

Hitting the Heights



The ICA Commission on Mountain Cartography last reported its work here in December 2008. Since then, its annual business meetings and biannual workshops have been held regularly. 2012 promises to be a highlight as the 8th Mountain Cartography Workshop will be held at The Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuit Centre near Taurewa, adjacent to the Tongariro National Park, at the centre of New Zealand's North Island (1-5 September 2012). Registration is open via website 1.

The group naturally tends to meet in mountainous areas, resulting in well-received workshops in stunning locations with exciting content. The previous Mountain Cartography Workshop was held in the resort town of Borsa in the Carpathian mountains of northern Romania. Over 30 participants from 11 different countries developed a lively programme

of long and short presentations, demonstrations and posters. The 26 presentations covered mapping and GIS applications for mountain regions, relief mapping and visualisation, tourist mapping projects, and 3D and topographic mapping, visualisation, animation and new techniques.

A special issue of the Romanian journal *Geographia Technica* was published to include the majority of the workshop presentations (website 2) showing the wide range of issues addressed by the Commission and the subject matter of the 2010 workshop. The programme was introduced by an overview of recent historical developments (Martin Gamache discussed 'Relief Mapping at National Geographic Magazine: 1970 to Present'), whilst specific projects were considered by various speakers: Jeremias Uffmann presented the new Centennial Edition of the 1908 Alpenverein Map of the Brenta Massif (Italy) and Fernando Berenguer talked on geoinformation retrieval in ice patch Jou Negro (Picos de Europa, Spain). Some conceptual topics were presented by Patrick Kennelly who talked about sky models and illumination issues, Tomaş Podobnikar who presented a method of mountain peak determination supported by shapes analysis, and who assessed results of airborne laser scanning data in mountain areas.

Many case studies were incorporated into the programme: Dorina Ilies outlined problems related to morphostructures mapping in the Plopiş Mountain (Romania), David Schobesberger introduced a topographic overview map of Himachal Pradesh, Nikos Tzelepis discussed topographic relief characterisation of Greek municipalities, Carlos Nelson overviewed Argentinean mountain mapping, and Marianna Serebryakova gave a Russian view on the Swiss mountain relief shading techniques.

Some outstanding tools to assist in terrain data handling and presentation are available, most emanating from members of the Commission: Christian Haeberling presented the new the web-based interactive Swiss World Atlas, Tom Patterson introduced new work from ShadedReliefArchive.com, Bernard Jenny showed developments in his impressive software tools, and Jürg Gilgen presented digital rock drawing.

As always, the indoor workshop activity was balanced with outdoor events – walks in the surrounding terrain, an excursion to lake environments and, for the bold, an ascent of Pietrosu Rodnei peak, which at 2,303m is the highest in the Oriental Carpathians.

Cartographic Perspectives, the journal of the North American Cartographic Information Society, has published a special issue (No 67) disseminating some of the research work of Commission members. This is available online at 3, and, along with the issue of *Geographia Technica*, is a recommended showcase of the art and science of cartography applied to challenging environments. The Commission is active, addresses a range of vibrant topics, and welcomes you to New Zealand in September.