

# Editorial

It is a great honor and privilege for me to have the opportunity to serve the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON GEOSCIENCE AND REMOTE SENSING (TGRS) in the capacity of Editor. The Administrative Committee (AdCom) of the IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) has entrusted in me the responsibility to maintain the highest standards of scientific and technical excellence in this flagship journal of the society, and I am very pleased and honored to accept this responsibility with great enthusiasm and sense of commitment.

We live in an era in which Earth sciences and remote sensing are playing a pivotal role in terms of social relevance and impact. The spatial, spectral, and temporal resolutions of Earth observation instruments are ever increasing, and the availability of improved geoscience and remote sensing instruments, tools, and data sets has rapidly introduced new processing challenges. The need of our society for a clear understanding of how the Earth System operates and evolves has never been greater, and the science and engineering of remote sensing is one of the cornerstones of modern Earth System Science. It is our duty as geoscience and remote sensing researchers to advance the discipline with contributions of the highest quality, as it has been the tradition of TGRS throughout its history. At the same time, it is my duty and responsibility as TGRS Editor to ensure that those outstanding advances are properly reported to our research community and to a much larger community of end users, policy makers, and others, with accuracy, timeliness, and integrity.

TGRS is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. The first issue of the journal (formerly known as the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON GEOSCIENCE ELECTRONICS) was published in 1963, with a total of 34 pages in its inaugural issue, which contained five contributions. The journal published one issue per year until 1967, in which three issues were published, and then the journal published four issues per year from 1968 to 1984. From 1985 to 2000, the journal published six issues per year. Since 2001, the journal has been publishing 12 issues per year, and the latest regular issue of TGRS had a total of 49 contributions and more than 600 pages. The journal is devoted to the theory, concepts, and techniques of science and engineering as applied to sensing the Earth, oceans, atmosphere, and space, and the processing, interpretation, and dissemination of this information. Today, TGRS is one of the most prestigious and internationally acclaimed journals in the fields of geoscience and remote sensing and the premier publication in the technology of remote sensing.

This was possible due to the leadership of the past Editors of TGRS that have brought the journal to outstanding levels of scientific excellence. My immediate predecessor Christopher S. Ruf deserves enormous thanks for all the time and effort he has

given to our society over the past four years. He has been also a wonderful mentor during my interim period, and I am extremely grateful to him for his outstanding training and advice. The line of Editors before Chris was as equally competent and dedicated, and I would like to particularly thank past TGRS Editor (2003–2008) and past GRSS President (2011–2012) Jon Atli Benediktsson for all his outstanding support and wonderful advice regarding editorial and many other matters. Jon was the first TGRS Editor based in Europe, and it is particularly gratifying for me to be able to follow in his footsteps.

I would also like to take this opportunity to gratefully thank the Associate Editors of TGRS for their outstanding commitment and dedication to the journal. Currently, TGRS has a pool of 44 dedicated Associate Editors from prestigious organizations worldwide, assisting with many different topic areas. Anonymous peer reviewing is one of the cornerstones of vigorous advancement in science and engineering research, but it is also often one of the most underappreciated of the many requests and demands made of subject experts. It is for this reason that GRSS is extremely grateful to Anonymous Reviewers for their time, energy, and dedication to our journals.

Submitting authors are also gratefully acknowledged for relying on TGRS as a venue for the publication of their most relevant results. The number of submissions to TGRS is ever increasing, with the total number of new submissions to the journal in 2011 (1103) already equalled in 2012 by the end of October. This gives an idea of the rapid expansion of the journal in our community. The outstanding technical support provided by George Criscione, Alison Larkin, and Leigh Cignavitch at the IEEE is essential for the efficient management of manuscripts submitted to the journal.

Last but not least, I would like to gratefully thank Wool Moon (GRSS Vice President of Publications), James A. Smith (past TGRS Editor and Chief Financial Officer for GRSS), Jocelyn Chanussot (JSTARS Editor), Paolo Gamba (GRSL Editor), Lorenzo Bruzzone (GRSS Magazine Editor), William J. Emery (Past GRSL Editor), and Melba Crawford (GRSS President) for their outstanding advice regarding editorial and other matters.

I very much welcome my term as TGRS Editor. I am indebted to GRSS for entrusting in me this responsibility, and I look forward to continue working with full commitment and dedication to this task in order to maintain the outstanding level and impact of TGRS in our community.

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**Antonio Plaza** was born in Cáceres, Spain, in 1975. He received the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in computer engineering from the University of Extremadura, Cáceres, Spain.

He has been a Visiting Researcher with the Remote Sensing Signal and Image Processing Laboratory, University of Maryland Baltimore County; with the Applied Information Sciences Branch, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, MD; with the Airborne Visible Infrared Imaging Spectrometer Data Facility, NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, CA; with the Telecommunications and Remote Sensing Laboratory, University of Pavia, Italy; and with the GIPSA-lab, Grenoble Images Parole Signal Automatique, France. He is currently an Associate Professor (with accreditation for Full Professor) with the Department of Technology of Computers and Communications, University of Extremadura, where he is the Head of the Hyperspectral Computing Laboratory (HyperComp). He was the Coordinator of the Hyperspectral Imaging Network, which is a European project designed to build an interdisciplinary research community focused on hyperspectral imaging activities. He is the author or coauthor of more than

350 publications on remotely sensed hyperspectral imaging, including more than 90 journal citation report papers (45 since January 2011), around 20 book chapters, and over 230 conference proceeding papers. His research interests include remotely sensed hyperspectral imaging, pattern recognition, signal and image processing, and efficient implementation of large-scale scientific problems on parallel and distributed computer architectures.

Dr. Plaza has guest edited seven special issues of scientific journals on the topic of remotely sensed hyperspectral imaging. He has been a Chair for the IEEE Workshop on Hyperspectral Image and Signal Processing: Evolution in Remote Sensing (Whispers 2011). He has also been serving as a Chair for the SPIE Conference on Satellite Data Compression, Communications, and Processing since 2009 and for the SPIE Europe Conference on High-Performance Computing in Remote Sensing since 2011. He was a recipient of the recognition Best Reviewers of the IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Letters in 2009 and the recognition Best Reviewers of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON GEOSCIENCE AND REMOTE SENSING in 2010, a journal for which he has served as an Associate Editor since 2007 and for which he has reviewed more than 260 manuscripts. During 2011–2012, he served as the Director of Education Activities for the IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS). He is currently serving as President of the Spanish Chapter of the IEEE GRSS. In January 2013, he starts a three-year term as Editor of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON GEOSCIENCE AND REMOTE SENSING.

# Editorial

**W**ITH the completion of my term as Editor-in-Chief of these Transactions, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincerest thanks to the many people who helped make my tenure both smoother and more productive. First, I would like to thank the members of the GRSS Administrative Committee who trusted in my abilities enough to appoint me as Editor in 2008. In particular, the current and past Presidents of the society during my tenure, namely, Jon Benediktsson, Alberto Moreira, and Tony Milne, were as supportive and helpful as I could possibly ask. The Vice President of Publications Woil Moon provided valuable assistance with the administrative duties of the position, as did the Director of Finance Jim Gatlin with the business side of things. The most important technical and editorial aspects of my job were greatly helped by advice and wise counsel from past TGRS Editors-in-Chief Jon Benediktsson, Jim Smith, and Leung Tsang and by support from the other GRSS journal Editors Paolo Gamba, Eells LeDrew, and Jocelyn Chanussot. I was ably assisted in the many administrative tasks by the IEEE publications staff members Alison Larkin, George Criscione, and Leigh Cignavitch. Finally, I would like to offer a very special and emphatic thank you to two additional groups of people. The first group, too large to name individually, is my team of Associate Editors. Without them, the standards of quality that we, as a society,

aspire to for TGRS would simply be impossible to maintain. One Associate Editor in particular deserves special mention. Prof. Antonio Plaza proved himself to be an exemplary member of the editorial board and a valued colleague throughout my tenure. He has been accordingly selected to succeed me as Editor-in-Chief, and I am confident that this journal will be in very good hands under his guidance and direction. A second group deserving of special mention, which must remain anonymous out of necessity, are the many reviewers who volunteered their time and expertise to vet and critique our manuscript submissions. While there is a place and a valuable purpose served by open community sites such as Wikipedia, I strongly believe that the anonymous peer review of scientific literature remains a vital and central part of the research environment. I am very proud to have played a role in that process as your Editor-in-Chief. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

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