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Chair of FIG, COM. 3

Dear Markku Villikka, dear representatives, Greek organizers, sponsors and the Greek agencies that are present here, dear colleagues and friends:

Yesterday only a few had access to mobile telephones. Tomorrow we will talk about personal navigation. All of us will have access to services difficult to imagine to day. Many of these services will be based on geographic/spatial data and information.

To day is possible to get access to databases containing data representing an actual status of our surroundings. This is not sufficient. People look for experience and adventure. To morrow all information including the historical dimension need to be available.

The traditional paper map is static. Each map sheet represents a snapshot of selected objects at a given time, and "the owner" has an exclusive right to the map and the data the map is based on.

In contrast to this a digital map or better a collection of spatial data is dynamic with the time parameter as a part of the individual data collection.

In "the digital world" we have a situation with different owners of spatial data, many different users and an unknown number of applications. There is a market for spatial data. But it is not traditional hierarchical market. We will experience a market organised as a network with many, too many relations.

The users, as well public as private, will take it for granted that it is possible to combine data from different sources. This is a real challenge for all of us.

This implies that the owners of data have at their disposal robust and stable spatial data. There will be a strong need for a general accepted Spatial Data/Information Infrastructure. And at the same time a demand for management and sharing of knowledge

Spatial Information Management as well as knowledge management is a growing field for surveyors.

Within FIG Commission 3 is responsible for Spatial Information Management.

It stands to reason that spatial information is an indispensable part of the basic infrastructure in the individual country. Again and again it is stated that spatial information affects 80% of human decision making.

Spatial Information Management is something overlaying a lot of disciplines. It is not something static. It is a dynamic concept. It changes in line with the technological possibilities and the political and organisational developments in society in general.

But we must never forget that Spatial Information Management is also about human resources and organisational changes. Being involved in spatial information management means to be in center between man and technology.

Commission 3 works through working groups and by bringing people together.

At events like this seminar:

We offer people from different countries the possibility to share experiences,
We offer people from different countries the possibility to be members of a global network and
We give people from different countries the possibility to be friends.

Besides there will be an outcome in the form of proceedings that will be available on the web for other professionals, for students etc.

This event would not have been possible without the sponsorship of

The Technical Chamber of Greece and the KTIMATOLGIO S.A

The seminar would have been worthless without all the prepared presentations and there would not have been a seminar without the honoured guests from Europe, Middle East and Africa.

The next days will become a memorable part of the commission 3 history.