

# The Power of Data



We are now over halfway through January and 2017 is probably in full swing for you. Ahead of you lies another year full of challenges, new technologies and both foreseen and unforeseen developments in your personal as well as professional life. I would like to especially highlight one trend, which is both a challenge and a development, and that is 'the power of data'.

*(By Durk Haarsma, publishing director)*

In the November 2016 issue of *GIM International* Professor Stig Enemark, one of the respected members of *GIM International's* Editorial Advisory Board and a regular contributor, wrote an Insider's View column on '[The Call for a Data Revolution](#)'. Just a few weeks later I witnessed Professor Enemark receive the Michael Barrett Award at RICS in London. In his lecture called 'Land Governance in Support of the 2030 Global Agenda' to mark that occasion, he highlighted the importance of good land governance to comply with the global agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, in order to build a sustainable long-term future. The growing relevance of data in facilitating good land governance is unmistakable. Land professionals must also be aware of this growing relevance, and new land administration systems are necessary to deliver good data for governments to base their policies upon if the SDGs are to be achieved.

This month the first [UN World Data Forum](#) is being held in Cape Town, South Africa (from 15-18 January). The UN World Data Forum is an outcome of the main recommendations of the 2014 report titled [A World that Counts](#). The UN Statistical Commission has stepped up to organise this forum which will indeed intensify cooperation between various professional groups, such as information technologists, geospatial information managers, data scientists and users as well as civil society stakeholders. The event will have the overarching theme of 'Harnessing the Power of Data for Sustainable Development' and will include sessions on data literacy, geospatial and remote sensing data for sustainable development applications, the role of open data to support national statistics and monitoring against the SDGs, and big data innovations.

This high-level forum will certainly help the year of data to start with a bang! We'll definitely keep you updated on all the outcomes of the UN World Data Forum, plus we'll monitor and report on the ever-increasing role of data in the daily life of geomatics professionals – all in order to give you the best possible head start in harnessing the power of data. For now, let me end this month's column by wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!