

# GIM INTERNATIONAL INTERVIEWS KARL-FRIEDRICH THÄŦNE

## Gearing up for Karlsruhe



From 22nd to 24th September the technology region of Karlsruhe in Germany will draw international geo-professionals from around the world to Intergeo 2009. Experts from five continents will be visiting this, the world's top event for geodesy, geoinformation and land management. Incorporating a trade fair and conference, Intergeo enables participants to meet decision-makers, developers and buyers, and to learn more about the latest topics, trends and technologies in the industry, many focused on the preservation of our planet. We spoke to Dr Karl-Friedrich ThÄŦne, president of the German Association of Surveying - Society for Geodesy, Geoinformation and Land Management (DVW), organiser of Intergeo 2009, to find out more about what's in store for you.

### **Could you tell us something about the background to Intergeo?**

Intergeo is organised by DVW, the German Society for Geodesy, Geoinformation and Land Management and is the world's largest event in the developing field of surveying. The trade fair, organised in partnership with HINTE, and Intergeo Conference provide a major overview of all the key trends and innovations in surveying along the entire value chain, from spatial geo-referenced information surveys and data processing to economic ecological and social applications that enable a better understanding of the relationship between people and the planet at local, regional, national and global levels. Intergeo integrates technique and technology, making attendance a 'must' for all geo-professionals and their clients.

Under the theme 'Knowledge and Action for Planet Earth', Intergeo provides a global communication network for all market players. More than 250,000 experts and professionals communicate through this community each year. More than five hundred exhibitors are expected this year. Intergeo forms a network between all target groups for effective business relationships and management decisions relating to politics, welfare and business. An independent survey of last year's Intergeo in Bremen showed that more than 70% of visitors were high-level procurement and decision-making professionals. Intergeo 2009 will be held alongside the 57<sup>th</sup> German Cartographic Conference in collaboration with the German Cartographic Society and is part of Geodetic Week. By combining the trade fair with presentations from industry experts, Intergeo has become an interesting and unique event.

### **When were you appointed president and what are your primary goals?**

After serving for ten years as DVW vice-president, the General Assembly elected me president in 2008, with effect from January this year. My main occupation is director-general for Forestry, Nature Conservation and Development of Rural Spaces in the Ministry for Agriculture and Environment of the Freestate of Thuringia in Erfurt.

Founded in 1871, DVW is well organised as a result of sustained good management. A total of thirteen independent DVW state associations guarantee a vibrant professional and social community, paving the way for further education and networking. Seven permanent expert study groups deal with current surveying and land management issues on both scientific and practical levels, and provide decisive input for the Intergeo Conference programme, where their findings are regularly presented.

Under my leadership, DVW will continue to confront global professional challenges and responsibilities. In order to promote our profession's key role in society and raise public political awareness more than ever before, we have to define and communicate the surveyor's fundamental contribution to sustainable development in areas such as globalisation, demographic change, poverty reduction, energy supply, environment and climate change, and scientific and technical progress.

In these trying times, largely caused by financial people lacking values and morality, we have to make it clear that the engineering

disciplines, especially in the field of surveying, are characterised by solid, professional ethics. My colleagues and I are working on a strategy to raise the visibility of our profession and promote the idea that surveying engineers are as respected as quality brands. I am working towards closer co-operation between the various associations in the broad field of geodesy, cartography, geoinformation, photogrammetry and hydrography. I am therefore pleased about the 'Bremen Declaration' that has paved the way for us to work together in future. This includes stronger representation of common professional interests and joint activities in further education, recruiting new young professionals, branding, co-ordination in specialist work of association committees, and improvement in cross-industry communication. A visible sign of this co-operation will be the joint presentation stand at Intergeo 2009, the Geo-Associations Park.

The further development of Intergeo will be an emphatically core component of my work. DVW has just founded a non-profit institution to professionalise the conference programme with due regard to clients' demands concerning identification of the most important themes and organisation of events for target groups.

### ***What are the themes of Intergeo 2009?***

I'll mention just some of them:

Geodata infrastructures and INSPIRE will explain the dimensions of geodata and stress the importance of a three-dimensional global co-ordinates system.

Disaster risk prevention and management, which are a global challenge with respect to climate change and preservation of the environment.

Emerging technologies (GNSS, Galileo, GEOSS or Indoor-GPS), which offer solutions for better understanding of the complex interrelations between people and the planet, from both local and global perspectives.

Engineering survey methods and terrestrial laser scanning have led to new trends and innovations in positioning and measurement, a field of geodetic core competence.

Webmapping, the dynamic visualisation of spatial data and geomarketing, will be discussed in relation to the classic discipline of cartography.

### ***In what ways will Intergeo 2009 differ from previous Intergeo events?***

In the light of increasing internationalisation of surveying technology and applications in science, industry and practice, Intergeo 2009 will for the first time provide a presentation platform for innovative start-up companies. The German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, along with ten companies, is promoting the joint presentation of the Open Source Park. In addition to this initiative, Intergeo helps facilitate entry into the market for start-ups through the Innovation Park. The eleven enterprises involved, some of which are showcasing their capabilities to an international audience for the very first time, are also receiving ministerial support to ensure their participation.

DVW and HINTE have launched Intergeo-TV in English, which marks a new dimension in international industry communication and highlights the innovative capabilities of our partner HINTE. Intergeo-TV can be found online at [ 1], and reports on news, highlights, innovations and events in the surveying industry. Also for the first time, the French Agency for International Business has organised a French pavilion at Intergeo. This national stand clearly underlines the growing importance of geo-business.

### ***What is the significance of Dr Wolfgang Schäuble, German Federal Minister of the Interior, acting as patron of Intergeo?***

I am delighted that Federal Minister Dr Schäuble is our patron for 2009. The German Federal Ministry of the Interior co-ordinates the collection, management and provision of official geodata across federal and state administrative bodies. These responsibilities are dealt with by the Inter-ministerial Committee for Geoinformation Activities (IMAGI), which is also monitoring the development of Germany's geodata infrastructure (GDI-DE) in connection with EU activities as a fundamental competence of the state and part of the provision of basic public services. Core tasks include standardisation of data and provision of cost-free data access for all departments and authorities.

The patronage shows that Intergeo is of high political and societal interest within the context of Europe's economic and environmental policies.

It is my great pleasure to inform the Intergeo-community that Dr Schäuble has just promised me in an official letter general patronage for future Intergeo events. This is indeed a big step.

***Could you name some of the most prominent speakers and, as president, predict a few highlights of the event?***

As chair of the programme committee for many years, it's my view that Intergeo is embarking on new territory. The conference programme, including the identification and selection of top national and international speakers, is drawn up and reviewed by a Programme Committee in order to guarantee stringent quality management and monitoring. It would be unfair to highlight certain presenters, as visitors will be drawn to sessions in their own area of interest.

Personally, however, I am looking forward to Federal Minister Schäuble's opening speech. As a result of my own professional background, I'm also keen to listen to international expert Willi Zimmermann's keynote address; the first DVW award winner, he will speak about land as a political and ecological resource, a mega theme which will underline the connection between good governance and high-quality land information, administration and management.

Another highlight will be the International Students' Meeting, organised by DVW in co-operation with the national students' associations and the FIG Young Surveyor's Network. We believe there are none better able to recruit new blood for our profession than the younger members of our community.

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<https://www.gim-international.com/content/article/gearing-up-for-karlsruhe>

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