

# ISPRS in Africa

ISPRS continues to support and develop photogrammetry and remote sensing in Africa. Jide Kufoniya, ISPRS regional representative in Africa, attended the first meeting of the Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology (CODIST) on the theme 'Scientific Development, Innovation and the Knowledge Economy' in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 28th April to 1st May 2009. CODIST is one of the seven subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

## Development Challenges

The role of CODIST is to review challenges and issues pertaining to the information and communications technologies (ICTs), geoinformation, and science and technology sectors; formulate policies and strategies to address Africa's development challenges; and determine priorities to be reflected in the ECA Science and Technology Division (ISTD).

Two pre-meeting workshops on geo-specific activities were held, one addressing 'Enlisting National Mapping Agencies in the fight against HIV/AIDS', and another discussing 'Revamping the implementation plan of the African Geodetic Reference Frame (AFREF)'. Reports on these workshops will be posted on the CODIST website (1).

## Recommendations

Geoinformation-related resolutions and recommendations emerging from the meeting were as follows:

Member states should:

- consider spatial data infrastructure (SDI) as a basic infrastructure
- commit themselves to putting at least one GNSS station on the AFREF network
- enact national geoinformation and national mapping policies
- structure national mapping agencies as extra-ministerial departments
- consider national mapping agencies as priority institutions for funding.

ECA should:

- assist member states in formulating a legal and regulatory framework for geoinformation
- support effective development of AFREF and work with AUC to ensure AFREF-related activities are endorsed by the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST)
- continue to develop training programmes in geo-information technologies and their applications in resource assessment, planning, management and monitoring for resource technicians, managers and scientists, in collaboration with regional centres of excellence
- increase development partnerships with regional and international organisations such as the GEO (Group on Earth Observations) capacity-building process, GMES, UNGIWG, UNGEGN etc.

## Working Groups

CODIST-Geo also reconstituted its four working groups to spearhead activities for the next two years. The working groups respectively address fundamental datasets, standards, capacity building and AFREF. The latter will include some non CODIST-Geo members, such as representatives of the African Union Commission (AUC), the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) and international organisations (ISPRS, FIG, IAG, etc) to form the International Steering Committee on AFREF that will lead AFREF implementation.

ISPRS will continue to work with African organisations such as the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE) and will be present at the Africa GIS Conference in October, where they will co-organise a workshop on 'Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance' and two special sessions on 'Education and Outreach'. For further details of ISPRS activities in Africa, contact the authors.

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