

Struve Geodetic Arc Joins World Heritage List

15th July, Durban, South Africa

The World Heritage Committee chaired by Themba Wakashe, South Africa's deputy director-general for Heritage and National Archives has inscribed seventeen cultural sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The nominations took place on 15th July at a meeting in Durban, South Africa. The World Heritage List now numbers 812 sites in total, including 628 cultural, 160 natural and 24 mixed sites, in 137 States. Bahrain, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina enter the List for the first time. The sites inscribed during the current session of the World Heritage Committee include three transboundary sites and extensions to six sites that were already on the List.

The Struve Geodetic Arc is the first survey-site on the list. The countries hosting the Struve Geodetic Arc are Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Sweden and Ukraine. The Struve Geo-detic Arc is a chain of survey triangulations stretching from Hammerfest in Norway to the Black Sea, through ten countries and over 2,820km. These are the points of a survey carried out between 1816 and 1855 by the astronomer Friedrich Georg Wilhelm Struve and represent the first accurate measuring of a long segment of a meridian. This helped establish the exact size and shape of our planet and marked an important step in the development of earth sciences and topographic mapping. It is an extraordinary example of scientific collaboration among scientists from different countries, and of collaboration between monarchs, for a scientific cause. The original arc consisted of 258 main triangles with 265 main station points. The listed site includes 34 of the original station points, with different markings, i.e. a drilled hole in rock, iron cross, cairns, or built obelisks.

**3rd Survey and GIS Summit and 25th ESRI User Conference
22-29 July 2005, San Diego, CA, USA**

The 25th ESRI User Conference was held at the San Diego Conference Centre from 25th to 29th July 2005. The third Survey and GIS Summit was linked to the User Conference and took place between 22nd and 26th July at the same venue. FIG took part in the Survey and GIS Summit for the third time as gold sponsor, also attending the exhibition at the User Conference, where it shared an exhibition stand with the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM).

The ESRI User Conference was attended by the highest ever number, more than 14,000, participants from 126 countries. After the grand opening, there was an opening plenary session entitled "New start time GIS" Helping Manage Our World™: the theme of the conference. A keynote presentation came from Mr Jack Dangermond, president and founder of ESRI, who briefed participants on the latest ESRI

projects in the use of GIS and developments in ESRI software. Dr Jane Goodall, DBE, of the Jane Goodall Institute gave the keynote speech; Dr Goodall is internationally known for her research with chimpanzees. The conference included numerous technical workshops, paper sessions and panel discussion covering both technology and policy issues. The technical exhibition offered a good overview of software solutions, technology and activities by ESRI partners and users. The traditional map gallery included a large display of GIS projects.

The Survey and GIS Summit 2005 "Bridging the Gap"™ gathered together more than 300 participants to discuss how to improve co-operation and bridging the gap between survey and GIS. A sub-theme of the Survey Summit was "It's All about the Data."™ Keynote presentations were given by Mike Weir, surveying industry manager at ESRI, Jim Hart of HES/ Samco, who gave "A Vision on Integrated GIS"™, and Gary R. Kent of The Schneider Corporation.