

FIG Task Force on Surveyors and the Climate Change

Draft to be endorsed by General Assembly 18 May 2011

Terms of reference

(To be approved by the General Assembly, May 2011)

Rationale

The evidence for climate change is now overwhelming. However, the extent to which climate is likely to change in the next century is not clear. Climate models produce a wide range of possible outcomes depending upon the various forcing factors used – factors that, in turn, depend upon assumptions relating to industrial growth, greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, etc. Many of the climate related changes can be detected by spatial measurement and analysis. The surveyor, as a pragmatic observer of the natural environment, is the professional person whose expertise and skills encompass such tasks. These broadly based skills enable the surveyor to make a unique contribution in establishing, quantifying, and managing change. It is the surveyor's knowledge of cadastral systems and land administration, for example, that gives the surveyor specific insights into the impact that such changes might have on local administration structures and local economies.

Because of the importance of climate change to the global community, FIG wishes to examine the engagement and role that surveyors can have in contributing to climate change studies. The Task Force will also consider how FIG might be able to partner with other global agencies involved in such studies. The intent here is not to replicate the work of others, but rather to understand and highlight the unique contribution that surveyors can make in assisting the global community to understand and adapt to climate change.

A final report will be delivered at the FIG Congress in Kuala Lumpur (2014).

Terms of Reference for the Task Force

1. To identify and investigate specific areas where surveyors have the professional expertise to contribute to studies related to climate change. For example, this may include:
 - Assessing the accuracy of relevant technologies.
 - Opportunities for spatial measuring and monitoring.
 - Providing an unbiased, pragmatic approach to data interpretation.
 - Contributing to the understanding of the datums and reference frames that underpin global measurement systems.
 - Systems for land administration, management and settlement that can:
 - (i) accommodate land use changes driven by climate variability, and
 - (ii) help improve productivity.

2. To identify how and where surveyors can partner with other global agencies (e.g., FAO, UN-HABITAT, World Bank, etc) in developing sustainable solutions to problems arising from climate change.
3. Where appropriate, to comment from a climate change needs perspective on the development of future global monitoring systems.

Composition of the Task Force

Chair John Hannah (New Zealand)

Task Force Members

- Michael Sutherland (Canada)
- David Mitchell, Australia
- Neil Pullar (New Zealand)
- Marcus Rothacher (Germany)
- Isaac Boateng (Ghana)
- Paul van der Molen (The Netherlands)

Corresponding members to be appointed as necessary.

Proposed Work Programme

FIG Working Week, 2011

Terms of reference and task force membership confirmed. Task force holds a special technical session for paper presentation, coordination, and work planning.

FIG Working Week, 2012

Task force holds special technical session and face to face meeting.

FIG Working Week, 2013

Task force holds special technical session and face to face meeting as well as presents outline/structure of the report.

FIG Congress 2014

Task Force has final meeting and presents final report.

Chair

Prof. John Hannah

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