

UNDER THE EL MISTI VOLCANO

Third AGSE2010 in Arequipa, Peru



The Third Applied Geoinformatics for Society and Environment conference took place in August 2010 in Arequipa, jointly organised by Stuttgart University of Applied Sciences (SUAS, Germany) and the Catholic University of Santa Maria (UCSM, Arequipa, Peru). Nearly a hundred participants from different continents proved the very international character of the AGSE.

The primary theme was 'to offer an interdisciplinary, international forum for sharing knowledge about the application of geoinformatics, with focus on applications and on developing countries', and special emphasis on biodiversity; 2010 was UN Year of Biodiversity, and Peru is one of the countries with the greatest biodiversity.

The conference opened with a welcoming address by Prof F.-J. Behr, expounding AGSE's ideals and philosophy and its role in ushering in internationalisation of education. This was followed by welcoming speeches by dignitaries of the UCSM, Cesar Castillo Caceres, Jose Sulla Torres, and César Beltrán Castañón. A.P. Pradeep- kumar of Mahatma Gandhi University of India, spoke on the opportunities for internationalisation of education in Latin America. He was followed to the podium by Prof Sandoval, Universidad Austral de Chile, who addressed vegetation and land-use change in his country. Further morning keynotes were given respectively by professors Schröder (Open Source GIS), Rawiel (RFID for Real Time Location Systems) and Lehmkuhler (Status of SDI).

Presentations during AGSE2010 brought out the versatility of GIS techniques, covering topics like environmental protection and sustainable development, internet-based applications and open-source solutions, earth observation systems and spatial data infrastructures, and real-time locational applications. GIS applications for tackling developmental problems, biodiversity monitoring and GIS for pollution control were also discussed. All presentations were translated in real time into Spanish by an SUAS alumnus, Karina Guardado.

The afternoons gave an opportunity to catch up with the latest trends in GIS through participation in a series of half-day hands-on workshops, introducing Internet Mapping; 'R' for spatial analysis; Open Source GIS, especially gvSIG, Process Management; Geostatistics; and OGC standards for disseminating geodata.

The conference ended in a colourful and joyous closing reception, along with good hopes that all would meet again at Nairobi for AGSE2011 to renew the spirit of internationalisation and scientific cooperation.