
President's Corner:

Wrapping Up a Four-Year Plan of Continued IGS Growth



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The 10th *International Conference on Geosynthetics* (10ICG) in Berlin, Germany, is looming, and promises to be a major celebration of the technical achievements of the geosynthetics industry. The 10ICG will also serve as a framework for much of the business of our Society, including the induction of new IGS officers and council members. On the personal side, the 10ICG will mark the completion of my role as your president, which I was so honored to fulfill for the last four years. I take this opportunity to revisit the strategic goals and measurable outcomes that the IGS Council set forth in 2010, during its meeting held at the 9th *International Conference on Geosynthetics* (9ICG) in Guarujá, Brazil, when I initiated my tenure as your president.

Listing the strategic goals and measurable outcomes is perhaps just fine, but what about reporting on the actual outcomes and achievements of the last four years? Well, the plan is that these outcomes will be reported during the *IGS General Assembly*, which will take place in Berlin on 24 September 2014. At this point, I'll let you speculate which (if any) of the six specific measurable outcomes listed below were actually met after four years of intense work by the IGS Council, its chapters, and its operating units.

The IGS Council, during its 2010 meeting in Guarujá, developed a long-term plan in order to organize and prioritize its efforts for the subsequent four years. The plan included identifying the Core Purpose of the IGS. That is, we wanted to articulate the IGS's very reason for being or existing. As an outcome of this rich discussion, we concluded that:

The Core Purpose of the IGS is to provide the understanding and promote the appropriate use of geosynthetic technology throughout the world.

Key to the stated Core Purpose is the underlined term "appropriate." This is because the IGS does not seek to promote the mere use of geosynthetics, but the "appropriate" use, which is quite different.

In order to meet this Core Purpose, the IGS Council also identified a Big, Audacious Goal that stretches beyond the current four-year strategic goals. Because it is "audacious" it represented a significant challenge and its achievement was expected to require the IGS to move outside of its comfort zone. This long-term goal, as identified by the IGS Council, was:

That geosynthetics become indispensable to the point that they are regularly included in engineering curricula and relevant design standards.

This long-term goal was expected to be achieved within a timeframe of 10 to 15 years, and was useful in setting the direction for the current and future four-year strategic plans.

After having articulated the IGS Core Purpose and the long-term, audacious goal, the IGS Council defined a set of specific measurable outcomes that we aimed to achieve during the four-year term of this council. These specific measurable outcomes, on which we will report during the upcoming IGS General Assembly, include:

- 1. Increasing the IGS membership by 50%**
- 2. Increasing traffic on our web site by 200%**
- 3. Increasing the number of chapters in regions not represented by the IGS (e.g. Africa, parts of Asia and the Americas)**
- 4. Integrate more completely the IGS Council with the IGS Chapters**
- 5. Increasing the number of formal agreements with international sister societies**
- 6. Begin our efforts to increase geosynthetics education at the undergraduate level**

These self-imposed objectives, which the IGS Council pledged to achieve in a four-year term, were all particularly challenging. While the bar was set high, the members of our diligent IGS Council have been working hard toward achieving them. Did we fail miserably in achieving these six difficult goals? Or did we achieve them, perhaps with flying colors? We'll have a detailed report on these outcomes soon... in Berlin!

All best regards,



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