

New Showcase for UAS Exhibitors during Intergeo

Intergeo's integrated 'interaerial SOLUTIONS' platform is a response to the rapid development in data acquisition, analysis and applications for unmanned flight systems. The recently agreed partnership with the German-speaking Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle Association (UAV DACH) underlines the commitment of Intergeo, the world's largest industry platform, to remaining the leading trade fair for UAS manufacturers and service providers in the German-speaking region and to further developing its international profile.

► <http://bit.ly/1JEdwyG>

UAS Captures Near-infrared Mapping Data



DroneMetrex NIR imagery of a farm.

The radiometric quality has been achieved because DroneMetrex specialists performed the necessary camera modifications and have designed the external filters specifically to match the requirements for accurate, discriminative vegetation mapping. According to DroneMetrex, this is the first time in the UAV's mapping history that NIR imagery has been captured at this level of quality.

► <http://bit.ly/1zXau8S>

36th Asian Conference on Remote Sensing

The organisation committee of the 36th Asian Conference on Remote Sensing (ACRS) is inviting remote sensing professionals to join the conference. ACRS 2015 is being held from 19-23 October 2015 in Quezon City, Philippines, and is one of the largest remote sensing conferences in Asia. Last year, more than 400 participants attended ACRS 2014, which was organised in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

► <http://bit.ly/1JEe6w9>

Semantic Nonsense



The human mind is gifted with the ability to boil down complex parts of reality into one comprehensive representation, and numbers come in very useful. Surveyors, for example, are used to accompanying their measurements with accuracy indicators, including root mean square error (RMSE), 1 sigma or circular error at 90% confidence. The economy, on the other hand, is often described in terms of gross domestic product (GDP). Now, as we seem to be emerging from eight years of economic crisis, the European future is expressed as follows: 'The economic growth for the EU will rise to 1.7% in 2015 and 1.3% for the euro zone. In 2016, economic activity should grow by 2.1% and 1.9% respectively.' The decimal point in the percentages suggests that the numbers are exact to one part per thousand, but are they? Let's take a closer look. The concept of GDP was developed by the US Ministry of Commerce in 1934 to measure the economic well-being of the country during the Great Depression and its developer, Simon Kuznets, received the Nobel Prize for his achievements in 1971. Once the aggregated number has been compiled, the growth of the economy – positive or negative – can be calculated from quarter to quarter and from year to year. The number also acts as the sole measure to determine the tax and development aid contributions to be paid to Brussels by EU member states. It enables comparisons of a nation's military spending, educational

budgets and healthcare expenditure and a global ranking according to economic success. An overarching measure is convenient, but it does not tell the whole story. For example, from 2013 to 2014 the GDP of Nigeria increased overnight from 42.4 trillion naira to 80.2 trillion naira (USD510 billion) – an 89% increase. Nigeria is now ranked 26th based on GDP per country and number 121 for GDP per capita. The reason: 'rebasing'. One of the inputs used to compute GDP is the growth of industries weighted according to their importance to the economy. Since those weightings are related to the base year and are not updated annually, fast-growing industries retain the same low weighting and the figures gradually drift away from reality, ultimately underestimating the economy by as much as half a percent. The previous calculations referred to 1990 as the base year. Rebasing occurred in 2010 and the proper weightings were given to mobile telecom providers, the movie industry and other budding sectors. So, have the Nigerians become wealthier? Only on paper. But what effect can readjusted GDPs have in the political arena? When Simon Kuznets developed this method of measuring the national income, he indicated its limitations and foresaw abuses. He warned that a quantitative measure brings the illusion of precision and may be abused. Furthermore, GDP is not able to measure welfare adequately unless the personal distribution of income is known. Other economists have argued that GDP cannot really distinguish between wealth-generating activities contributing to the well-being of individuals and capital consumption. Hence, the numbers may merely indicate the pace of money pumping through the system. The recalculations of Nigeria's GDP took place 50 years after Darrell Huff published his book *How to Lie with Statistics*, in which he states that statistics "is employed to sensationalise, inflate, confuse and oversimplify. Statistical methods and terms are necessary in reporting the mass data of social and economic trends [...] But without readers who know what they mean, the result can only be semantic nonsense". ▲