

REPORT ON FIG COMMISSION 9, PARTICIPATION AT THE 46TH ANNUAL CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HOUSING AND PLANNING (IFHP), TIANJIN, CHINA, SEPTEMBER 2002.

In September I participated at the 46th Annual Congress of the International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP) in Tianjin in north-west China (refer map below) As you maybe aware, China has a population of approximately 1.2 billion people. Tianjin has a population of approximately 12 million which includes approximately 2000 international consultants employed by the Chinese Government.

Of the 800 plus delegates, approximately 300 international delegates travelled by bus to a number of locations in Tianjin. We had a police escort and the roads were closed to traffic to enable us to commute. This is an efficient way the Chinese manage international visitors.

There were a number of key sessions provided throughout the Congress and below are some examples of the papers presented:

Urban Expansion and Designing for a Sustainable Urban Future – Professor Franz Josef Radermacher of the Research Institute for Applied Knowledge Processing Sciences, Denmark.

Prof Radermacher's paper was on the increasing densities and multifunctional land use in urban areas and the need to continuously plan for expansion. The paper discussed the “new urbia”, its perceptual value and its practical value and the relationship between the new and old developments

Sustainable City Growth – Professor Zeng Jian (CN) Urban Planner at the Research Institute of Urban Planning, School of Architecture, Tianjin University

The organic growth of cities prior to the industrial revolution resulted in urban patterns that cannot now be repeated in modern urban development. Nonetheless, they have become such characteristic features and such important determinant factors of the identity of cities that one might be inclined to copy them into a new form. As a result, it is essential for strategic conservation policies and strategies to preserve these values.

Sustainable Cities and Spatial Planning – Vincent Nadin Director of Centre for Environment Planning, University of the West of England.

The fundamental principles of sustainability should underpin the planning, development and renewal of our cities and towns. They should guide the creation of planning policies and their implementation in all places. However, actual planning strategies and policies vary from place to place. The paper described examples from a number of European countries where the objective had been to create more sustainable cities, and where the principles of sustainability have been embedded in planning and policy action. It also considered the strengths and weaknesses of national and regional planning systems and the way they either encourage or inhibit more sustainable solutions in development.



Tianjin Province China

FIG Commission 9 - Workshop

On behalf of FIG Commission 9, I conducted a workshop session entitled *GIS Application for Strategies in Urban Planning*. This workshop covered GIS Application in both “Two” and “Three” dimensional urban planning, computer assistance mapping of data, analysis of data, quality control and display outcomes. The 3-D section covered development project analysis and appraisals.

The students attending the conference from Tianjin University found this workshop material to be of great interest. Furthermore, the interest shown by delegates from Europe has encouraged me to use some of the material in a proposed paper at the FIG Conference in Paris 2003.

Photo A shows some of the Chinese students attending the Congress and my workshop. In the background are the computer facilities which I used in part of the workshop. Photo B shows my Powerpoint presentation.



Photo A



Photo B

If there was an overall theme that was picked up at the conference, it would be the move towards sustainability which is heavily influencing European countries and the question is, whether China will embrace sustainability in the future. At this stage, the judgement is out.

My overall impression of China was the difference between urban and rural areas and the vast number of issues that central China has to address. Furthermore, how well China is addressing a number of key issues. I was also able to inspect and discuss on a post conference field trip, the modernisation of Shanghai which was far beyond my expectations.