

WECC2015 Newsletter No.8

November 20, 2015



**Chair of the Kyoto Local
Organizing Committee
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The World Engineering Conference and Convention 2015 (WECC2015) will be held in Kyoto, and the overall theme of the event is “Engineering: Innovation and Society.” This is a highly significant event in three respects. Firstly, it is a forum where engineers, policy-makers, and business people from many fields can gather for wide-ranging discussions enabling them to share knowledge and experience. Secondly, it provides an opportunity to consider and make proposals on the further development of engineering in the context of its relationship with society. Thirdly, holding the event in the ancient capital of Kyoto gives us the chance to communicate a new direction for engineering based on historical and cultural perspectives.

On the first point, opportunities to gather people from diverse fields are rare, since international conferences are generally field-specific events where specialized issues are discussed. However, we currently face a range of very complex problems, including urban safety and security, health promotion in aging societies, efficient energy usage,

and cyber-security. Thus people from multiple fields need to share knowledge and discover solutions together. To this end, it is important for people from many specialized fields to communicate beyond the framework of their specializations, and WECC2015 provides a forum for creating such opportunities. It is vital for specialists from different fields to examine a given issue from their differing viewpoints and approaches, since contact with previously unconsidered approaches can spark innovations.

Regarding the second point, engineering must be useful to society while also being properly evaluated within society. Although engineering uses the same numerical formulae and applies the same principles as pure sciences, ultimately it is required to design and build structures and machines that are useful to the development of society, and to provide useful services. Sometimes its mission is undervalued by society, and sometimes excessive expectations are placed upon it. In these circumstances, as well as discussing ethical and educational issues within engineering and indicating appropriate directions for us to take as engineers, WECC2015 presents a good opportunity to discuss society’s assessment and expectations of engineering and consider ways of building stronger ties with society as a whole.

Turning thirdly to the significance of holding WECC2015 in the historical and cultural center of Kyoto, engineering tends to be regarded as a spiritless academic field, but this location reminds us that engineering is in fact built upon

human history and cultural traditions. Kyoto is a city of artisans with a history of generating innovations while preserving cultural traditions and traditional ways of life. Kyoto teaches us that in developing and applying engineering, it is important to consider not only economics, but also harmony with local history and cultural traditions.

For all these reasons, I am confident that WECC2015 will offer an ideal opportunity to build valuable networks of people related to various fields of engineering who will take up the challenge of resolving diverse issues.

An international symposium entitled "River Technology for Innovation and Social System"

An international symposium entitled "River Technology for Innovation and Social System" will be held jointly by WFEO-CDRM and local engineering-related organizations in Kyoto prior to the WECC2015. The symposium consists disaster- and environment-oriented sessions in river and watershed engineering, and a panel discussion from both sessions. It is open to public. You can participate in the symposium without charge.

If you are interested in attending the event, please send an email, including your name and affiliation in advance; to the Secretary for "River Technologies for Innovations and Social Systems", email address (river-innovation@rfc.or.jp).

Here is more detailed information:

Purpose: The symposium is to provide valuable information for river/watershed engineering, business, and political measures over the world through disaster and natural conservation perspective.

Organized by: Organizing Committee for "River Technologies for Innovations and Social Systems"

Co-organized by: Japan Federation of Engineering Societies (JFES), World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO), Japan River Restoration Network (JRRN), Japan Society of Civil Engineers (JSCE), and Architectural Institute of Japan (AIJ)

Supported by: Science Council of Japan (SCJ), Japan Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), and Asian River Restoration Network

Date and Time: Saturday, 28 November 2015, 09:00–18:00

Room and Venue: Room D, Kyoto International Conference Center (www.icckvoto.or.jp/en/access/)

Maximum number of participants: 120 people

- * Worldwide engineers and engineering-related people are welcomed as a participant
- * There is a limit to the number of receivers of interpretation.

You in order to participate, you need to contact in advance to the secretariat.

Admission: All participants are free for attending the symposium only.

You need to register with full payment if you wish to attend other WECC 2015 events.

Language: English and Japanese (simultaneous translation is available)

(Note) This symposium will be held as a side event for the WECC2015 in Kyoto and "Session I" serves as the 9th Joint International Symposium on Disaster Risk Management.

URL: http://river-innovation.net/index_en.html