

# Influence

The influence your work has upon the world is sometimes beyond belief. I am not writing this to compliment you. I'm writing it because often, going through articles to be sent to press and published for our readership, I come across little gems illustrating the effects of simple surveying, digital aerial photogrammetry and GIS projects. For instance the efficient control of dykes in Holland. In his interview with Huug Haasnoot and Marc Hoogerwerf this month, our fresh new contributing editor Arie Duindam writes about digitally mapping dykes and processing and viewing the resultant data in Pakistan. Another fine example is the decrease in land conflicts in Africa due to improvements in land administration.

Where in Africa factors such as drought and flood, rural migration, corruption and legislative loopholes, missing or inaccurate surveying, missing land register and missing, and outdated or only sporadic land-use planning mean need for land putting a strain on resources, this strain is managed by better land administration.

And while better land administration is, of course, primarily used to build an efficient land market, Babette Wehrmann of the University of Mnchen describes in this issue of GIM International how it has another positive side effect: a decrease in conflicts over land.

Did you know that the height, and therefore the safety, of dykes and seawalls in the low-lying Rhine and Meuse delta are monitored, and that therefore the safety of many living there depends upon airborne laser altimetry? Or that the number of conflicts over land in Africa is falling thanks to new land-administration projects - a not entirely unwelcome side effect on this troubled continent?

Well, you probably did know. Or, at least, you will not be at all surprised. But I know many people would be, for I meet with it often in my own private life when discussing these things with outsiders, those completely unfamiliar with the field or our work. Once something is explained, the response is often amazement at the influence of surveying, photogrammetry, remote-sensing and GIS-related projectsâ€a â€œWow, thatâ€™s interesting!â€ This may provide us with a bit of fun, even a modest laugh or two, but I think it would be a whole lot better for the industry if our field was to become much more familiar to the majority.

It would generate new ideas, new jobs, new opportunities and chances. And the result would be this small, niche, and often unheard-of field greatly increasing its already huge sphere of influence.