



RIEGL USER CONFERENCE HAILED A SUCCESS

RIEGL'S AMBITIOUS 'ONE CONFERENCE, TWO EXCITING LOCATIONS' EVENT IN HONG KONG AND GUANGZHOU ATTRACTED A RECORD ATTENDANCE OF 550 DELEGATES FROM MORE THAN 40 COUNTRIES

Riegl acknowledged China as one of its fastest growing global markets by hosting its LIDAR 2015 conference in Hong Kong and Guangzhou during the same week. This new and innovative approach made the conference conveniently accessible to attendees from around the world.

For Johannes Riegl Jr, the company's chief marketing officer, the result was gratifying and a source of much pride. "A record number of attendees, captivating keynotes, and fascinating presentations from more than 100 speakers added-up to a major success," he commented.

As well as significant product introductions from Riegl itself, some 30 leading international geospatial companies presented their products and services as sponsors and exhibitors. "When coupled with the spectacular surrounding of Hong Kong and Guangzhou, it made for a remarkable industry event," said Johannes Riegl Jr. "Attendee feedback

had been amazingly positive and many will be wondering where our Riegl LIDAR 2017 conference will take us. We will just have to wait and see!" he added.

Flying high

The packed conference agenda featured tracks on topics as diverse as UAV-based scanning, mining, bathymetry, mobile, archaeology, multispectral, forestry assessment, and many more. Platinum sponsor Esri and gold sponsors Applanix, Flying-Cam and Trimble, showcased their products and services while, in the 3D exhibition area, Euclidean gave delegates a unique experience in its Hologram Room, shown for the first time at such an event. ArcTron 3D gave a spectacular demonstration of data captured from one of the world's best-mapped castles –



Company founder and CEO Dr Johannes Riegler Sr proudly unveils the new RIEGL VP-1 Helipod



RIEGL CTO, Dr Andreas Ullrich gave a technical presentation on the company's core technologies

the Château de Vianden in Luxembourg - now complemented by Riegl RiCOPTER UAV datasets.

Riegl also took the opportunity to introduce new and improved hardware and software, not least its new VUX-1HA, VUX-1UAV and VUX-1LR high-performance LiDAR sensors for Kinematic Laser Scanning. The three models are optimised for mobile, UAV-based and airborne mapping respectively.

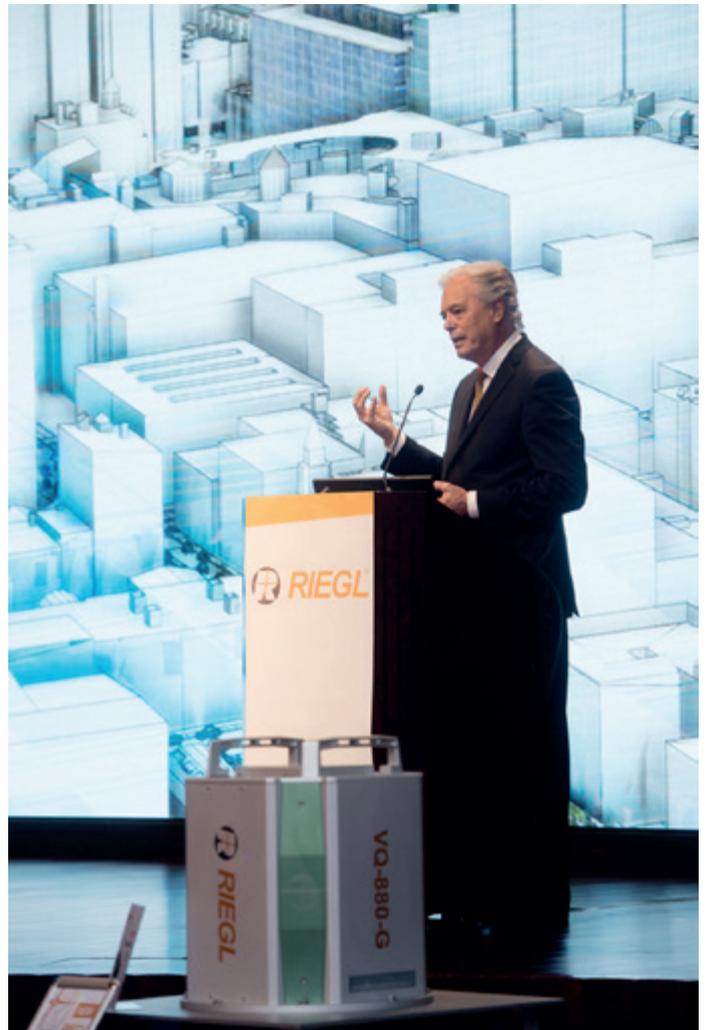
For airborne scanning, RIEGL's new VP-1 ultra-compact helipod generated much interest as a user-friendly turnkey solution that integrates the VUX-1LR sensor, camera solution, IMU/GNSS and control unit. You can watch the project video on the RIEGL channel at YouTube.

Down to Earth

With the introduction of the new single-head Riegl VMQ-450 Mobile Laser Scanning System, the company now offers a cost-effective mobile mapping solution to complete its broad range of scanner engines and systems for mobile applications. Again, the RIEGL YouTube channel has more information.

Additionally, many improvements in terrestrial and kinematic data acquisition have been packaged in the latest releases of RiSCAN Pro 2.1 and RiACQUIRE 2.0 software.

The launch of new products, riveting presentations from Riegl staff and users, plus exciting evening events at both locations more than matched expectations and augur well for Riegl LIDAR 2017 – date and venue to be announced.



Keynote speaker Lawrie Jordan, director of imagery at Esri, gave an overview of how LiDAR supports the company's efforts to generate the map of the future



On show to delegates was a 3D model of the Château de Vianden in Luxembourg generated by ArcTron 3D GmbH of Germany. The model (inset lower left) was developed with the help of datasets acquired by the RIEGL RiCOPTER UAV, shown here in flight over Vianden – one of the world's best-mapped fortresses





Sandbanks in the Wadden Sea, the Netherlands

EYE ON EARTH

IN AN INTERVIEW WITH *GEOCONNEXION INTERNATIONAL*, BARBARA RYAN EXPLAINS THE IMPORTANCE OF EARTH OBSERVATION DATA TO DECISION-MAKERS AND WHAT READERS CAN EXPECT TO LEARN AT THE EYE ON EARTH SUMMIT IN OCTOBER



What is Eye on Earth?

Eye on Earth (EoE) is a growing global movement that aims to improve access to and availability of environmental, social and economic data to support informed decision-making for sustainable development. Despite technological and scientific advances, decision makers often lack vital data on the state of the world's

resources. Filling this information void – or 'data gap' – is critical to achieving the goals of the post-2015 development agenda.

How does the work of EoE relate to the geo industry?

EoE includes governments, non-governmental organisations, civil society and the geospatial industry. The linkages across these sectors are important. For example, governments with broad and open data

policies and practices create both increased transparency of data and information for their citizens, and favourable conditions for growth in the geospatial industry and, ultimately, their national economies.

The geospatial industry is critical to creating value-added products and services -- an essential step in bridging the gap from data to information.

What are the main issues to be addressed at the EoE summit 2015?

With close to 30 sessions over the course of three days, the entire spectrum of earth observations will be covered from collection to delivery of results. From big data for sustainable development to private sector demand of environmental data for improving business performance, *GeoConnexion International* readers and other geospatial professionals will engage in a number of plenaries and interactive breakout sessions led by the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and major geospatial leaders from both the public and private sectors.

We will take a look at the logarithmic explosion of data, both in terms of volume and sources, and highlight the undiscovered potential of geospatial information and new location-enabled technologies to engage more actors – and create more business opportunities – to address the environmental, social and economic challenges faced by politicians, businesses, governments, scientists and ordinary citizens.

Some sessions will look specifically at the components and capabilities of GEO's Global Earth Observation System of Systems, while others will focus on crowd sourcing and the power of harnessing citizen

science to fill potential blanks in existing geographic systems. For example, Professor Muki Haklay, founder and co-director of the UCL Extreme Citizen Science group, will present the latest developments in technologies and methodologies to allow any community, regardless of its literacy, to use scientific methods and tools to collect, analyse, interpret and use information about its area and activities.

For its part, GEO will lead an examination of the role of the private sector in connecting the supply of data to end users. Another discussion will focus on the growing need for Earth observations to serve as a monitoring mechanism to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

The EoE summit is really about the global community coming together to share our experience, capabilities and technologies so we can identify solutions to harness geospatial information, and other data, to contribute to a more sustainable world.

How can GISs contribute to the EoE movement and sustainability?

GISs are one of the tools that make geospatial information easier to understand and, therefore, to use. The adage of 'a picture is worth a thousand words' is a good starting point, but GIS does so much more. These tools allow the integration of disparate information in such a way that new (and, often times, unexpected) relationships emerge. GISs also permit forecasting or future analyses to be performed such that the potential impacts of selected decisions and/or scenarios can be discussed, debated, measured and monitored by political and business leaders seeking to take appropriate actions for sustainability.

For example, GeoSUMR – GeoInformation for Sustainable Urban Management and Resilience – is designed to promote the use of geospatial tools and information by decision-makers in intermediate-sized cities in the developing world. The goal of this initiative is to harness the power of information technologies, such as remote sensing, GISs, GPS and web-based mapping tools, to improve the efficiency and sustainability of urban infrastructure and service delivery by linking infrastructure planning to both the natural resources and social characteristics of these rapidly growing urban centres. GeoSUMR is one of the seed-funded projects under the EoE Community Sustainability and Resiliency Special Initiative. The entities involved in this project include the Association of American Geographers (AAG), the US Department of State, Esri, Ecocity Builders, Trimble, Mundiapolis University, Ushahidi, US & World Green Building Council.

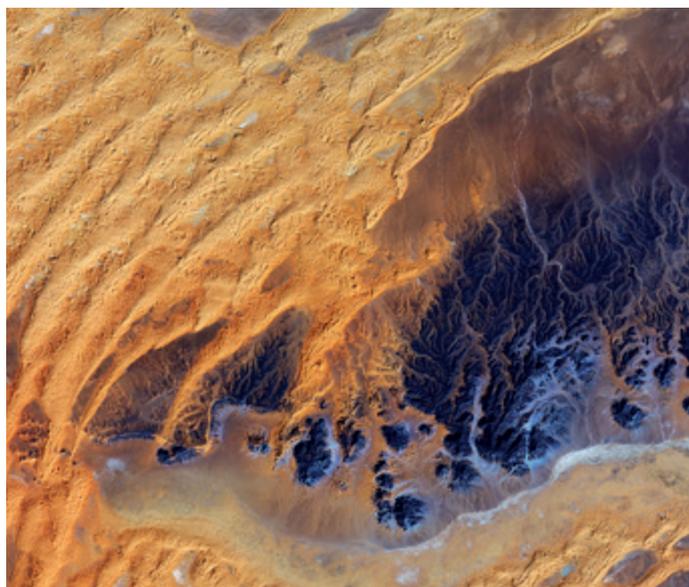
During the summit, the EoE Oceans and Blue Carbon Special Initiative will look at how increased understanding of the role of data and mapping can support joint fact finding. Specifically, it will explore how web-based solutions can be used to search and organise ecosystem services data in a way that is easy and navigable for stakeholders, and which policies have been put in place as a result.

How can the geospatial community work with other industries to bridge the data gap for decision makers?

The geospatial communities must continue to reach out to users of these technologies. The benefits of using Earth observations and GISs accrue to decision-makers in the agricultural, energy, health, humanitarian, insurance and transport sectors, just to name a few. Leaders in these industries need easier access to data and information so that the thousands of business decisions they make are done with the most up-to-date and complete information possible.

In addition, one summit seminar focuses specifically on donor demand for data. We will learn from the international donor community – international development banks, development agencies, foundations and others – how data is and can be used in their decision-making processes, and the additional data and tools they need to continue to make informed, sustainable decisions.

Barbara Ryan is secretariat director of the Group on Earth Observations and Eye on Earth Alliance partner



The Sahara Desert in Algeria. © JAXA/ESA



The Tibesti Mountains in the Sahara Desert, Chad

EOE SUMMIT

Established at the 2011 inaugural summit in Abu Dhabi, Eye on Earth is governed by a partnership or alliance of organisations including the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi through the Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI), the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Resources Institute (WRI).

The next summit, 'Informed Decision-Making for Sustainable Development' will take place under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, president of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Abu Dhabi, from 6-8 October in Abu Dhabi.

The summit will focus on the supply-and-demand dynamics, and necessary enabling conditions of data to create real-world change. It will cast a spotlight on the role of governments, technology, the scientific community and citizen participation in closing the 'data gap' and enhancing access to quality data to address the environmental and social challenges facing our world.

Register your interest to attend at www.eoesummit.org/summit-2015