

ISPRS in Southeast Asia



There are eleven countries in Southeast Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Southeast Asia is a region with diverse cultures, religions and ethnicities, and with a relatively fast-growing economy. The key to success for this region is to get people to meet, and to encourage, initiate, support and maintain collaboration.

The Asian Conference on Remote Sensing (ACRS) is an annual event which is organised by the Asian Association on Remote Sensing (AARS). It is held in one of the AARS member countries each year. AARS is a regional member of ISPRS, and ACRS is an excellent platform for collaboration between AARS and ISPRS.

The 35th Asian Conference on Remote Sensing was organised recently (27-31 October 2014) in the Myanmar International Conference Center II, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. This was the first time ACRS had been held in Myanmar. Thanks to the enormous effort of the organisers and the support from various organisations, including ISPRS, the conference was a great success. There were 415 participants from 32 countries and regions, with 211 oral and 66 poster papers submitted. 25 firms and organisations took part in the exhibition. Subsequently, the 12th ISPRS Summer School was held at University of Forestry, Yezin, Nay pyi Taw, which attracted 43 participants from five countries.

ACRS is gaining more and more attention from ISPRS and its officers, and ISPRS is becoming increasingly popular in the region through many activities in the form of workshops, seminars, conferences and the ISPRS Summer School. Present in Myanmar were ISPRS president Chen Jun, ISPRS general secretary Christian Heipke, congress director Lena Halounová and other distinguished guests, including former president Ian Dowman, former vice presidents Armin Grün and Manos Baltsavias, and Clive Fraser from Australia.

ISPRS and regional representatives in Southeast Asia have been working hard to promote ISPRS in the region. Since 2010, every ACRS has been followed by an ISPRS Summer School. In 2010, the summer school was held in Hanoi, Vietnam; in 2011 in Taoyuan, Taiwan; in 2012 in Pattaya, Thailand; and in 2013 in Bali, Indonesia. The 9th International Conference on Geoinformation for Disaster Management (Gi4DM) was held in Vietnam in collaboration with ISPRS and the Institute of Geography, Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology. In addition, an ISPRS workshop entitled 'Geospatial Information for Sustainable Development' is scheduled for 15-17 October 2015. The venue is Halong Bay, Vietnam, which is a World Heritage site.

Today, ISPRS has seven ordinary members in Southeast Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. Hopefully the abovementioned activities will lead to an increase in this number and to an even wider spread of photogrammetry, remote sensing and geospatial information sciences in the area in the near future.