

NZCS: Profile of a Member Nation



ICA is an international membership organisation with connections to a range of subscribing bodies that represent their national cartographic community, including government agencies, national mapping organisations and national learned societies. An example of the latter is the New Zealand Cartographic Society (NZCS), which joined ICA to represent New Zealand in 1976. New Zealand also has an affiliate member of ICA, the Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), which includes the national mapping organisation.

Passion for Maps

Founded in 1971, NZCS is an open association for those individuals and organisations with an interest in and passion and excitement for the study, production and use of maps. It has a most diverse membership, both professionally and geographically. Volunteer

members manage all Society activities. Services provided include organisation of the biennial National Cartographic Exhibition, co-ordination of the National Children's Map Competition (part of the ICA Barbara Petchenik Children's Map Award), maintenance of the Society's website, organisation of cartographic conferences, workshops, seminars and courses, support for students to attend these events, and general cartographic information and advice.

EduCart Outreach

To assist GIS practitioners and promote cartography at all levels of education, the NZCS has developed the EduCart outreach programme. This comprises a modular cartography course for geospatial professionals, and the Maps for Schools project, which is concerned with production of wall maps for primary schools. To maintain contact with members and interested others, the Society's newsletter, the Cartogram, is published several times each year and emailed to both members and a mail-out list almost as large. It is available for download from the Society's website 1.

GeoCart Conference

Every two years, alternating with the ICA's cartographic conferences, the NZCS hosts a national cartographic conference in the GeoCart series. GeoCart 2010, was held in Auckland from 1st to 4th September last year and formed the first ICA Symposium on Cartography for Australasia and Oceania 2. These conferences are particularly stimulating and represent the lifeblood of the Society. About a quarter of attendees come from overseas, reinforcing both New Zealand's potential as a destination and the GeoCart series as a vehicle for promoting their specialisations and ideas.

Strong Links with ICA

Over the years NZCS has maintained a strong relationship with ICA by attending all General Assemblies since 1976 and actively participating in International Cartographic Conferences and ICA Commissions' meetings. New Zealand has been particularly successful at the International Cartographic Exhibitions, winning several cartographic excellence awards. A number of ICA events have been held in New Zealand, including ICA Commission meetings, seminars and workshops, and many highly respected and notable international cartographers have been invited to these.

Celebrations

Next month the Society will host a celebration to commemorate its founding forty years ago. A celebration of New Zealand Mapping is expected to be attended by about two hundred people who have contributed to mapping over the years, and to the Society in its formative years.