the future European Space Agency Earth Observation strategy and its 'Living Planet' Programme and by the Council of Europe on their EUROPA Major Hazards Agreement. The major themes addressed in the oral sessions included: Agriculture and Forestry, Meteorology, Hydrology, Oceanography, Forest Fires, Hazards and New Techniques and Methodologies. The conclusions of these sessions pointed to the fact that remote sensing techniques are playing an ever more important role in monitoring and helping in mitigating the effects of environmental pollution and natural disasters.

### EARSeL Web-site

The EARSeL Web site is now based at the Ecole des Mines de Paris in Sophia Antipolis, France, supervised by the Secretary-General. EARSeL members are listed in a Directory database, which can now be searched by means of a standard http interface. (URL: [http://www-earsel.cma.fr/earsel\\_dir](http://www-earsel.cma.fr/earsel_dir)). The Special Interest Groups are listed with links to their specific home pages. Future events organised or co-organised by EARSeL are also listed with links to their specific home pages.

### EARSeL Publications in 1999

The quarterly *EARSeL Newsletter* appeared regularly. The December issue was a special issue with several articles dedicated to various approaches to distance learning.

The *Proceedings of the annual symposium 1998* held in Enschede, The Netherlands, were published by Messrs. Balkema, NL.

The *Proceedings of the Workshop on Imaging Spectroscopy*, held in Zurich, Switzerland, in October 1998, were also edited and published by EARSeL.

### Relationship with ISPRS

It is the policy of EARSeL to co-ordinate research efforts

and foster the application of remote sensing techniques. As mentioned above, EARSeL has collaborated closely with the ISPRS in organising joint meetings and we expect this trend to continue after the study undertaken by ISPRS to identify areas of activities where those of regional members overlap those of certain ISPRS Commissions and Working Groups.

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