



MIDDLE EAST
GEOSPATIAL
FORUM

3 - 4 April, 2012

**Qatar National Convention Centre
Doha, State of Qatar**



CONFERENCE REPORT

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Introduction

Geospatial technology, with its ability to put crucial information at our fingertips, has become an inseparable part of our lives and the Middle East Geospatial Forum is an attempt to provide a knowledge sharing platform to the geospatial community in the region. Since its inception in 2005, the Map Middle East series of conferences has evolved into an international platform that facilitates in building networks and also explores various uncharted aspects of this technology by congregating geospatial technology experts from across various domains and different parts of the region.



Middle East Geospatial Forum 2012

Geospatial Media and Communications, in association with the Centre for GIS, MMUP, State of Qatar, organised a two-day conference and exhibition event on geospatial technologies at the Qatar National Convention Centre during April 3-4. The Middle East Geospatial Forum 2012 took our engagement with the stakeholders to the next level by building on our objective of propagating and promoting the significant usage of geospatial technology as a tool that serves varied domains.



Conference Agenda

Spanning over two days, the highpoint of the conference was its plenary sessions and exhibition. The conference was based on a carefully designed plan with plenary sessions that featured an array of celebrated speakers from around the globe, who brought along with them a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the Middle East geospatial community. The conference also had an exhibition area where companies from all over the region showcased some of the latest developments taking place in the field.





Participation

The forum witnessed participation of close to 1000 visitors and delegates from 18 countries around the world. The list of attendees included participants from the private and government sector as well as various fields such as defence, municipalities, academia, military survey agencies, civil aviation authorities, electricity and water authorities, planning and land departments, construction companies, contractors and surveyors.



Inaugural Session

The Forum kicked off with a welcome address by **Eng. Mohamed Ahmed Al Sayed**, Director, Doha Municipality. The dignitaries attending the opening ceremony included **Eng. Ali Abdulla Al Abdulla**, Undersecretary, Planning Department, Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning. The welcome address was followed by a presentation from **Chris Gibson**, Vice President, Executive Committee Member, Trimble. The presentation titled 'Integrating Geospatial Information into Infrastructure Projects' gave an overview of how geospatial information and building information modelling is being integrated into the overall infrastructure project management and how geospatial information links multiple industries. Citing best examples from around the world, it aptly showcased how geospatial technology is being used in the management of large-scale infrastructure projects.



Plenary Sessions

The plenary sessions witnessed high profile speakers and domain experts from across the globe talk about the significance of geospatial technology in various spheres. The sessions focussed on the usage of geospatial technology across various domains and also highlighted some of the upcoming technologies that are being developed around the world.



Construction and Infrastructure

The plenary on construction and infrastructure began with a presentation by **Geoff Zeiss**, Director Utility Industry Program, Autodesk, Inc. The presentation stressed upon the need to enable more intelligent cities in view of the rapid urbanisation taking place around the world. Highlighting the whopping investment that the GCC countries are projected to make on rail and road projects, the presentation described how infrastructure development companies are linking BIM models to project mgmt software to enable 4D and 5D views.



David Goedecke, Senior Solution Architect, Public Safety and Security, Intergraph, gave a presentation titled 'Smarter Decisions and the Smart City', which explained how smart cities are breaking down the barriers between information and communications technology and improving the way services and resources are planned, managed, delivered and consumed.



Energy & Utilities

The second plenary on Energy & Utilities witnessed speakers from Esri, KAHRAMAA, Qatar Telecom, Qatar Petroleum and Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute talk about the significance of geospatial technology in the utilities segment.



The presentation by **Dean Angelides**, Director International Operations, Esri, titled 'GIS Empowers Energy and Utilities' described how geospatial technology is helping the utilities industry to tackle various problems such as increasing customer demands, ageing technology, increasing costs and decreasing resources, customer patience and budgets. The presentation went on to describe the use of GIS in various energy and utility industries such as oil and gas, transportation and fleet management.



Next, **Dr. Yasir Mohieldeen's** (Scientist – GIS and Spatial Analysis, Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute - QEERI) presentation titled 'Geospatial technology in the service of advanced research themes on environment and energy in Qatar' highlighted the role of QEERI in contributing to the country's sustainability. Some of the research projects where spatial analysis is being used include air quality monitoring and modelling in Doha, soil modelling in Qatar, solar energy mapping, biodiversity mapping and spatial distribution of species and soil salinity mapping using remote sensing and GIS.



In his presentation titled 'GIS support for right decision at right time', **Ibrahim Mohd Al Sada**, Manager, Water Planning, KAHRMAA gave an overview of the organisation's mission and core areas of business. He further highlighted the significant role that geospatial technology is playing in helping KAHRMAA to meet its objectives of enhanced customer satisfaction, maintain supply efficiency and improve the overall quality of its services.



Sajjad Sameer, GIS Coordinator, Qatar Petroleum in his presentation titled GIS – Bringing Unity in Diversity described how the agency is using GIS to streamline various tasks such as navigational safety, locating new installations, routing subsea pipelines and cables, asset safety and data polling and reuse. The presenter focussed on some of the key areas where GIS is being used effectively within Qatar Petroleum.



The last presentation in the plenary was given by **Krishna Kumar Subramaniam**, Asst. Manager, GIS System and Development, Qatar Telecom. The presentation described how the department is using GIS to streamline its functioning, manage its assets and help plan better for the future.



SDI for Good Governance

Mansoor Al Malki, Director of IT Department, Qatar Statistics Authority informed about the second high level forum on GGIM to be held at Qatar next year where the country will highlight its world class GIS setup. He also pointed out initiatives like establishing an Arab geospatial team for the Arab countries under Al-Khawarezmi committee, starting specialised degree and post-graduate courses in geospatial information through Qatar University, and adding geospatial information subject in school curriculum.



Kees de Zeeuw, Director, Kadaster International, in his presentation titled 'SDI for people-profit-planet,' described the correlation between sustainable development, good governance and spatial data infrastructure. de Zeeuw went on to highlight the Netherlands' initiatives towards promoting e-governance and thus paving the way for a spatially enabled society.



Steven Ramage, Executive Director, Marketing and Communications, Open Geospatial Consortium, talked about the importance of geospatial standards and the OGC's role in enabling technology developers to make geospatial information and services accessible and useful with any application that needs to be geospatially enabled. Ramage also revealed the OGC's plans to setup an OGC Middle East Forum.

Geospatial Technologies and Applications



The first presentation by **Major Aref Ibrahim**, Ministry of Interior (MOI), State of Qatar highlighted some of the latest GIS initiatives in the MOI. The presentation talked about the NJM system which is based on latest GIS technology integrated with MOI data centre and related GIS data sources. NJM, the Arabic abbreviation for Unified Criminal System is an integrated data system that has been designed for receiving complaints reported to police stations by individuals.



Neil Gyte, Enterprise Geo Lead – Emerging Markets, Google gave an overview of the current GIS trends and the future of enterprise GIS. Taking the example of the dramatically increasing sale of smart phones over desktop and laptops, he highlighted how there has been a major shift in both consumer and enterprise computing.



The presentation on 'Terrestrial Laser Scan Application in Urban Planning' by **Dr. Khaled El Nabbout**, National Delegate Commission 3, International Federation of Surveyors, showed how the application of terrestrial laser scan technology in different sectors has increased over the last decade. Using live demonstration of a 360 degree view taken using laser scan technology, the presenter aptly highlighted the major strengths and weaknesses of the technology in the field of urban planning.



Exhibition

Spread over an area of 1100 square meters, the exhibition held at the Middle East Geospatial Forum 2012 witnessed 33 exhibitors display some of the latest developments in the field of geospatial technologies. The exhibitors Included survey device manufacturing companies, government organisations from the Middle East, utility companies, research institutes etc. The major exhibitors included the Ministry of Environment, State of Qatar, Qatar Petroleum, KAHRAMAA (Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation), Public Works Authority (Ashghal), Qatar Telecom, Esri Mannai Trading Corporation, Trimble, Ideal Solutions, Intergraph and Autodesk.





Valedictory and Awards

Addressing the gathering in his closing address, Abhishek Kotangale, Regional Manager - Middle East and North Africa, Geospatial Media and Communications said that the forum had aptly displayed how geospatial technology is speeding up the development process in the Middle East. He also thanked the sponsors, speakers and attendees for their support in making the conference successful.



The valedictory also witnessed awards being given away to the best exhibitors. The awards were presented by **Fawziya Hussain Mohd Zainal**, Division Head -CGIS, MMUP, Qatar. The winners for Best Exhibitor awards included Qatar Petroleum, KAHRAMAA (Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation), Ministry of Interior, State of Qatar, Trimble, Esri Mannai Trading Corporation and Public Works Authority (Ashghal).



Key outcomes:

Some of the key outcomes of the two-day Middle East Geospatial Forum were as follows:

- Geospatial technologies are an essential ingredient for the successful implementation of Qatar's vision for the future.
- Geospatial technologies find application across various domains and verticals.
- Geospatial technologies can effectively address the need for sustainability.
- There is a need to create effective information sharing networks.



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