Geography is one of the oldest sciences that have formed their identities through fundamental research focused on developing new theories and methods, but also by solving specific spatial, social and economic problems. The awareness of importance of using geographic skills and spatial ways of thinking has greatly increased in the last decades. This is foremost a result of increasing challenges in the contemporary world, which can be largely attributed to scarcity and a rapid depletion of natural and social resources. On the other hand, the evolution of geo-information techniques has offered a new approach in solving variety of global problems, including spatial management. At the same time, the last decades have seen an increased awareness of the importance of space, the so-called spatial turn in social sciences, which has provided an opportunity for the affirmation of geography in a new theoretical discourse of understanding the space and place.

Thanks to its fundamental characteristic as a bridge between nature and society coupled with potential benefits from application of new information techniques, geography should definitely become one of the key sciences of the 21st century. However, applied geography today often takes place outside the academia, resulting in theory and practice becoming more separated, while geography tools and approaches are often used by professionals from other fields. At the same time the ideas of multidisciplinary approach in solving complex issues unfortunately, are sometimes far from the reality. This is exactly the reason why there is a need for an academic discussion about past experiences and future potentials of applied geography focused on problem-solving research in all geographic disciplines.

THE NEED FOR A SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

Like a number of other scientific and educational institutions in the region, the Department of Geography, Faculty of Science, faces numerous challenges that require critical thinking and charting a new path. The changes in the structure of labour markets are forcing us to critically examine existing university curricula and develop new ones to better respond to new demands. At the same time, the reduction trend in government financing of science and higher education generates the need for identifying new sources of funding. On the other side, the approaching membership in the unified scientific area of European Union provides new opportunities for a closer international cooperation in scientific and educational fields, as well as the access to new funding sources. In particular, the Bologna process is an opportunity for creating new higher education curriculum, and expanding the application of GIS and other geo-information technologies that could strengthen

geography as a scientific discipline, educational course and an approach in solving problems of modern society. Furthermore, the spatial turn in social sciences as well as the cultural turn in geography demand identifying what today's applied geography is, as well as broadening of the framework of applied geography in the context of *useful knowledge*. In conclusion: the question of applicability and value of geographic research and probing the relation between theory and practice are crucial for the position and the importance of geography as an academic discipline in the 21st century.

CONFERENCE GOALS

The goal of the international scientific conference *Applied geography in theory and practice* is to provide a forum for an exchange of experiences and discussions of potentials of geography in solving the problems of spatial, social and economic development, including the study of human influence in shaping the environment. Contributions from different theoretical and disciplinary discourses that discuss the real or potential opportunities for applying geographical theories and methods in solving society's problems and challenges are expected. Themes that explicitly accentuate the application possibilities of geography are especially encouraged.

Themes:

- Relation between theory and practice in geography (fundamental and applied research)
- Applied physical geography and geoecological analyses
- Protection and management of natural resources
- Natural risk management
- Spatial social and economic analysis
- Regional and spatial planning
- Valorisation and protection of cultural landscapes
- Spatial perception and imagination – its use in political, social and economical strategies
- Applied GIS and other geo-information technologies
- Geographic curriculum and applied geography

KEYNOTE LECTURE

Keynote lecture will include presentations by Prof. Antoine Bailly and Prof. Michael Pacione, authors of many works in applied geography including books *Applied geography for the entrepreneurial university* (ed. A. Bailly by and L.J. Gibson, Brookings, 2008), *Applied geography: a world perspective* (ed. by A. Bailly and L.J. Gibson, Kluwer, 2004) and *Applied geography: principles and practice* (ed. by M. Pacione, Routledge, 1999).

DATE AND LOCATION

The conference will be held in Zagreb from 5th to 6th of November 2010. On the 6th of November a city tour will be organized with a professional guide. On the 7th on November an excursion in Zagreb surroundings and Hrvatsko Zagorje region will be held.

REGISTRATION FEE

Registration fee for the participants of the conference is 150 EUR. It includes a printed version of the Book of Abstracts, a guided city tour and a joint dinner for all the participants.

Registration fee for the students is 100 EUR.

The registration fee should be paid by a bank transfer after the presentation topic is accepted (20th June 2010). Details will follow.

CONFERENCE EXCURSION

On Sunday, 7th of November an excursion to Zagreb surroundings and the region of Hrvatsko Zagorje will be organized. The excursion fee is 50 EUR. It covers all the travel expenses, a lunch, entrance tickets for all the venues and a professional guide. A minimum of 25 participants is needed.
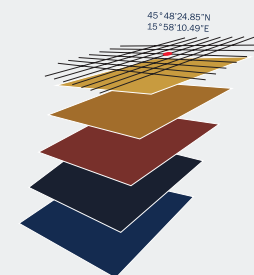
REGISTRATION AND CALL FOR PAPERS

If you are willing to participate with presentation or poster, you are invited to submit an abstract until 5th of May 2010 (up to 300 words in English with title and 5 keywords). Apart from that, name and surname of authors as well as professional title, name of the home institution and the e-mail address should be added.

Please send your abstract to conference@geog.pmf.hr or fax it to +385 1 4895-440 (both participants with a lecture as well as poster are expected to submit an abstract).

The notification about the acceptance of presentations and posters will be sent by 20th of June 2010.

Application form is a part of this announcement, and can be found on the official web site of the Conference: **http://appliedgeography.wordpress.com**

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SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

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ORGANIZING COMMITTEE*

Laura ŠAKAJA, conference coordinator

Aleksandar LUKIĆ, secretary

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Marin CVITANOVIĆ

Ivan ČANJEVAC

Vedran PRELOGOVIĆ

*all from University of Zagreb

ORGANIZER OF THE CONFERENCE

Department of Geography
Faculty of Science
University of Zagreb
Marulićev trg 19/2
10000 Zagreb
Tel. +385 1 4895-400
Fax. +385 1 4895-440
conference@geog.pmf.hr
http://appliedgeography.wordpress.com
www.geog.pmf.hr

PAPERS AND PUBLISHING

The articles presented at the conference will be peer-reviewed and published in a scientific journal *Croatian Geographical Bulletin* (*Hrvatski geografski glasnik*) which is indexed in CAB Abstracts, CSA Sociological Abstracts, Current Geographical Publications, GEOBASE, EBSCO, SAGE Urban Studies Abstracts and SCOPUS. Notes and instruction for contributors can be found at the following web-page: http://www.hagede.hr/images/hrvatski_geografski_glasnik/notes%20for%20contributors.pdf
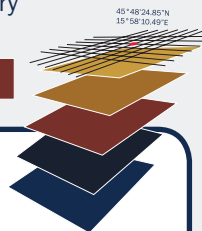
FURTHER INFORMATION

Please send abstracts, application forms and technical questions to: conference@geog.pmf.hr

If you need any additional information do not hesitate to contact us: Laura Šakaja, Lsakaja@geog.pmf.hr, conference coordinator Aleksandar Lukić, alukic@geog.pmf.hr, secretary

APPLICATION FORM

I announce my participation as follows (choose one):

- With a lecture
- With a poster
- No lecture/poster

Name and surname: _____

Degree/Title: _____

Home institution: _____

Address of the institution: _____

_____

City/ Country: _____

Contact information: _____

Address of the participant: _____

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City/ Country: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

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1ˢᵗ Announcement

Applied geography in theory and practice
International Scientific Conference
5 – 6 November 2010, Zagreb, Croatia
Department of Geography
Faculty of Science
University of Zagreb