

ENGAGING THE CHALLENGE: ENHANCING THE RELEVANCE

IN THE FIRST OF A REGULAR COLUMN DEVOTED TO THE WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SURVEYORS (FIG), DIRECTOR MARKKU VILLIKKA SETS THE SCENE BY OUTLINING ITS RAISON D' ÊTRE AND PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD



The International Federation of Surveyors – FIG – is the premier international organisation representing the interests of surveyors worldwide. It is a federation of the national member associations and covers the whole range of professional fields within the global surveying community. It provides an international forum for discussion and development aiming to promote professional practice and standards.

Through more than 100 member associations and other bodies, including universities, national mapping and cadastre organisations and corporate members, it links some 350,000 surveyors in more than 125 countries. Its professional work is conducted by 10 technical commissions covering all surveying disciplines, from land management and GIS to positioning and engineering surveys, and from spatial planning and implementation to valuation and quantity surveying.

Changing role

During its 130-year history, the role of FIG has changed considerably. In addition to staging conferences and workshops, the role of preparing guidelines and influencing global organisations such as the United Nations (especially FAO and UN-HABITAT) and the World Bank has increased immensely, especially on land-related issues and in promoting the Millennium Development Goals.

The overall theme for FIG during the current four-year term of office is "Engaging the Challenge: Enhancing the Relevance". The three key pillars are: Engaging the Membership; Engaging Global Challenges; and Enhancing the Relevance of the Profession. The surveying profession continues the race to the top as FIG seeks opportunities to



FIG, FAO and CNGeGL representatives at the balcony of CNGeGL in Rome preparing the programme for FIG 2012

extend the usefulness of surveying into governance of land and natural resources, environmental sustainability, national development and economic stability, mindful of the need to act responsibly.

FIG organises an annual conference that will, this year, be the FIG Working Week in Rome, Italy (6-10 May). Its theme – "Knowing to manage the territory, protect the environment, evaluate the cultural heritage" – will cover the expertise of all 10 professional commissions.

The organisers expect more than 1,200 participants from about 100 countries to attend this main FIG event whose agenda will include some 400-500 presentations spread

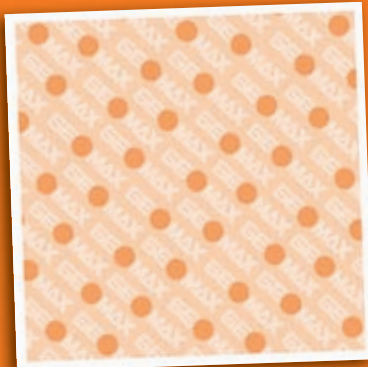
between 90 technical sessions, forums and workshops. The organisers have received more than 700 proposals so the quality of the presentations will be very high.

In addition to the professional and scientific programme, there will be a series of administrative meetings, an extensive exhibition, and an outstanding social programme (e.g., the opening ceremony will include a concert with symphony orchestra at the Parco della Musica), The 1st FIG Young Surveyors Conference will be held 4-5 May and directly linked to the Working Week. The main institutional partner of FIG 2012 is UN FAO.



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