

# **Commission on Cartography and Children**

## **Report for 2003-2007.**

### **1. Terms of reference (TORs)**

The aims and TORs of the commission for 2003-2007 were:

The commission aims, internationally, to:

- promote the use and enjoyment of maps by children and young people;
- increase understanding of children and young people's engagement with maps.
- raise the standard of maps and atlases produced for children and young people;

In 2003-2007 it will further these aims by:

1. disseminating the outcomes of research into map use by children and young people (deliverable: an enhanced set of online bibliographic research tools)
2. developing stronger links between the ICA and relevant international educational organisations (deliverable: a joint international conference with the Commission for Geography Education of the International Geographical Union)
3. stimulating a debate on design and realisation of maps and atlases for children (deliverable: a collection of papers on case studies in educational cartography)
4. promoting the use of digital cartography and GIS in schools (deliverable: an international conference and associated publication)
5. providing consultative support to the ICA executive in relation to the rules and judging of the Barbara Petchenik Children's World Map Competition (deliverable: appropriate support as required)

### **2. Activities**

Activities in 2003-2007 in relation to each of these TORs have been as follows:

1

- The commission website has been updated and bibliographic references added in several languages.
- A collection of updated papers from the first 10 years of Commission conferences has been edited and made available on the website and on CD by Jesus Reyes.
- Commission members have played a full part in presenting papers at the ICA International Cartographic Conferences in Durban, A Coruna and (in preparation) Moscow. Commission members have also made a significant contribution to ICA joint seminars (e.g. in Madrid, 6-8 July, 2005) as well as at other events internationally (e.g. the annual International Conference on Cartography and GIS in Borovets, Bulgaria) and nationally (e.g. the annual conference of the British cartographic Society). This profile has helped to promote the work of the commission and the ICA.

2

- Two international conferences have been held jointly with the Commission for Geography Education, International Geographical Union. Papers by commission members were published in the refereed conference proceedings:

- Glasgow: August 13-15, 2004. Publication: W.A.Kent, E. Rawling and A. Robinson (Eds) *Geographical Education: Expanding Horizons in a Shrinking World*, Scottish Association of Geography Teachers and the International Geographical Union Commission of Geography Education, Glasgow.
- Brisbane: June 26 – July 2, 2006. Publication: K. Purnell, J. Lidstone and S. Hodgson (Eds) *Changes in Geographical Education: Past, Present and Future*, International Geographical Union, Brisbane.

3

- Several commission members edit school atlases and other educational cartographic material. A collection of five papers on the realisation of educational cartography was published in a refereed *Forum in International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 12(4), 2003.

4

- Papers on digital cartography and GIS in schools were presented at the Glasgow and Brisbane conferences as well as at the ICA joint seminar in Madrid and the International Cartographic conferences in Durban, A Coruna and (in preparation) Moscow. It is hoped that these will form the basis for an edited collection of papers aimed at an international cartographic education readership.

5

- Commission members have played a leading role in the organisation and judging of the Barbara Bartz Petchenik children's map competition.
- A selection of winning entries from the competition was edited by members of the commission with an introduction by the present and former commission chairs. The publication (Anderson, J.M., Atwal, J., Wiegand, P.A. and Wood, A.A. (Eds.) (2005) *Children Map the World: Selections from the Barbara Petchenik Children's World Map Competition*, Redlands, CA: ESRI Press) has done much to publicise the work of the ICA.

### **3 Strengths**

- The Commission now has a track record of 12 years' engagement with cartography and children.
- There is a large corresponding membership from many countries.
- Many members have active current engagement with the production of map materials for children. This is a unique strength of the commission and members represent the largest association of children's map and atlas editors, advisors and consultants in the world.
- Within the Commission there resides a significant pool of expertise in education and teacher training in relation to children and maps.
- A significant number of Commission members have expertise in working with electronic media.
- We have a significant and growing body of conference publications.

#### **4 Weaknesses**

- Our membership is primarily 'academic'. We should endeavour to engage with more publishers of educational cartographic materials in order to strike up a productive dialogue between users and producers.
- We have not yet made a significant impact on educational policy internationally in relation to school cartography and GIS.
- We don't yet have strong enough links with some of the wider ICA expertise that perhaps offers most to the development of the educational cartography deliverables such as internet and handheld applications.

#### **5 Opportunities**

- The growth of GIS and digital cartography in schools, at least in the more economically developed countries, provides a major opportunity for an effective contribution to change.
- There is increasing interest in GIS from science education which is generally one of the better funded curriculum sectors in schools.
- Many educators recognise that GIS and digital map expertise is something they need and that we have. This raises the possibility of research and development funding in many national contexts.
- Software producers are investing in educational applications of GIS and we could collaborate in such initiatives.
- The Commission provides a network through which funded research outcomes could be disseminated.
- Approval has been given for the expenditure of up to US \$4000 for a single event to promote cartographic literacy among disadvantaged learners. This sum comes from royalties received from the ESRI publication noted above.

#### **6 Threats**

- Geography education is under pressure in the school curriculum of many countries.

#### **7 Future directions**

- Dr Patrick Wiegand will resign as Commission Chair in 2007. Happily, the Hungarian and Bulgarian national committees have proposed Dr Jesus Reyes (vice Chair) and Dr Temenujka Bandrova (an active member of the commission over many years) as joint Commission Chairs for 2007-2011.

Patrick Wiegand  
23 July, 2007.