

COLLABORATION GETS RESULTS



WHEN PEOPLE WORK TOGETHER,
THEY CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

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Sometimes, watching the news can seem overwhelming, with life-threatening problems and challenges that seem insurmountable. Even trying to see what the solutions might be can be difficult and make respite seem impossible. What can we do? We can't do anything that can fix what's been broken.

At least not alone. Fortunately, we're not and as this issue shows, even though each of us is just one person and possibly only able to do a little ourselves, together we can make a real difference.

This issue, in our regular OGC column, we have an update on geofencing for UAVs. In previous issues, we've looked at the difficulties of creating 'no-fly zones' for UAVs around areas of concern, such as airports and military installations. We've also considered what needed to be done to make this happen – and the shopping list of requirements was long. What were the chances of making it happen?

Indeed, for the article, Scott Simmons and Simon Chester were originally going to throw OGC's hat in the ring to spell out what more work needs to be done. But at the end of last year, the UAV industry collectively announced a series of measures and standards to make 'no-fly zones' a reality. You can find out what those are and what you can do to help on page 20.

Similarly, in past issues of *GeoConnexion International*, we've looked at the problems facing the global ecosystem from plastic

pollution. Initiatives are now under way internationally to both stop additional plastic from entering the environment and remove what's already there. But knowing the extent of the problem has always been one of the main problems.

Thankfully, FIG is running a number of schemes, involving young volunteers and surveyors around the world, to map the extent of the problem, and is dedicating part of this year's Working Week to training others to help. You can learn what has already transpired and what more can be done on page 22 from Simon Ironside, chair of FIG's 'Mapping the Plastic' working group.

Meanwhile, on page 34, Eli Tamanaha looks at what else geospatial collaboration has been able to do to save the planet – and how the democratisation of algorithms could enable even greater change. Private sector institutions such as hedge funds have been able to use advanced techniques, datasets and algorithms to make money. Imagine what could happen if researchers around the world had access to the same systems.

January is traditionally a time for resolutions and thinking about what we can achieve in the new year. Let's make it our resolution to work more closely together to bring about change. Think it's impossible? Tell that to Greta Thunberg – a 16-year-old who has already brought others together to change the world. You can, too.

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