**Issue 22 - News around the world**

|  |
| --- |
| **9 July 2013 – ‘Hello Lamp Post’ launches in Bristol**A new project has launched in Bristol which combines art and urban infrastructure to explore the concepts of ‘psychogeography’ and the memories of cities.The ‘Hello Lamp Post’ project is the idea of PAN Studio, a design and production company, and is supported by Bristol Council, local universities and technology businesses. It aims to encourage people to interact with street furniture (post boxes, lamp posts, bus stops etc) using text messaging. It is like a combination of chat room, game and artificial intelligence.Each object has its own SMS code and when users text it to the central server the object responds with several questions. The next person to interact with the same object will be able to see previous answers as well as give their own.As more people engage with the project then a city-wide conversation will develop. Tom Armitage, co-developer of the software being used for the project, said, “We’re hoping that by encouraging people to engage in conversation with objects... ...we might be able to more effectively alter their perspective of their city – to change how they see it.”The organisers hope that by concentrating on the small, everyday features of the city rather than the big buildings, the city will become a playful space for residents and visitors. |
| **20 June 2013 – NASA’s *CloudSpotter* app aims to create a ‘cloud atlas’**Ssmartphone users around the world are being asked to monitor the effect of clouds on the Earth's climate. NASA wants people to download their ‘CloudSpotter’ app, take pictures of clouds and try to identify their type.The information collected will be used by scientists to confirm the location of clouds which have been detected by their ‘Clouds and the Earth’s Radiant Energy System’ or Ceres. Three satellites in orbit measure the sunlight reflected back from Earth into space. Different surfaces reflect different amounts of light and heat – trees reflect very little, while ice and clouds reflect a lot more.The instruments are designed to help scientists understand how clouds affect the Earth’s climate. It isn’t easy, however, and ice causes a particular problem. "Some of the things that cause us real problems are situations like when you have clouds over snow that are really hard to detect from space," says researcher Lin Chambers.CloudSpotter users will be able to help to reduce those errors by taking pictures of the clouds they see and sending the information to the Ceres team. The data will be matched up with the satellites’ data from a particular location to highlight how the system might be missing or mis-identifying certain types of clouds. |
| **11 June 2013 – Global Peace Index 2013 reveals increases in conflict around the world**Earth is a less peaceful place to live than it was five years ago according to the Institute for Economics and Peace. Each year they rank 162 countries according to security in society, the extent of conflict and the degree of militarisation. This year's report confirms a long term trend in which global levels of peace have fallen by 5% since 2008.The figures are driven by increases in internal conflicts in countries like Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan and Libya. The researchers say that 110 states have become less peaceful and that 48 have become more so. It is not all bad news, however, as hostility between states has fallen overall. |