

United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress - The geospatial way to a better world

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Deqing, China, was the setting of the first United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) hosted from 19-21 November 2018.

The aim of the inaugural congress was “to provide an environment for the geospatial community to enhance leadership, knowledge and understanding of the significance and the usefulness of geospatial information management to address national, regional and global challenges.” AfriGIS was amongst four South African representatives. Our aim was to get first-hand knowledge of global trends and product offerings in comparison with our own. We were proud to see that AfriGIS’s vision, development and products are without doubt globally competitive. The core product offering that AfriGIS provides to clients in terms of Land Administration, Address verification and Location Based Services are world class in terms of development and usability.

The UNWGIC created a platform to achieve the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDG) for 2030, namely - Transforming our World 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Each of the SDG’s has a spatial component and of the 14 fundamental datasets identified by the United Nations, AfriGIS builds and maintains 11.

Congress themes included:

- Measuring & Monitoring SDGs
- Digital Economy, Location Analytics and Big Data
- Smart, Resilient and Sustainable Societies
- Growing Global Geospatial Capabilities and Capacity
- Geospatial Innovation, Science & Technology
- Digital Silk Road and International Partnerships
- Sustainable Development in Action

The focus and theme that carried through the event was networking and creating relationships across boundaries to



facilitate growth. Presentations from the event will be available on the UNWGIC website in coming months to keep the momentum going as well as to spread and share the knowledge.

It was an inspiring three days to see all the possibilities in the geospatial world. The setting of the event was unlike anything we have ever seen. The venue which hosted the event, was built specifically for the 1,200 participants. An estimated 5,000 volunteers were involved in ensuring that the event ran seamlessly from one session to the next plenary.

It was a privilege to be a part of the event. It is an even greater privilege to be a part of the solution in building a better world the geospatial way.

Sources:

- UNWGIC 2018 Program Book
- <https://www.unwgic2018.org/>
- <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

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