



# World Geospatial Industry Council

## HORIZONS NEWSLETTER

June 2026

### WGIC UPDATES

#### WGIC Horizons 2026: Geospatial as Critical Digital Infrastructure



WGIC Horizons 2026 explored how geospatial is becoming a strategic layer of critical digital infrastructure, connecting AI, trust, climate intelligence, digital twins, satellite data, energy resilience, and real-world decision-making. The event brought together leadership voices from technology, infrastructure, climate, law, academia, energy, and public service.

The discussions were not just about tools, models, or platforms, but about systems, accountability, interoperability, and the role of geospatial industry in shaping technologies that are increasingly embedded in daily life and national decision-making.

The event was supported by Lead Sponsor Esri, Co-Sponsors Hexagon, TomTom, and Trimble, Breakfast Sponsor Sparkgeo, Luncheon Host Bentley Systems, and Cocktail Reception Host CHC Navigation.

For key insights from the day that reflect on how the geospatial industry is moving into a new position of importance and responsibility.

[Read the report here.](#)

#### WGIC and University Partners Announce World's First Professional Doctorate in Geospatial Leadership



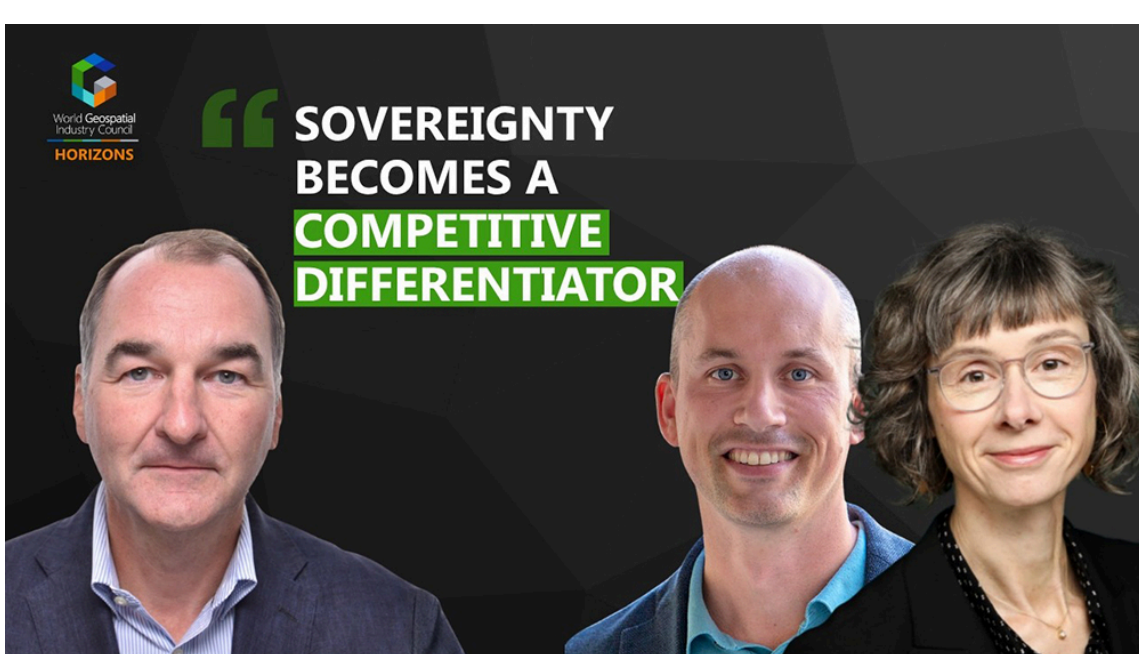
Developed in partnership with WGIC and its 50+ member organizations, Clark University and the University of Southern California will each offer the Executive Doctor of Geospatial Leadership (DGEO) program starting Summer 2027.

The initiative reflects WGIC's ongoing commitment to geospatial workforce development. Accordingly, WGIC invites its member organizations to help establish the DGEO programs, participate in the doctoral capstone and classroom experience to bring real-world practices to the curriculum, and drive recognition and demand for the degree worldwide.

[Learn more](#)

### HORIZONS PODCAST VIDEOS

#### Data Sovereignty Isn't A Goal, But A Means To Manage Risk



John Renard, Founder of Airdale Advisory and WGIC Board Member, speaks with Kerstin Van De Sand, Head of Developers and Location Services at Esri Germany, and Joris Bak, Deputy Director at Esri Netherlands, about data sovereignty and its growing importance for the geospatial industry. The episode explores the differences between data sovereignty, data residency, and data localization, and discusses how organizations can manage risk, classify data, balance cloud and local infrastructure, and support trusted data sharing through interoperability and federated approaches.

[Watch now](#)

#### AI Is An Important Muscle And Skillset For Students To Flex



Stephanie Michaud P.Eng, Director of Product Management, Field Software at Trimble, speaks with Bhanu Rekha, WGIC's Communication Strategist, about the widening geospatial skills gap, industry academia collaboration, AI, automation, and the need to prepare the next generation of geospatial professionals. The episode explores why the private sector must take an active role in connecting classroom learning with real industry applications, and how initiatives such as Trimble Technology Labs are helping students gain hands on exposure to modern geospatial workflows.

[Watch now](#)

### EVENTS & OUTREACH

#### London Climate Action Week: AI and Geospatial Intelligence for Climate Ready Cities



WGIC Associate Director Helen Gilmartin attended London Climate Action Week, joining discussions on AI, city climate action, and urban resilience.

A key message stood out: as climate change places growing pressure on urban infrastructure, cities need trusted data, geospatial intelligence, and AI to support faster, clearer, and more reliable decision making. From data integration to governance, the conversations reinforced that real climate impact depends on systems that can connect, exchange, and trust data at scale.

### WGIC Leads Conversations on AI, Automation, and Workforce Development at GEO Business 2026



As Lead Partner of GEO Business 2026, WGIC joined the geospatial community in London for key conversations on AI, automation, geospatial workflows, and workforce development.

WGIC Executive Director Aaron Addison, Associate Director Helen Gilmartin, and Associate Director – Research Kuhelee Chandel connected with members, partners, and industry professionals throughout the event. Aaron also contributed to discussions on how geospatial solutions can move beyond technology to address real customer pain points, while emphasizing the need to better align education with the skills required for the future geospatial workforce.

We thank everyone who joined WGIC's sessions, visited our booth, and contributed to the conversations.

### Building the Future Geospatial Workforce: WGIC Joins UCGIS Symposium



Aaron Addison attended the annual University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS) Symposium at the University of Maryland.

During the symposium, Aaron highlighted advancements and opportunities for educating workforce-ready graduates, while engaging in discussions on research and innovation in the GeoAI realm.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**ISPRS-2026 | July 4-11, 2026**

**AI for Good Global Summit | July 7-10, 2026**

**Esri User Conference | July 13-17, 2026**

**INTERGEO | September 15-17, 2026**

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