

# Navigating with the Pilot

15-494 Cognitive Robotics  
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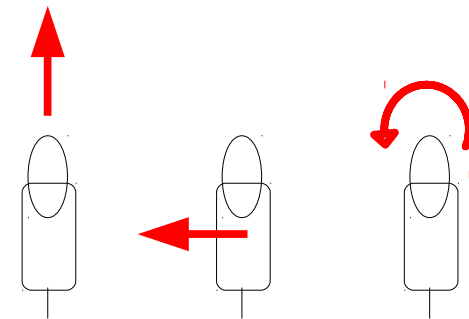
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# How Does the Robot Move?

- Multiple walk engines are incorporated into Tekkotsu:
  - CMPack '02 AIBO walk engine from Veloso et al. (CMU), with modifications by Ethan Tira-Thompson
  - UPennalizers AIBO walk engine from Lee et al. (U. Penn)
  - XWalk engine by Ethan Tira-Thompson for the Chiara
  - “Wheeled walk” for the Create
- Basic idea is the same for the legged walk engines:
  - Cyclic pattern of leg motions
  - Parameters control leg trajectory, body angle, etc.
  - Many different gaits are possible by varying phases of the legs
  - “Open loop” control: no force feedback
  - Can't adapt to rough terrain
  - Can move quickly, but not very accurately

# WalkMC

- WalkMC is a motion command that uses the walk engine to move the robot.
  - For legged robots this means calculating leg trajectories.
  - For wheeled robots, calculate motor speeds.
- Walking is controlled by three parameters:
  - xvel: forward velocity
  - yvel: lateral velocity (strafing)  
requires legs or roller-wheels
  - avel: angular velocity (rotation)



# WalkNode

- Subclass of StateNode
- Activates a WalkMC on start()
- Deactivates the WalkMC on stop()
- User can specify (x,y,a) velocity or displacement
- WalkNode(xvel, yvel, avel, time, WalkNode::VEL)
  - Velocities xvel, yvel in mm/sec; avel in rad/sec; time in sec
- WalkNode(xdisp, ydisp, adisp, time, WalkNode::DISP)
  - Displacements in mm and radians; time in sec.
  - Calculates velocity to reach destination in time
  - Use a time of 0 to request maximum velocity.

# Requirements for Navigation

There's more to navigation than just walking.

The robot should be able to:

- Move in a specified direction at a specified speed
- Keep track of its location and heading
- Avoid cliffs
- Avoid obstacles or report collisions
- Localize using landmarks
- Plan paths using a world map
- Execute planned paths with error correction

# The Pilot

- Higher level approach to locomotion.
- Specify effect to achieve, rather than mechanism:
  - Go to an object.
  - Search for an object.
- Specify policies to use:
  - Cliff detection (AIBO IR sensor)
  - Obstacle avoidance (turn off to knock down soda cans)
  - Localization procedure
- Experimental code; changing rapidly.

# Pilot Request Types

- **walk** – essentially a WalkMC displacement request
- **setVelocity** – set speed and go forever
- **waypointWalk** – provides Waypoint walk functionality
- **localize** – look for landmarks and invoke the particle filter to update position estimate
- **goToShape** – plan path and travel to the location of a shape on the world map
- **visualSearch** – turn body to look for an object
- **pushObject** – plan path and push an object from its present location to a target location (in progress)
- *More functions are planned...*

# PilotNode

- The PilotNode class provides an interface to the Pilot:
  - Creates a PilotRequest in the member variable pilotreq
  - Transmits the request to the Pilot
  - Listens for completion of the request
  - Posts a completion event when the request is finished
- Users typically create their own subclasses of PilotNode so they can fill in request parameters in the doStart() method.



# Trivial Pilot Example

```
$nodeclass MyPilotDemo : VisualRoutinesStateNode {  
    $nodeclass Goer : PilotNode(PilotTypes::walk) : doStart {  
        pilotreq.dx = 500;    // forward half a meter  
    }  
    $setupmachine{  
        Goer =C=> SpeechNode("I have arrived")  
    }  
}  
  
REGISTER_BEHAVIOR(MyPilotDemo);
```

# Fields of a PilotRequest

- dx, dy, da Displacement distance in mm or rad
- forwardspeed Forward speed in mm/sec
- turnspeed Turning speed in rad/sec
- strafespeed Sideways speed in mm/sec
- collisionAction What to do if a collision is detected
- landmarks Landmarks to use for localization

Lots of other options; see the online documentation.

Not everything works for every robot.

# Motion Nodes

- Defined in `/usr/local/Tekkotsu/Crew/MotionNodes.h.fsm`
- Common motions with convenient constructors:
  - `WalkForward(dist)`
  - `Turn(angle)`
- For legged robots:
  - `Rock(dist)`
  - `Sway(dist)`
  - `Twist(angle)`
  - etc...

# Odometry

- From Greek word meaning “measuring a journey”
- The robot estimates its position and heading by integrating position and heading changes over time.
- For most robot types, Tekkotsu assumes that position and heading changes match the commanded velocity.
- But the Create measures the changes itself:
  - Go to Root Control > Status Reports > Sensor Observer > Sensors
  - Click on Distance and Angle menu items
  - Go to Realtime View
  - Drive the robot around and watch the values change

# Limitations of Odometry

Odometry can be inaccurate for several reasons:

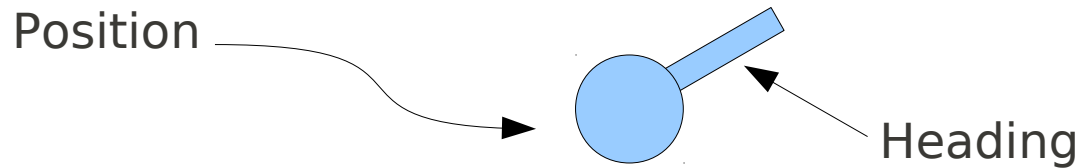
- Acceleration/deceleration error: the robot may not always be moving at the commanded velocity.
  - Encoders on the wheels can measure actual distance traveled.
- Wheel or foot slip: varies with speed & type of surface.
  - An IMU (Inertial Measurement Unit) could be used to estimate true body displacement.
  - But IMU's also have accuracy limitations
- Integration error is cumulative: it increases over time.

# Create Odometry Bug

- The Create reports angle values in integer degrees.
- Values are updated several times per second.
- Turning at low speeds gives an angle change of zero at each update because the software does not correctly accumulate fractional heading changes.
- Tekkotsu works around this problem by:
  - Using a default angular velocity high enough for decent odometry, but not high enough to cause other types of problems (e.g., slipping due to high accelerations).
  - Not trying to advance and turn at the same time. If both  $dx$  and  $da$  are nonzero, the robot will turn first and then move forward.

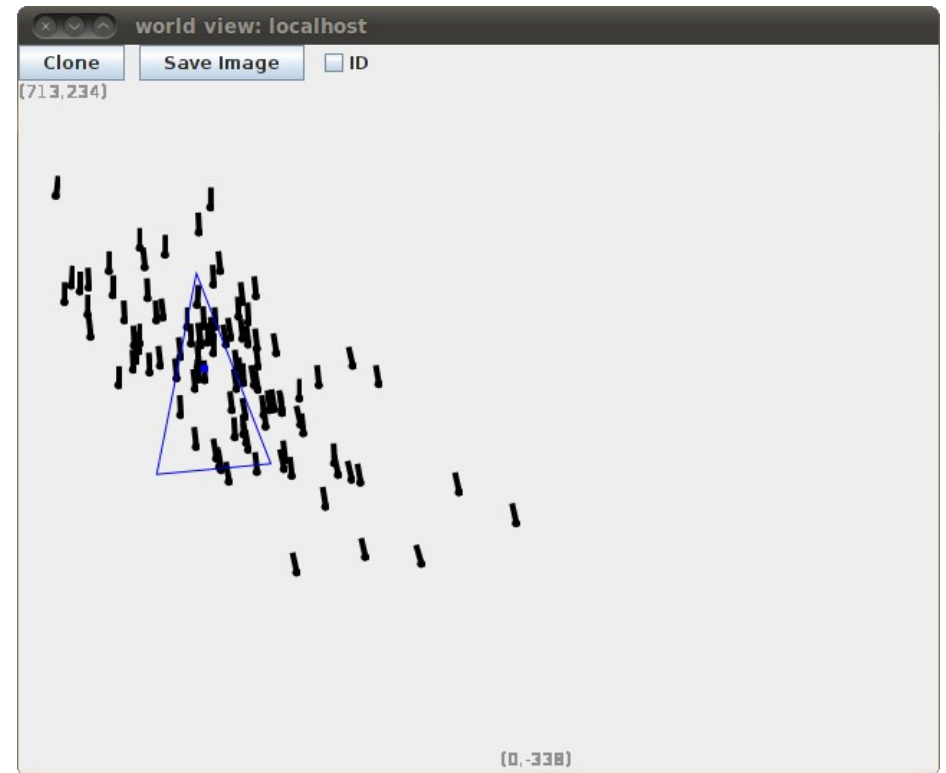
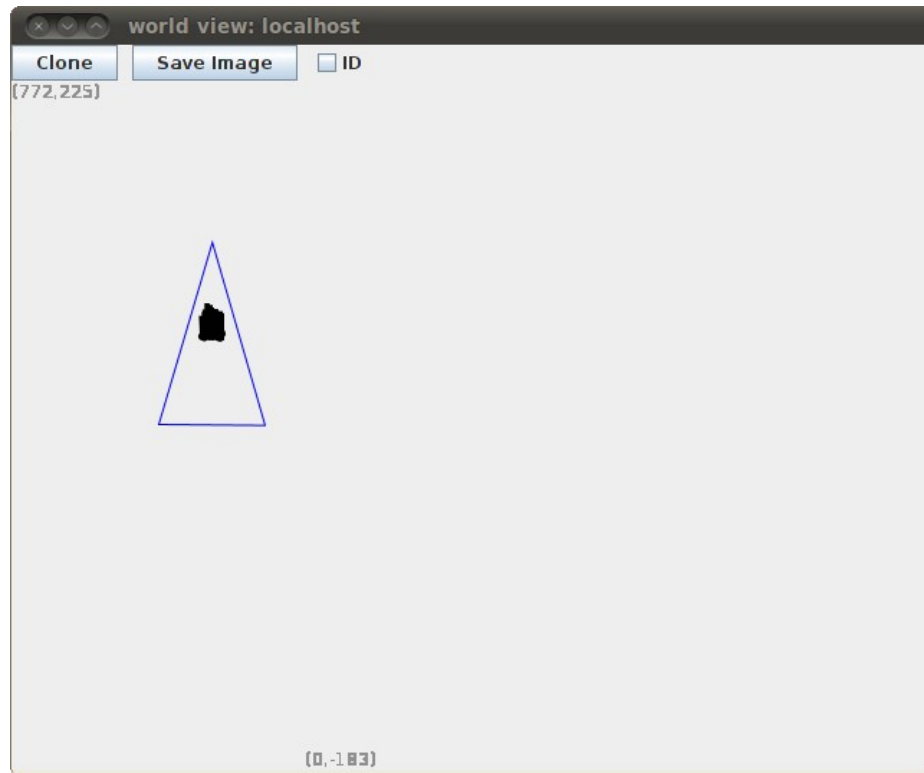
# Localization Particles

- A localization particle is an object that represents a hypothesis about the robot's position and heading.



- The Pilot's *particle filter* maintains a collection of these particles.
- The particles all start out at the robot's initial position and orientation.
- As the robot moves, the particles are updated by odometry, and noise from a *motion model* is added to simulate the effect of integration error.
- The particle “cloud” disperses, reflecting the growing uncertainty in the robot's pose.

# Particle Dispersion Over Time



The robot and particles are displayed on the *world map*.

Click on "W" in the Sketch row of the ControllerGUI to bring up the map. Click on Refresh to update it.



# PilotDemo

- PilotDemo is a built in demo framework for demonstrating various features of the Pilot.
- It uses a simple, extensible command line interface.
- You can run it directly, or define your own behavior as a subclass of PilotDemo to make use of its features.
- To run it, go to:  
Root Control > Framework Demos >  
Navigation Demos > PilotDemo
- Use “msg” to send commands to the robot, e.g.,  
msg fwd 2000
- To use the PilotDemo class, you must do:  
#include “Behaviors/Demos/Navigation/PilotDemo.h”  
But note that the actual source file is PilotDemo.h.fsm

# Robot Positioning

- Use PilotDemo commands to move the robot instead of using the Walk Controller.
  - F/B forward/backward 500 mm
  - f/b forward/backward 100 mm
  - fwd *<distance>*
  - L/R left/right 90 degrees
  - l/r left/right 10 degrees
  - turn *<angle>*
- Reason to avoid the Walk Controller: too low or too high a velocity will mess up the robot's odometry.
- PilotDemo uses “good” velocity values so odometry works reasonably well.

# The =PILOT=> Transition

- If you only care about when a Pilot request has completed, you can use a =C=> transition.
- But the Pilot reports additional information about what happened as a result of the request. To access this information you must use a =PILOT=> transition.
- Example: you may want to take special action if a collision was detected. Use:  
    =PILOT(**collisionDetected**)=>
- A plain =PILOT=> transition will act as a default case if none of the other cases match.
- You should not use a =C=> transition if you have any =PILOT(...)=> transitions exiting the node.

# Collision Detection

```
$nodeclass PilotLab3 : VisualRoutinesStateNode {  
  
  $nodeclass Backup : PilotNode(PilotTypes::walk) : doStart {  
    pilotreq.dx = -90;           // negative displacement means back up  
    pilotreq.forwardSpeed = 30;  // speeds are always non-negative  
  }  
  
  $setupmachine {  
    forward: WalkForward(500)  
    forward =PILOT=> SpeechNode("done")  
    forward =PILOT(collisionDetected)=>  
      SpeechNode("Ouch! I hit something.") =C=> Backup  
  }  
}
```

# Collision Policies

- Defined in `/usr/local/Tekkotsu/Crew/PilotTypes.h`
- Collisions are detected either from the bump switches or from a motor stalling.
- Choices of collision action:
  - `collisionIgnore`                      Do nothing
  - `collisionReport`                      Post an event but continue
  - `collisionStop`                      Stop (default action)
  - `collisionReplan`                      Replan; not yet implemented

# Push A Ball & Keep Going

```
#include "Behaviors/Demos/Navigation/PilotDemo.h"

$nodeclass SlamAndScram : PilotDemo {
    $nodeclass Slammer : PilotNode(PilotTypes::walk) : doStart {
        pilotreq.dx = 2000;
        pilotreq.collisionAction = collisionIgnore;
    }

    $setupmachine{
        rundemo: Slammer =PILOT=> SpeechNode("Got it")
    }
}
```

Special node named **rundemo** can be activated using the Pilot's rundemo command after the user has positioned the robot.

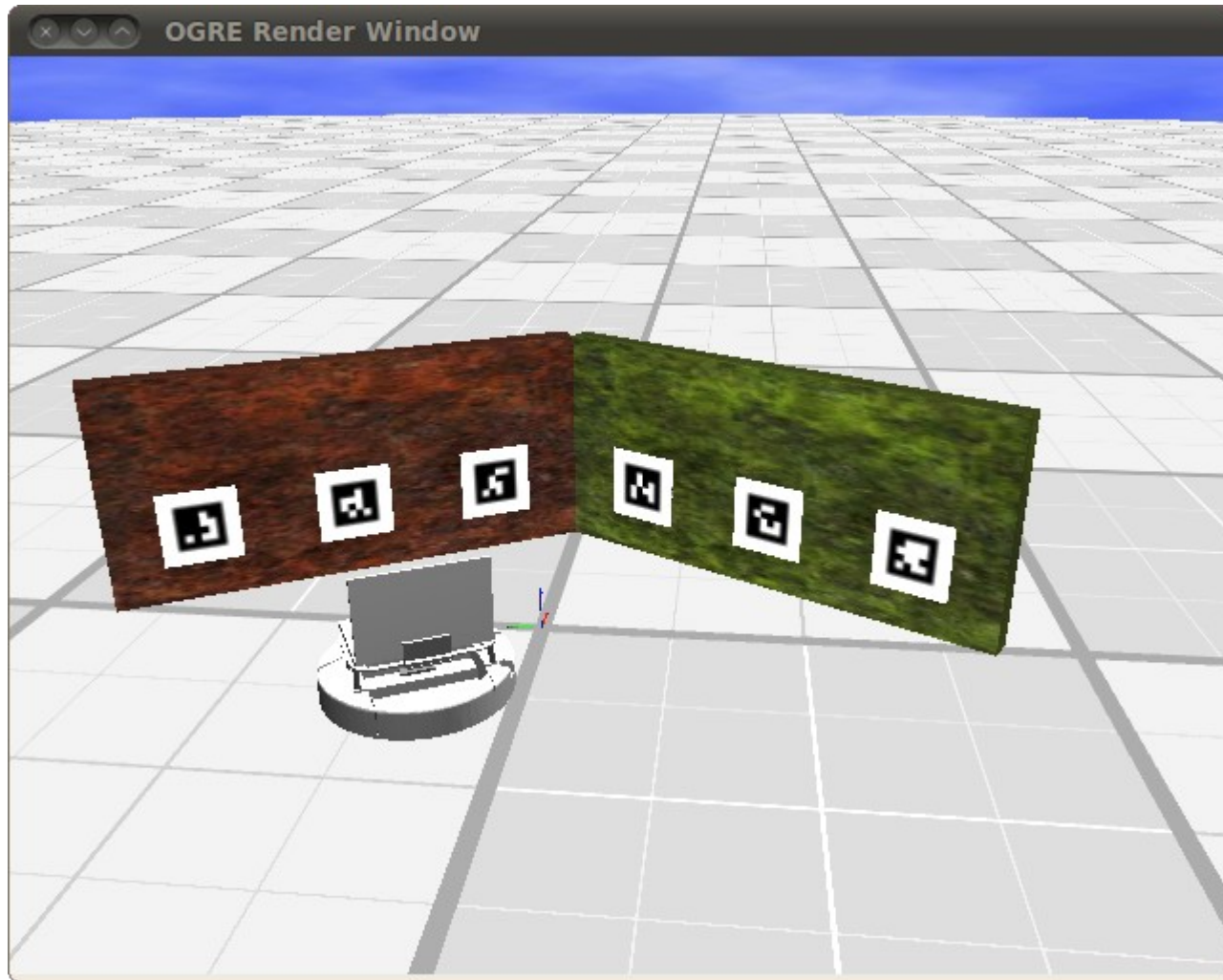
Use **startdemo** to make the demo start automatically.

# Localization

- As the robot moves, the particle cloud disperses and position uncertainty grows.
- How can we reduce our uncertainty?
- **Use visual landmarks and the particle filter to make a new estimate of position.**
- Requirements:
  - Landmarks such as AprilTags that the robot can recognize.
  - A world map giving the landmarks' locations.
- What does the Pilot do?
  - Look around for landmarks and build a local map.
  - Use particle filter to match local against world map.
  - Particles giving the best match get the highest score.

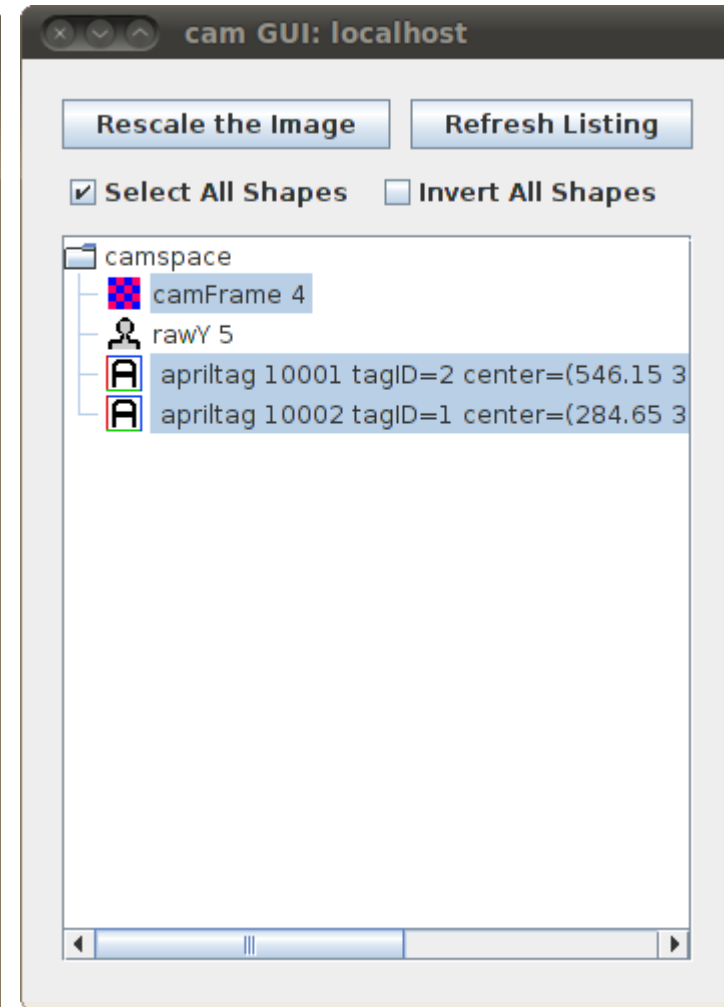
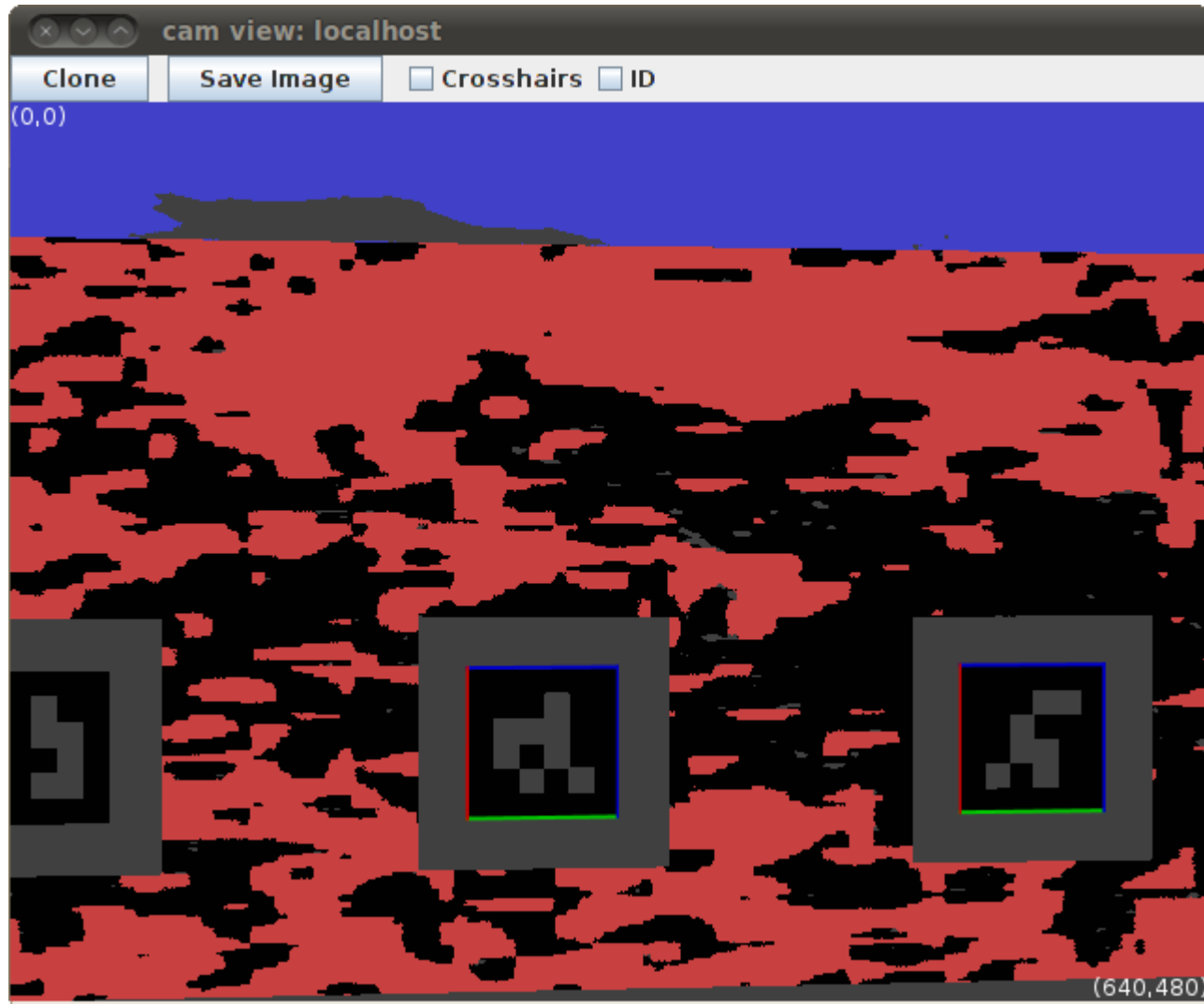
# The VeeTags Demo

- Unique AprilTags serve as landmarks.
- Use PilotDemo's "loc" command to localize.

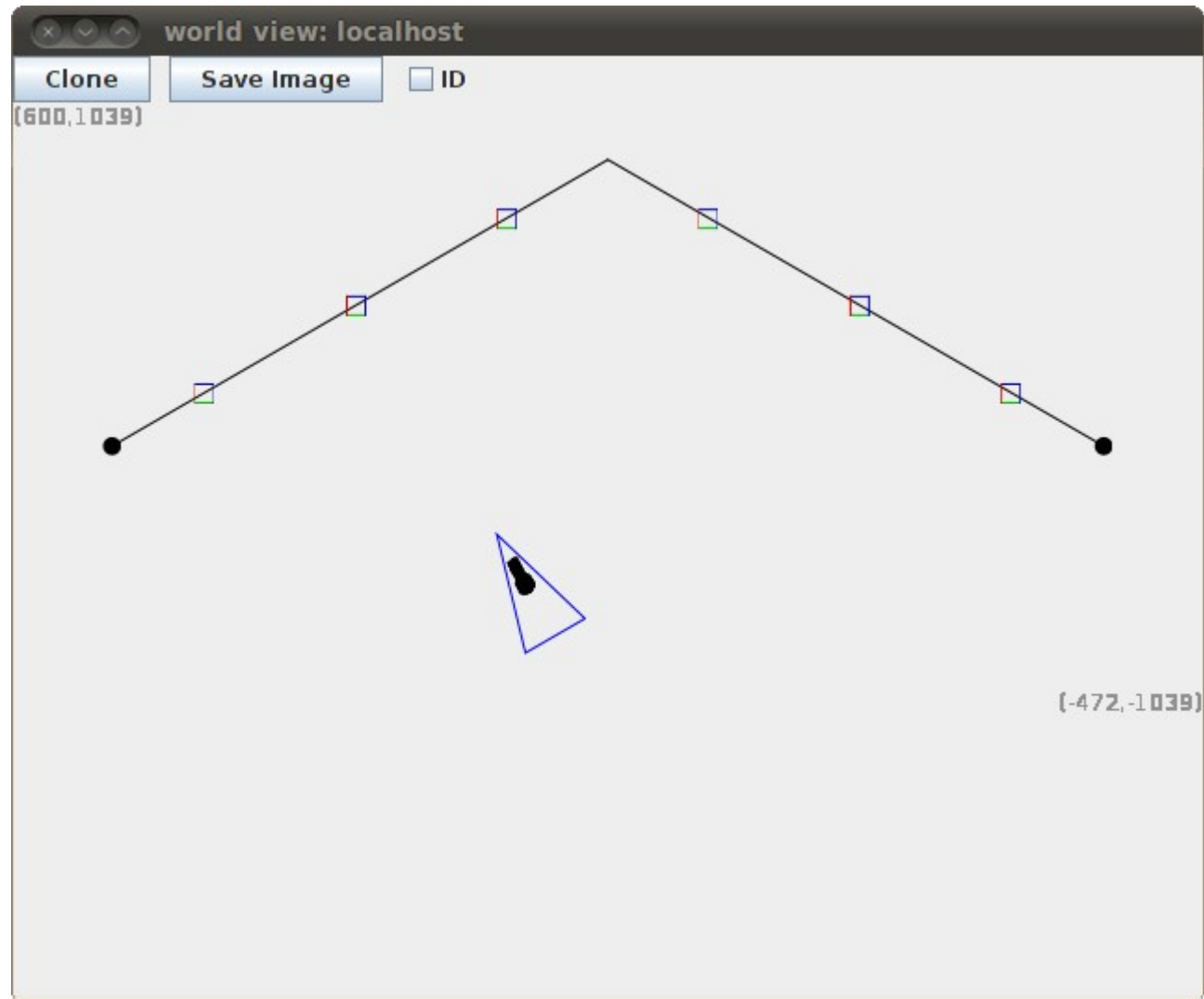




# Camera View



# World Map After Localization



# Retrieving the Robot's Pose

```
cout << "Robot is at x="
      << theAgent->getCentroid().coordX() << " y="
      << theAgent->getCentroid().coordY() << endl;

cout << "Robot heading is "
      << theAgent->getOrientation() << endl;
```

# Summary

- The Pilot is responsible for:
  - Moving the robot through the world.
  - Tracking its position using odometry.
  - Localization using landmarks and a particle filter.
  - Path planning to avoid obstacles (to be covered later).
- Use a PilotNode to send a request to the Pilot.
- Use a =PILOT=> transition to check the results.
- Common cases:
  - =PILOT(collisionDetected)=>
  - =PILOT(noError)=>
  - =PILOT(someError)=>
  - =PILOT=>