



Editorial: RSPSoc Annual Student Meeting 2008

TINA THOMSON

Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering, University College London, Chadwick Building, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT, UK; thomson@cege.ucl.ac.uk

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The collection, processing, modelling, and dissemination of data about the Earth system remains the central focus at the Remote Sensing and Photogrammetry Society (RSPSoc) Annual Student Meeting. With the aim to inform and educate its members, RSPSoc (<http://www.rspsoc.org>) supports the exchange of knowledge and expertise, and promotes the application of these fields to education, science, research, industry, commerce, and public service. Its Annual Student Meeting (ASM) serves student members with the opportunity to gather and share their research projects from across different institutions in the United Kingdom. This year, an activity centre in the New Forest provided a relaxed and informal atmosphere for young researchers to present their work and exchange ideas over a two-day period in March 2008.

The ASM welcomes students from all stages of their research careers - whether it's a PhD they are pursuing or working on their undergraduate/Masters dissertation - and typically displays a range of topics across remote sensing, photogrammetry, and geographic information science. This variety was again evident this year with scientific and technical presentations in areas such as disaster and risk management, glaciology, vegetation, geomorphology, and forestry, to name a few. Mapping, naturally, is a central tool in these research areas because it provides the spatial context for the natural and human-modified landscapes and for describing and portraying research findings. Together with the Journal of Maps Student Edition, we are pleased to publish three maps and articles that originated from this conference.



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Hall (2008) addresses the identification of land cover in glaciated areas from satellite imagery through the use of a rule-based classification in the image analysis software eCognition. This is used to identify ice extents based on visible and near infrared bands of the electromagnetic spectrum. The map depicts the classification results of both datasets showing issues related to image resolution; the presence of debris-covered ice that hampered the classification and required additional thermal bands for its separation to other classes.

Disaster risk reduction and assessment is the main theme for the two further papers. Babb and Khalid (2008) model the impact of Hurricane Ivan on the affected population of Grenada, one of the Caribbean islands. Spatial modelling is used to assess hazards and risks through the combined use of GIS and remote sensing. The map shows hazards such as floods, storm surge, and wind exposure, which were used to plot risks among populated areas.

Morris (2008) evaluate the usefulness and development of regional pre-disaster maps, focussing upon mapping risk areas for improving emergency planning and increasing local hazard awareness. Risks such as vulnerability to seismic activity, population densities, and flood zones are assessed, and the final map illustrates the combined risk factor for Filadelfia, Costa Rica.

Remote sensing and GIS play an increasingly important role in many aspects of our lives, and as such the ASM is an ideal opportunity for students with similar research interests to exchange ideas, but also to gain an overview of the diversity of applications within their field. Indeed, as Paul Aplin (University of Nottingham and Chairman of RSPSoc) notes, “now that images of Earth are everywhere, we believe this Society has something to offer everyone”. With this in mind, I would like to thank everyone who attended this year’s ASM, especially those who have stepped forward and submitted to the JoM SE, and further I would like to extend my gratitude to the reviews who have provided valuable feedback for the papers presented here.

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