



BY DAVID KUNKEE

Looking Ahead for 2021

In my first message as IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) president, I would like to thank the members of the Administrative Committee (AdCom) for their confidence in electing me to lead the Society in 2021. I will do my best to ensure the Society maintains its technical excellence while providing an inclusive and diverse environment within the AdCom. We have many great volunteers, and I believe that together we can continue the success that the Society has enjoyed under Paolo Gamba's excellent and enthusiastic leadership.

Since the November 2020 AdCom meeting, I have been discussing upcoming changes to our organizational structure as we move into 2021 and updated the AdCom organization to reflect the results of the IEEE and November GRSS elections. Please welcome the new and returning members of the AdCom: Lorenzo Bruzzone, Subit Chakrabarti, Josée Levesque, Antonio Plaza, James Smith, and Feng Xu. For 2021, the AdCom elected Mariko Burgin as executive vice president. I would like to offer my congratulations, and I look forward to our continuing collaboration this coming year. For 2021, the GRSS vice presidents include Bill Emery, Lorenzo Bruzzone, Sidharth Misra, Saibun Tjuatja, and Fabio Pacifici.

In November, we learned that Bill Emery was named to the IEEE Technical Activities Board (TAB) Hall of Fame for his contributions to "sustainability of TAB publications." Bill has been a key resource for the GRSS in advancing and positioning GRSS publications for success as well as within IEEE overall. Congratulations!

At this point, I will take a moment to recognize the contributions of Tom Jackson, who has stepped down as GRSS secretary. At the end of 2020, Tom was the longest-serving member of the AdCom with more than 25 years of involvement in the Society leadership. We will miss his sound advice, significant experience, and consistent contributions to the Society leadership. I have nominat-

ed Steve Reising to serve as GRSS secretary for 2021. I look forward to working with Steve in his new role with the AdCom.

Other changes to the Society AdCom include a new ad hoc committee, Standards for Earth Observations, with liaisons from each technical committee to facilitate its activities. The committee is led by Siri Jodha Singh Khalsa, and we will be reporting more about its goals and activities later in the year. I have also appointed Nathan Longbotham as the new director of industry relations. Nathan has contributed significantly to growing the scope of the technology, industry, and education forum activities over the past years, and I also look forward to working with him in this new role.

Every year, IEEE announces a new set of member elevations to the grade of IEEE Fellow. Achieving the rank of IEEE Fellow is a recognized standard in our community and a "distinction reserved for select IEEE Members with extraordinary accomplishments within the IEEE fields of interest." Although we traditionally recognize new GRSS IEEE Fellows at our awards ceremony held during the International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium (IGARSS) plenary session, I'd like to take just a moment to call out our nine new GRSS IEEE Fellows here at the beginning of the year. They are Xiuping Jia, Jun Li, Zhao-Liang Li, Jeffrey Piepmeier, Robert Shin, Annalisa Verdoliva, Lizhe Wang, Birsen Yazici, and Xiao Xiang Zhu. Congratulations, 2021 GRSS IEEE Fellows!

A list of all 2021 IEEE Fellows and their citations can be found at <https://www.ieee.org/membership/fellows/index.html>. This note of congratulations would not be complete without also recognizing the outstanding work of our GRSS Fellow Evaluation Committee, chaired by Jón Benediktsson in 2020, along with the contributions from others who have supported their efforts. Thank you!

Looking back on the Society's activities and accomplishments over the last months of 2020, we include, as an important milestone, the first India Geoscience

and Remote Sensing Symposium (InGARSS 2020). This conference was originally intended to be an in-person meeting and was the third regional symposium planned by the GRSS for 2020. However, as with many other symposia, the pandemic forced InGARSS 2020 to be virtual. The conference, held on 1–4 December, offered six tutorials, and more than 80 technical papers were presented. A special track devoted to focused discussions on Young Professionals, Women in Engineering, and Industry Partners was also provided. This first InGARSS, cochaired by Dr. Shiv Mohan and Dr. Paul Rosen, was a nice success to end 2020. I would like to thank the many volunteers who enabled this meeting to occur during difficult times and guided it to this success.

Another achievement is the high interest in GRSS ad hoc webinars. The webinar series continues to enjoy a great following since the series began during the period leading up to the September online IGARSS. As reported by Paolo Gamba [1] in this column in December 2020, you can view the ad hoc webinar series on the dedicated GRSS YouTube channel (please see <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNOdGBo--6UVCiwKSNTMqyg>).

Last fall, the AdCom also approved the realization of an outreach video to help explain who we are as a Society and to attract new members. The video was shown at the fall 2020 AGU conference and is now available in three different versions for other events in which the Society may be involved. For instance, we may think of running a short version at the beginning of a lecture by one of the GRSS Distinguished Lecturers or Industrial Speakers. A longer version may be useful for GRSS Chapters to run at their events and so on. All versions are available on the GRSS YouTube channel:

- ▶ 1-min video: <https://youtu.be/JZrCOuquSN0>
- ▶ 4-min video: https://youtu.be/tdBXEpGAn_g
- ▶ 7-min video: https://youtu.be/ytyfajp_DFQ.

By the time you read this, I anticipate that you will have had a chance to thoroughly explore the look and organization of our new GRSS webpage. I hope that it is easier to use, well organized, and filled with helpful resources. This upgrade required a significant effort on the part of the

Information Resources Portfolio led by Mariko Burgin last year and this year by Sid Misra.

Among the other achievements I want to highlight is our GRSS remote sensing course, now available on Coursera, titled "Remote Sensing Image Acquisition, Analysis, and Applications." This project, which has been in the works for more than two years and is produced by John Richards of the University of New South Wales, has now come to fruition. The positive response to this offering has been wonderful to see as well.

Before ending this message, I need to report that we are saddened by the passing last November of Prof. David Landgrebe, a pioneer in the development and use of quantitative remote sensing. Prof. Landgrebe was a champion of hyperspectral imaging and developed algorithms to address the topic's associated opportunities and challenges. The Society established the David Landgrebe Award to be considered annually for outstanding contributions in the field of remote sensing image analysis. You can read about Prof. Landgrebe and his contributions in this issue's "In Memoriam" column and at the following web address: <http://www.grss-ieee.org/news/david-landgrebe-1934-2020/>. He will be very much missed within the remote sensing and *Landsat* communities.

In closing, I'd like to take another moment to thank all of you for your contributions to the GRSS during these difficult times. I believe that we are a very special Society within IEEE, and this is demonstrated not only by the quality of our publications and conferences but also by the response, enthusiasm, and dedication of our volunteers. Our membership numbers also confirm this. I look forward to working with you all to make 2021 an exciting and productive year for the GRSS.

REFERENCE

- [1] P. Gamba, "2020: A year of challenges and triumphs," *IEEE Geosci. Remote Sens. Mag.*, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 6–7, Dec. 2020. doi: 10.1109/MGRS.2020.3037005.

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FROM THE EDITOR (continued from p. 5)

In past issues, I have mentioned that *GRSM* will soon implement a two-stage review process in order to give more timely feedback to potential authors. Short five-page (or fewer) white papers are to be submitted first. These will then be reviewed by associate editors or members of the editorial board. Following a positive review of the white paper, authors may be invited to submit a full manuscript, which will then undergo a complete peer review.

Contributions to our regular columns—"Chapters," "Space Agencies," "Women in GRSS," "Education," "Software and Data Sets," "Technical Committees," and "Conference Reports"—are always welcome. White papers, columns, and invited manuscripts should be submitted through Manuscript Central at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/grsm>. Proposals for special issues should be sent to me directly at jlj@ieee.org.

Best wishes for 2021, and stay safe!

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