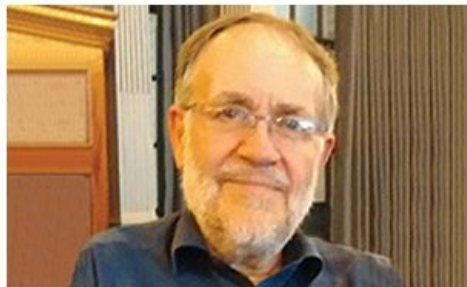


GI is not just for the Great Outdoors



It is always interesting to discover applications of geospatial you'd never even considered. In September I attended a conference organised by GI Standards for companies and organizations involved in the UNCAP scheme. This is an EU initiative to encourage development of technology to assist Europe's ageing population. We learnt about how RFID tags attached to medical equipment in hospitals can help keep track of where they're located and when they need servicing; how an underfloor grid with sensors can be part of a system to track movement and falls of the elderly and vulnerable; how research is progressing on indoor location systems; and how CEP – complex event processing – can be part of a system to keep track of vulnerable people and warn when something untoward happens like a fall. We tend to forget that geospatial is not just for the great

outdoors.

We will return to UNCAP and a longer article in the next issue of GIS Pro. But if you'd like to learn more then please go to pvpubs.com/GISProfessional/Home where you'll find a one-off special edition of GiSPro that was published to coincide with the conference and a meeting of the Open Geospatial Consortium's Technical Committee. Subscribers will have received a printed copy.

But if UNCAP is more about the micro then James Norris' report on a recent meeting of the UNGGIM committee is very much at the macro level. Getting world leaders to understand how geospatial technology can help alleviate so many problems is hard missionary work, which no one has done better than Dr Vanessa Lawrence, who has been the driver behind the project for the last five years. Her work was recognised with a special award from the UN's under-secretary-general of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Mr Wu Hongbo (page 24).

Two of the themes explored in this issue will certainly be revisited again in the coming months. Standards and INSPIRE may be perennially boring but they are essential. Look what has happened to VW when you get them wrong. In geospatial, so many of our systems will not work if there is not seamless interoperability between disparate systems and datasets. OGC does unsung work in this area and I encourage you to read the special article by two of their experts on page 19 along with Benjamin Allan on Phase 2 of INSPIRE (page 22).

The second theme is drones, variously known as unmanned aerial vehicles or systems. Abi Page reports from Scottish AGI's event (page 15) designed to acquaint members with their potential. There are also several other events coming up to promote this rapidly developing technology. They offer a relatively cheap way of rapidly acquiring areal data or close-range inspection. But there are limitations and the image sensors are often not designed for this purpose.

In the last issue, Robin Waters' Eurofile column touched briefly on Europe's CORINE Land Cover map. Dr Geoff Smith explains this project in much greater detail (page 12) and how it has tracked land use change since the 1980s. In six years alone the UK has experienced habitat loss or change of use to over 225,000 hectares.

November sees our industry's major gathering at Chesford Grange in Warwickshire for GeoCom. I am delighted that former AGI chief executive Chris Holcroft has previewed the event for us (page 16). It will be an exciting and eventful few days with some interesting top-line speakers. Don't miss it, for while we can report and give a flavour through these columns there is no substitute for being part of the conversation.

It remains for me only to draw your attention to our extraordinary front cover and the supporting article on page 10 and Adena Schutzberg's fascinating insight into how mapping just cannot be avoided once spatial data goes public. I am sure that no GIS Pro readers were caught in flagrante!

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