

## **FIG Task Force on Scientific Journal**

### **Terms of Reference**

(To be approved by the General Assembly, May 2015)

Task Force to evaluate the establishment of a FIG peer-review scientific Journal

#### **1. RATIONALE**

In recent years, there is a growing activity of academics in FIG (e.g. – FIG academic members). One of the parameters in which the achievements of the academics is examined is the number and quality of their published articles, especially those that are indexed in abstracts and citation databases of peer-reviewed literature (e.g. Scopus, ISI). This issue is particularly important for scholars in their early stages of academic career.

8 years ago, FIG initiated the full peer-review channel for papers submitted to the annual FIGWW conferences and Congresses. Still, a concern was made (by numerous delegates and members) that the level of review is not sufficient, and perhaps more important, that these articles do not appear in the scholar databases, such as Scopus and ISI.

To overcome such problems, many international professional organizations have established peer-review journals designed to advance the knowledge in their field on the one hand, and allow professionals in general and academics in particular to publish peer-reviewed articles on the other hand. These journals initiated by the international professional organizations, are in spite the relatively large number of existing journals. Several examples are:

- **“ISPRS International Journal of Geo-Information”** - *ISPRS International Journal of Geo-Information* (ISSN 2220-9964) is an international, open access journal on geo-information. It is a journal of the ISPRS (International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing) and is published quarterly online by MDPI.
- **“Cartography and Geographic Information Science”** - *Published on behalf of the American Cartography and Geographic Information Society* (ISSN 1523-0406 - Print, 1545-0465 - Online).
- **“International Journal of Spatial Data Infrastructure Research (IJS DIR)”** & **“Journal of Spatial Information Science (JOSIS)”** – The two journals are official journals of the Spatial Data Infrastructure Association.

FIG, as the international Federation of Surveyors, should take its leading position, and establish its own high level peer-review professional and scientific journal.

Moreover, our academic members so far see not much benefit from FIG and therefore we need to activate them through this activity. Coordination with VP Pengfei Cheng who chairs the

academic forum will enable us to activate several members, in order to cover all fields of surveying even the emerging ones.

## **2. AIM OF TASK FORCE**

The aim of the Task Force is to evaluate all aspects of establishing a journal under FIG umbrella. Inter alia, the issues to be assessed are:

- Is there a need for a new Scientific/professional journal under the umbrella of FIG while taking into account the other existing professional journals?
- Will it have a negative effect on the current channel of full peer-review submission of papers to the annual FIG event? Alternatively, will it have a positive affect by improving the quality of the submitted papers to the annual symposia?
- How can we compete with other existing journals?
- How we will get enough high-quality papers for the journal?
- How we will be able to motivate our academic and professional members to submit their research/papers to the new journal?
- An e-journal vs. printed journal - what are the implications of each one of the two alternatives?
- Open-access?
- What international impact such a move will have?
- Will it motivate delegates/members with poor-means that cannot participate in events – to contribute and be heard?
- What is the procedure and how long will it take for the journal to be indexed in citation databases (Scopus, ISI)?
- What are the financial implications – if any -of establishing the journal?

## **3. FOCUS/THEMES**

To discuss and analyze the issues listed in the previous chapter, and structure the way ahead and to bring recommendations to the GA in FIGWW' 2016 in Christchurch, NZ.

## **4. COMPOSITION OF TASK FORCE**

6 members: Prof. Dr. Yerach Doytsher; VP Prof. Dr. Pengfei Cheng; VP Prof. Dr. Rudolf Staiger; Prof. Dr. Charalabos Ioannidis; 2 more TBD

## **5. PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME**

- 03/2015 - FIG council decision; Task Force is established
- 05/2015 – the TF will be presented in the FIGWW'2015 GA
- 06-12/2015 - relevant data to be collected, discussions among the TF members via emails

- 01-02/2016 - optional - face to face meeting of the TF members (probably at a council meeting)
- 02-03/2016 – preparing of final report and recommendations
- 03/2016 - FIG council decision on the report
- 05/2016 - the report and recommendations to be presented at the GA in Christchurch for acceptance

## **6. OUTCOME**

A summarized report and recommendations on the following:

- Report on the proven necessity
- Procedures to be followed for the establishment of the journal
- Necessary costs (for the establishment and annually in future)
- Times (time schedules of all steps and expected achievements)
- Responsibilities
- Action plan for the speeding of the procedure and the increased participation e.g., engagement of potential authors, FIG members, etc.

## **7. CHAIR**

Prof. Dr. Yerach Doytsher