

EDITORIAL PREFACE

3D Urban Models and GIS for e-Governance and e-Planning

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The International Journal of E-Planning Research continues in this issue the exploration of complex e-Planning themes and e-governance issues confronting urban and regional planners: 3D Urban Models for the Visualization of climate change effects; the use of GIS to enhance e-Governance; the use of ICT to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban areas in the field of e-Health planning; the use of specific e-planning tools to enhance participatory data collection in fieldwork activities as an element of Participatory GIS; challenges and prospects for e-governance and e-planning in Africa; the potential positive role of e-planning in the co-creation of Good Urbanism; and the use of ICT to foster active citizen participation in public policies.

John Danahy, Robert Wright, Jacob Mitchell and Rob Feick in the article *Exploring Ways to Use 3D Urban Models to Visualize Multi-scalar Climate Change Data and Mitigation Change Models for e-Planning* explore modes of visualizing remote sensing heat island data with the aim to support planning policies and programs designed to mitigate urban heat island and climate change effects, in the Toronto region, an area that confronts problems of urban heat

island impacts due to the increasing frequency of extreme heat events.

In the following article *GIS for e-Planning in India*, Falguni Mukherjee and Rina Ghose examine the massive increase in the use of ICT in India, a process that has led to the transformation of traditional forms of governance into e-governance. These reforms seek to improve governance, to increase transparency and to eliminate corruption and bureaucracy. The authors identify a number of e-governance projects that make use of a mixture of ICT, being GIS one of them. The research reported in this article is focused on the Nirmala Nagara project (NNP), a program launched by the Government of Karnataka to address issues of urban development using GIS, one of the most ambitious Municipal e-Governance projects in the country encompassing 213 urban local bodies.

Elochukwu Ukwandu and Sylvanus Iroh in the Research Note *E-Health Solutions in Rural Healthcare in the Mbaise Area of Imo State - Nigeria* examine the role of e-Health in rural areas, discuss the factors perceived to influence the adoption and regular use of e-health solutions in rural healthcare centres in Mbaise, Imo State, in Nigeria, and make

recommendations on how ICTs can be used more effectively to improve health systems in rural healthcare centres.

Valentina Spanu and Michael Keith McCall in the note *Eliciting Local Spatial Knowledge for Community-based Disaster Risk Management: Working with CyberTracker in Georgian Caucasus* provide a critical guide on how to use the software CyberTracker in fieldwork conditions that involve citizen participation. CyberTracker is a participatory field data collection software employed as an element of Participatory GIS. It allows the acquisition, geo-reference, storage and transference of local spatial knowledge. As the authors show, this application was developed initially for animal tracking, ecological surveys and conservation management activities, but its use has been extended into other fields, as is the case of social data collection about hazards, vulnerability and disaster risk management. This critical review of CyberTracker is based on fieldwork operations carried out by the staff of a NGO and local governments in the Caucasus Mountains of Georgia.

The research note “Challenges and prospects for e-planning in Lusophone African countries: evidence from the UN e-government survey 2012” reviews critically the UN 2012 E-Government Survey, summarizes and discusses the key challenges for e-government development identified in the UN survey and, based on these findings, explores the challenges and prospects for e-Planning adoption in the five Lusophone African countries.

As we mentioned before, we see the review of innovative books as one way of advancing scholarship and for that reason we aim to expand the book-review section in the coming issues. One of the reviews included in this issue is

focused on a new approach to urban planning – ‘Good Urbanism’ – which, to some extent blends new concepts with principles and practices associated with Collaborative Planning and New Urbanism. The notion of Good Urbanism, proposed by Nan Ellin (“Good Urbanism. Six Steps to creating Prosperous Places”), combines ideas of ‘good city form’ (plan content) with the idea of co-creation (planning process, as the new ‘utopia’), in which e-Planning, in particular the extensive use of Internet, social media, collaborative computer-based technologies, and 3D visualization technologies in urban planning, have an important role to play in the co-creation of prosperous cities. The second book reviewed – ‘Active Citizen Participation in E-Government. A global perspective’, edited by Aroon Manoharan and Marc Holzer – offers new insights on recent developments in citizen e-participation worldwide and on the efforts made by governments, in different political and administrative tiers, across the world, to actively engage citizens in city governance and in urban planning decision-making processes.

We trust that the questions and cases examined and discussed in these articles, notes and reviews will motivate discussion and raise awareness of key challenges and opportunities confronting e-Planning. We also hope these papers will provide additional indication of the thematic and theoretical approaches we wish to encourage in future issues of the International Journal of E-Planning Research.

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Carlos Nunes Silva, PhD, is Professor Auxiliar at the Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Lisbon, Portugal. He has a degree in Geography (University of Coimbra), a post-graduation in European Studies (University of Coimbra - Faculty of Law), a master degree in Human Geography: Regional and Local Planning (University of Lisbon) and a PhD in Geography: Regional and Local Planning (University of Lisbon). His research interests are mainly focused on local government policies, history and theory of urban planning, urban and metropolitan governance, urban planning ethics, urban planning in Africa, research methods, e-government and e-planning. His recent publications include the books Handbook of Research on E-Planning: ICT for Urban Development and Monitoring (2010), Online Research Methods in Urban and Planning Studies: Design and Outcomes (2012), and Citizen e-Participation in Urban Governance: Crowdsourcing and Collaborative Creativity (2013). He is member of the Steering Committee of the International Geographical Union Commission 'Geography of Governance' (2012-2016). He is the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of E-Planning Research (IJEPR).