



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF REMOTE SENSING LABORATORIES
ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DE LABORATOIRES DE TÉLÉDÉTECTION

Head Office, Am Dill 169, 48163 Münster, Germany

E-mail : secretariat@earsel.org

<http://www.earsel.org>

30 April 2020

EARSeL Communication from the Bureau

Dear EARSeL members,

First, we hope that you and your relatives are doing well and that you manage to face all the difficulties induced by this unprecedented period.

As you can easily imagine, the current situation has also an impact on the functioning of an association like EARSeL and it will be impossible to hold the foreseen meetings and events in 2020. That's the reason why with this letter we would like to inform you about the current situation development regarding:

1. Future symposium and workshops
2. Current functioning of the Association
3. SIGs and Bureau elections
4. Obituary

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1. Future Symposium and Workshops

- **The Joint WS "Earth Observation for sustainable cities and communities"**, an EARSeL/NASA event combining 3 special interest groups initially foreseen from 26-28 May 2020 in Liège (Belgium) **is postponed to a date still to be defined in fall 2020.** <http://liege2020.earsel.org/>
- **The 40th EARSeL Symposium 2020** planned in Warsaw (Poland) from 22-25 September 2020 **is postponed to 07-10 June 2021.** <http://symposium.earsel.org/40th-symposium-Warszaw/home/>. Due to the uncertainties linked to the evolution of the spread of the virus and the travel restrictions taken in many countries it's impossible to organize an EARSeL Symposium this year.
Note that the SIG's "Coastal Zones" and "UAS" will organize specific sessions in the frame of this Symposium.
- **The 12th EARSeL Workshop on Imaging Spectroscopy** will be organized in Potsdam (Germany) **from 24 to 26 March 2021.** We remind you that the deadline for special sessions submission is 17 June 2020. <http://is.earsel.org/workshop/12-IS-Potsdam2021/>
- EARSeL and more specifically the SIG "Forest Fires" will be involved in the organisation of the **3rd International Conference on Fire Behaviour and Risk (ICFBR2021)** which will be held in Alghero (Sardinia, Italy). This event initially foreseen from May 18th to 21th, 2021 **is postponed to the second half of 2021 at dates still to be defined.** <https://www.icfbr2021.it/>



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2. Current functioning of the Association

BUREAU: The last physical meeting of the BUREAU was organised in Hannover in January. Because there is no guarantee that it will be possible to organize another physical Bureau meeting this year, **Bureau meetings are currently organized by teleconference each month** ensuring a normal functioning of it.

COUNCIL: The Association is governed by a Council consisting of one representative of each of the countries that have Member Laboratories. With the cancellation of the Symposium 2020, **no Council meeting will be organized this year**. Many actions requiring an official vote by Council member are postponed to next year (see point 3) and the Bureau will request approval by Council on both annual budgets (2019 & 2020) in June 2021. In case of questions or remarks, any Council member can directly contact the Secretariat or any Bureau member.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY: As you know, the General Assembly is composed of one representative of each Member Laboratory and its mandate is to decide on all matters affecting the Association including amendments to the Statutes. As for the Council, **no General assembly can be planned this year**. Any member can directly contact the Secretariat or any Bureau member in case of questions or remarks.



3. SIGs and Bureau elections

BUREAU ELECTIONS: As stated in the EARSeL statutes, the election of Bureau members is made every two years and the current Bureau is reaching the end of its mandate. Because it's impossible to hold a Council meeting in 2020 and because the election of the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary General and Treasurer of the Association who constitute the EARSeL Bureau is made by the Council members, it was decided **to postpone the election to summer 2021**. Consequently, the current composition of the Bureau is extended for one more year.

SIGs ELECTIONS: The main scientific efforts of EARSeL are concentrated in Special Interest Groups (SIGs). These SIGs form the foundation of the activities of EARSeL and its 'raison d'être'. They encourage co-operation and foster innovative applications of remote sensing.

Every 4 years, EARSeL holds elections for Special Interest Group chairpersons representing very important groups of remote sensing within the EARSeL member laboratories. Currently 16 SIGs are active within EARSeL. This call is also an opportunity to any EARSeL member to propose a new SIG.

The election process should have started in spring 2020 by publishing a call for chairpersons and was supposed to finish with the approval of the election results by the Council members during the Council meeting of September 2020 in Warsaw. Because no Council meeting will be organized this year it was decided **to postpone the SIGs election to summer 2021**.



4. Obituary

With our deepest regrets we have the sad duty to inform our members that recently two of our honorary members have passed away:

Professor Dr. Johann Bodechtel (* 27.12.1930 - † 07.11.2019)

Johann Bodechtel, professor in Geology at the University of Munich, was one of the founders of EARSeL. His Institute was one of the leading Remote Sensing laboratories in Europe and he has written very informative books on Remote Sensing.

He was a member of the Bureau from 1976 onwards:

- 1976 – 1977 Vice Chairman
- 1977 – 1982 Vice Chairman
- 1982 – 1984 Chairman
- 1984 – 1985 Chairman
- 1985 – 1987 Chairman

He also acted as the National Representative for Germany on Council for many years. Furthermore, he acted for many years as highly respected counsellor to ESA and the JRC Ispra of the European Commission to promote the young science of Remote Sensing towards an accepted tool with stable budgets in the geographical information of the European Union.



In 2004, he was rewarded Honorary Membership on the occasion of the General Assembly held in the frame of the Symposium in Dubrovnik from the president Eberhard Parlow.



All Bureau members of EARSeL's second General Assembly, held in Munich 1978: Johann Bodechtel, Gunnar Østrem, Preben Gudmandsen and Francis Cambou (left to right).



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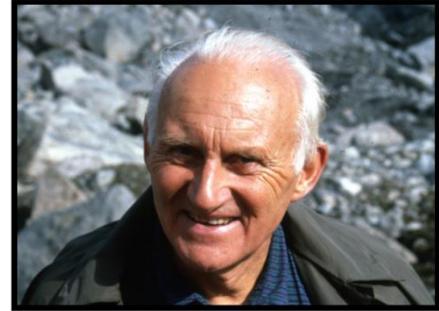
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Professor Dr. Gunnar Muldrup Østrem (* 25.03.1922 – † 12.01.2020)

In several ways Gunnar was a very important person for the association. First he was a founding member of the association in 1976 and became its first treasurer. He organized the first symposium in Voss in 1981 and since that time he attended many of our symposia. During the early 2000s he was the driving force to convince the EARSeL Bureau that it is time for a publication of the EARSeL History, which finally was published in 2008. During that time, Eberhard Parlow was the president of EARSeL and supported Gunnar's idea very much. During our 2004 symposium in Dubrovnik he was awarded an Honorary Member of EARSeL. He quite often attended the symposia, last time in 2010 at UNESCO in Paris.



In 1966, Gunnar arranged for special air-photo missions over the western Canadian mountains resulting in 1:10,000 scale maps of the IHD glaciers and information about the snowline that could be compared to his calculated glaciation levels. The map of Place Glacier was the first metric map ever produced by the Surveys and Mapping Branch. He understood early that satellites and remote sensing would be important tools in glaciology and became an active board member of the European Association for Remote Sensing Laboratories (EARSeL). In this vein, he collaborated with Richie Williams and Jane Ferrigno on the Glaciers of Norway chapter in the Satellite Image Atlas of Glaciers of the World.



Dubrovnik 2004 with Johann Bodechtel, Robin Vaughan, Madeleine Godfroy, Gunnar Østrem, Peter Winkler and John van Genderen (from l. to r.) Back row Eberhard Parlow.

We shall remember Johann and Gunnar in best memory.
EARSeL President and Bureau

Pictures: International Glaciological Society and Collection E. Parlow. Texts compiled from different sources: EARSeL History 2008, E. Parlow, S. Ommanney & B. Wold: International Glaciological Society 2020 : www.igsoc.org/news/gunnarostrem/

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