

Report on the 13th ISPRS Student Consortium and Working Group VI/5 Summer School

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The 13th ISPRS Student Consortium and Working Group VI/5 Summer School was held at the Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology (IESM), University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines from October 24-28, 2015. The summer school theme was “Using Geospatial Technologies for Natural Resources Management.” This summer school continues the collaboration and cooperation of the ISPRS Student Consortium with the Asian Association on Remote Sensing (AARS), the AARS Student Group (ASG).

A total of fifty-four (54) participants attended the summer school. Among these participants, thirty (30) were foreign participants coming from Indonesia, Ghana, South Africa, Slovakia, India, Iran, Mongolia, - Egypt, Japan, China and China Taipei. Twenty-four (24) participants are Filipinos coming from state universities, research institutes and government agencies. The participants were welcomed by Dr. Lemnuel Aragon, Director of IESM and Dr. Emmanuel Baltsavias, former chair of the ISPRS Working Group VI/5. This summer school consisted of intensive lectures – from open source tools to intensive image processing techniques. The first lectures were delivered by OpenStreetMap Philippines. The OSM (read: awesome!) lectures and simultaneous practicals included creating an account in OSM, contributing to OSM database and the potential applications for natural resources management. Dr. Emmanuel Baltsavias of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology gave a comprehensive lecture about the status, processing and applications of high resolution images. Dr. Martin Isenburg of rapidlasso GmbH discussed the methods on computing vegetation metrics and generating improved canopy height models and digital surface models using LiDAR data. LAStools, the flagship product of rapidlasso GmbH, was used to process the LiDAR data and to further expound on Dr. Isenburg’s lectures. The use of Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) data in agriculture, specifically in rice and crop monitoring, was extensively discussed by Mr. Massimo Barbieri of sarmap Switzerland.

The participants visited another unit of the University of the Philippines for the technical tour. They toured UP Los Baños. The first visit was at the Phil-LiDAR 2 project, which focused on the use of LiDAR technology for natural resources management in the country. Dr. Damasa Macandog and her team gave a brief but very informative introduction about the project. The participants had the opportunity to visit the project’s research laboratory. Participants learned more about rice, rice production and rice research through the Rice World Museum of the International Rice Research Institute. The group also had a brief nature encounter at the Makiling Botanic Garden and gained more knowledge about the fauna and flora of the garden through the assistance of forestry students and experienced guides. After the tour, the participants were rewarded with an organic and healthy dinner provided by rapidlasso GmbH through their Green Sponsorship.

Social events after the lectures were also organized so that the participants will know more about each other and their fields of interest and expertise. The ice breaker party allowed participants to take a wild guess on each other’s personality by determining which among the three (3) statements is the truth. Filipinos are very famous for singing in karaoke and the participants were challenged in a karaoke night. Team work with new found friends was also tested through a game that requires synchronized movement

to get to the finish line. During the closing ceremonies, the participants were entertained by the students of the Department of Geodetic Engineering with their singing and beat box talents.

The participants also experienced the Philippines through food, funny games and riding the jeepney. The friendliness and hospitality of the host country was felt by their warm welcome and genuine smiles. The 5-day summer school was a success through the intensive lectures and time well spent with new friends and colleagues.