

Activities of the GRSS Spanish Chapter

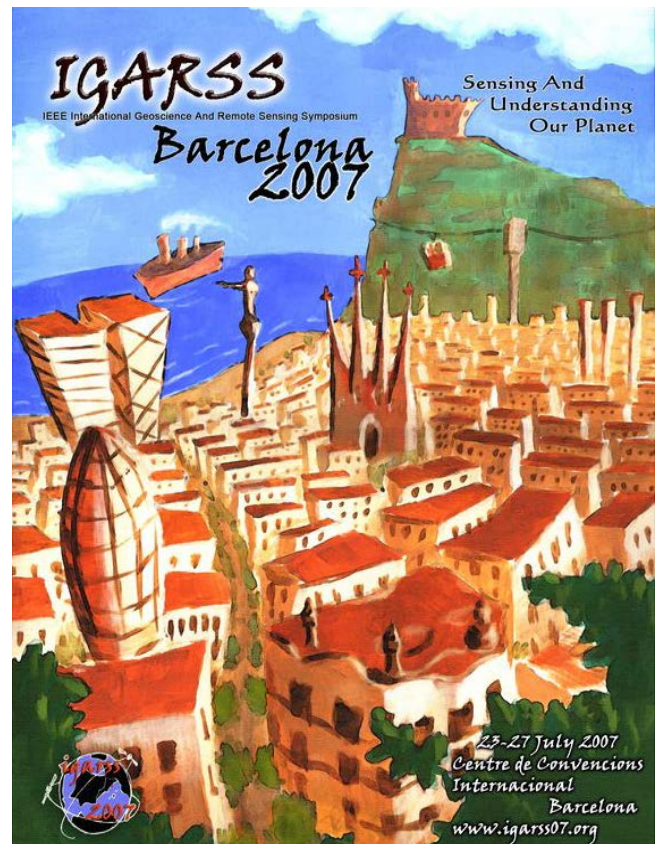
THE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society Spanish Chapter was formally established on November, 9, 2000. Since then, the Chapter was managed by Adriano Camps (2000-2005), Juan Manuel López (2006-2012) and Antonio Plaza (2012-2016). From November 2016 to date, the Executive Committee of the Chapter has the following members: María Piles (Universitat de València), chair; Javier Marcello (Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria), vice-chair; Carlos López-Martínez (Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology), Secretary/Treasurer; Gustau Camps-Valls (Universitat de València), vocal; José Luis Álvarez-Pérez (Universidad de Alcalá), vocal; Antonio Plaza (Universidad de Extremadura), vocal.

The Chapter was created to bring together the increasing number of Spanish researchers from academia and industry in the remote sensing area. The most important event in its beginnings, with attendance record, was the organization and hosting of the 2007 IEEE GRSS flagship conference, the International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium in Barcelona (IGARSS, Figure 1a). In 2018, IGARSS was hosted in Valencia (Figure 1b). The organization of these two events in Spain highlights the contribution of the Spanish remote sensing community to IEEE and GRSS.

The IEEE GRSS Spanish is composed by 3 Fellow Members, 16 Senior Members, 52 Members and 13 Student Members.

ACTIVITIES DURING 2018

One of the central activities of the Chapter is the organization of the IEEE-GRSS/Spain Best Master and PhD Thesis Awards. This was the second year in a row that the awards were organized with the aim of involving students, young researchers and their advisors. The fact of sponsoring outstanding research in GRSS in Spain was very well received by the national geoscience and remote sensing community, as indicated by the growing number of applications and visits to the chapter webpage. The two best PhD and Master Thesis are awarded with an economic prize, an IEEE-GRSS membership subscription for the next year and a diploma. The 2017 Thesis awards went to Hugo Carreño and Alberto Alonso (both from the Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña), and the best Master awards went to Francisco Manuel Jiménez (Universidad de Córdoba) and Irati Lekuona (Universidad de Zaragoza). The 2018 Thesis awards went to Manuel Campos (Universitat de València) and Raúl Guerra (Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria), and the Master Thesis awards went to María Arias (Universidad Pública de Navarra) and Javier Rosado (Universidad de Alcalá).



(a)



(b)

Figure 1. IGARSS posters: (a) 2007 in Barcelona and (b) 2018 in Valencia.



Figure 2. IEEE-IGARSS 2018 held in Valencia: (a) organizing committee and the volunteers and (b) welcome from Adriano Camps, President of the IEEE GRSS.

Undoubtedly, year 2018 was very special for us, since the 38th International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium (IGARSS 2018) was held in Valencia during July 22-27. The Chair was Prof. José Moreno and the theme of the conference was “Observing, Understanding, and Forecasting the Dynamics of our Planet”. All chapter officers attended the conference and some of them chaired several sessions and strongly supported the organization of the conference. Specifically, Prof. Gustau Camps-Valls was one of the Technical Program Chairs and Dr. Maria Piles co-organized a special session entitled “Multi-sensor data integration for enhanced retrievals of Earth system parameters”. A total of 2,406 papers were accepted and 2,356 attendees were registered, including 689 students. Figure 2 shows some photographs of the conference.

Another important event organized during 2018 was the Young Professionals Remote Sensing Conference (Figure 3) that was held on 7-8 June 2018 in Aachen (Germany). This conference aimed to be a meeting point for young researchers that, after their first degree, have started to work in the field of Remote Sensing. This event was jointly organized by the IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society and by the German, the Swiss, the South Italian and the Spanish GRSS Chapters. More than 80 abstracts were received and a total of 35 participants were able to attend the workshop. An important number of participants came from Spain (16 attendees).

The Chapter also supported the Young Professionals in Space 2018, held at the Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña, in Barcelona, from 17 to 21 July 2018. The conference attracted more than 100 young professionals and students and over 20 professionals and scientists (Figure 4). This annual event featured lectures, expert talks, workshops, and rocket launches.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The actions for 2019 are planned with the idea to promote the visibility of the Chapter activities, to attract new young



Figure 3. IEEE Young Professionals Remote Sensing Conference: (a) group of participants and (b) photo of one of the oral sessions.



Figure 4. Group of attendees, professionals and organizers, during the YP in Space 2018 conference.

professionals and members from the industry and to encourage networking and collaborations.

The Chapter will continue sponsoring outstanding research in remote sensing with a new edition of the IEEE GRSS/Spain awards to the best PhD and Master Thesis. The idea is to keep attracting the attention of students and young researchers and, more generally, of the whole geoscience and remote sensing community in Spain.

A technical workshop will be organized during 2019 in the University of Las Palmas (Canary Islands, Spain). The workshop will include different activities, mainly, a course by an IEEE GRSS Distinguished Lecturer, series of talks organized by Chapter members and experts and also an organized visit to a satellite ground station. Specifically, the course “Machine learning for Remote Sensing Data Analysis” by the distinguished speaker Prof. Camps-Valls has been selected because of its interest to the remote sensing community in Spain. In addition, conferences and workshops dealing with applications and technologies will be taught. Finally, a visit to the Maspalomas Tracking Station (Figure 5) is also planned with the idea to know a reference Spanish center in space activities. The Station is managed by INTA (*Instituto Nacional de Técnica Aeroespacial*) and, apart from spacecraft control, search and rescue and other activities undertaken at the Station, the visit will focus more on those related to the acquisition and processing of satellite remote sensing data. In summary, the technical workshop will be an opportunity to foster collaborations within the Chapter members, as well as to engage researchers, students and people from industry and administration. In the long-term, the aim of the Chapter is to organize a series of thematic workshops, hosted by different members and institutions.

The chapter web site was created in 2017 as a tool to gather key information and activities from the chapter and announce upcoming news and events to the community. It was created through IEEE’s web hosting service and tools and is allocated at <http://sites.ieee.org/spain-grss/>. The web site also includes links to other organizations and resources involving GRS research and education in Spain and it is our aim to keep it dynamic, and updated with the most relevant information for the community.



Figure 5. Panoramic view of the Maspalomas Tracking Station (INTA).