



EIS

Editorial

Dear Readers,

This month we have lots of interesting articles related to GIS/EIS in Africa and the world. The newsletter is so full of articles that we have had to publish some additional articles onto our website.

One such article is the final synthesis report on the "Determination of Fundamental Datasets in Africa." The HSRC and EIS-AFRICA jointly worked on this survey and the results are very valuable. We have also been successful winning the tender to conduct the study that will catalogue an inventory of these Fundamental data for Africa.

Very soon, many of you will receive a questionnaire that will allow us to de-

termine Geospatial Data Gaps in Africa.

Once these Gaps have been determined, the UNECA's CODI-GEO through the working group on Mapping Africa for Africa will undertake a continental mapping project.

We believe such a project will be very valuable to Africa in terms of attaining it's Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) and meeting the objectives of NEPAD.

I urge you to visit our website (www.eis-africa.org) to find more about this project and other interesting information.

Until next month, regards

Sives Govender

The International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing: ISPRS Priorities and

What is ISPRS?

The International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing is a non-governmental organisation devoted to the development of international cooperation for the advancement of photogrammetry and remote sensing and their applications. The Society's scientific interests include photogrammetry, remote sensing, spatial information systems and related disciplines, as well as applications in cartography, geodesy, surveying, natural, Earth and engineering sciences, and environmental monitoring and protection.

The ISPRS Council has set a number of objectives to be fulfilled during the current four year period running from July 2004 to July 2008:

Sustain and develop the scientific programme based on international excellence in research and in collaboration with other international scientific unions;

Expand the international role of ISPRS by building on our existing links and developing a presence in developing countries;

Continue the role of ISPRS in education and technology transfer in collaboration with international partners;

Develop the Foundation and attract \$500 000 of funds by 2008.

All of these objectives have relevance to Africa, to the people of Africa and the African environment. We feel that we must address the problems which Africans have to enable them to engage with ISPRS, and to ensure that our members in Africa receive the same, or equivalent benefits as those in the developed world.

ISPRS and Africa

ISPRS has 15 Ordinary members from Africa, 1 Associate Member and 5 Regional members. In line with our objectives for the current four year period, we are focussing attention on Africa. I have visited Africa 3 times in the last 15 months to attend conferences. At Africa GIS 2005 we organised a tutorial on use of high resolution satellite data and spatial data infrastructure, and, with other organisations, organised a workshop on GEOSS. I also attended the FIG

Open Source Geospatial Foundation OSGeo

The [Open Source Geospatial Foundation](#) is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to support and promote the collaborative development of open geospatial technologies and data. The foundation was formed in February 2006 to provide financial, organizational and legal support to the broader open source geospatial community. It will also serve as an independent legal entity to which community members can contribute code, funding and other resources, secure in the knowledge that their contributions will be maintained for public benefit (https://www.osgeo.org/content/news/news_archive/open_source_geospatial_foundation_initial_press_release.html).

Since its creation several activities have been initiated inside the foundation. These initiatives are generally open for participation to every one with a strong interest in the subject. Here is a brief description of some of the projects:

- Public geospatial data committee : this group is dedicated to promote access and use of open (<https://geodata.osgeo.org/> for more information).
- Promotion and Visibility: one of the main objectives of this committee is to spread word and build a strong recognition of the Open Source Geospatial Foundation. (http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/Promotion_and_Visibility_Committee for more information)
- Education: The project aims at creating and promoting educational and curriculum material that supports the goals of the Foundation (http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/Education_and_Curriculum_Committee for more information)
- International outreach: the objective here is the Open Source Geospatial Foundation agreed it was important that it be very international, and represent and weld

together open source geospatial activities around the globe (http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/International_Outreach)

There is also a specific mailing list for the Africa region (afica@mail.osgeo.org). Discussions on this list include the recent launch of an FOSS GIS Africa portal (<http://fsiu.uwc.ac.za/gis/index.php>)

Submitted by Assefa Yewondwossen

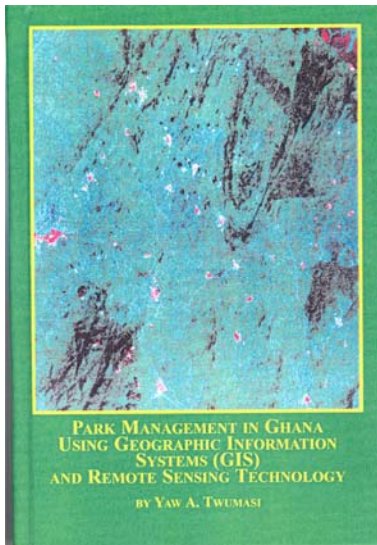
UFPRI Publishes Research Brief

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has released the research brief "From 'Best Practice' to 'Best Fit': A Framework for Designing and Analyzing Pluralistic Agricultural Advisory Services" by Regina Birner and colleagues. The brief addresses issues on the roles of advisory services in agriculture, and how they can be made more efficient and financially stable. Download the brief at <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/ib/rb04.pdf>.

21 April 2006

Source: Crop Biotech Update,

Book Release



Author: Yaw A. Twumasi

Title: Park Management in Ghana Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Remote Sensing Technology

Publisher: Edwin Mellen Press: Lewiston, 2005

Physical Description: 329 pp., illustrations, tables, photos, maps (some color), 24 cm.

Bibliography notes: Includes bibliographical references (p.295-323) and index

Subject: National parks and reserves -- Ghana -- management, Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing

ISBN: 0773459901 (Hard cover)

Price: \$119.95 / £74.95

Reviewed by:

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Degradation of natural areas, including officially protected parks and forests, is widely recognized as part of the global threats to climate and to biodiversity. Achievement of sustainability, in the sense of reaching a harmonious balance between societal needs for fuel wood energy, food, shelter and other cultural objects from forests and parks, without destroying the resource in the process, is one of the major challenges of development. Alternatively, perhaps the economic pressure of globalized trade for timber is the key driver to forest degradation in the developing world. This book by Dr. Yaw A. Twumasi is a timely and much needed contribution to the international literature on park and forest management, using modern techniques of satellite remote sensing and GIS. It contributes in an important way to filling the gap between the global policy debate and practicalities faced by park and forest managers in the developing world. By combining the best of his international experience at the forefront of applied remote sensing and GIS, using modern Earth Observation System satellites, with experiences in his home country (Ghana), Twumasi bridges the divide between international theorists and officials responsible for day-to-day implementation of practical park management. This is reflected in the balance of content between a rigorous introduction and survey of contempo-

rary literature, and a set of detailed case studies dealing with monitoring and management of two different parks in Ghana. This book will be useful to development agencies, government agencies dealing with natural resource management and to students in a range of geography, environmental, social and development studies. Dr. Twumasi is to be congratulated on this fresh and useful contribution to the contemporary remote sensing and environmental management literature. I am sure that this volume will enthuse and inspire other African students and scholars in a quest for sustainability in Africa and globally, and become a much paged reference for government and other officials devising and implementing sustainable strategies for park and forest management.

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Innovative application of RS and GIS for female professionals in the earth sciences

Cairo, Egypt

3-16 November 2006

The course "Innovative application for RS and GIS for female professionals in the earth sciences" will be held in conjunction with the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE) Conference (30 October to 2 November 2006) on: "Earth Observation and Geoinformation Sciences In Support of Africa's Development" (see <http://www.narss.sci.eg/aarse2006>).

What will be achieved?

The course coherently integrates aspects of remote sensing and ground-based data acquisition, data integration, information extraction and analytical GIS approaches to the mapping and modeling of Earth Systems. This will provide participants with practical skills and underlying theoretical aspects that would allow them to streamline the information and knowledge development process for individual projects as well as to obtain valuable insights on how to modernize geoscience information systems in their home organizations. The focus is on analysis and modeling of information from geoscience spatial data to support mapping projects done by geological survey organizations in a modern setting.

Admission requirements.

In order to be admitted the applicants should be alumni of ITC or associates of ITC pro-

jects. They should have BSc degree in geology, geography, or related earth science fields, have proficiency in the English language as well as basic skills in GIS.

The course is also open to female Netherlands Fellowship Programme (NFP) alumni (especially intakes from 1996 to 2002) and various organizations having links to the NFP Programme in Africa.

Participants accepted in the course are female Earth Scientists only (i.e., geologists, geomorphologists, engineering geologists) employed in survey departments, mining companies, Universities or other organizations, which in one way or other are engaged in Earth Science fields and who are also members or potential members of AARSE.

In addition, those fulfilling the requirements above and applying must be willing to present a paper for the 6th AARSE conference on their research and for the 2 weeks workshop on: "*The Role of Professional Women Earth Scientist in their Country*".

Contact persons

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E-mail: woldai@itc.nl

Upcoming Events

ISPRS Commission VII, Mid-term Symposium. Remote Sensing: From Pixels to processes, 8—12 May 2006, Enschede, The Netherlands. For more information, see <http://www.commissison7.isprs.org>.

6th GIMS User Conference, 8—10 May 2006, Summer Place, Hyde Park, Johannesburg, South Africa. As an ESRI or Leica user, the conference offers an excellent opportunity for sharing your experience in the application of GIS in your industries. Participants are invited to submit papers for presentiaton - your contribution will help to make the conference a success. Please contact the GIMS office on +27 11 6950400 for inquiries or email conference@gims.com.

UDMS 2006: 25TH URBAN DATA MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM. 15—17 May 2006, Aalborg, Denmark UDMS, the Urban Data Management Society, has organised international symposia at various locations in Europe in order to promote the development of information systems in local government since 1971. An important aim of UDMS has been to provide a forum for people to discuss new approaches, to consider new technologies and to share practical experiences in the field of urban data management. The focus has been on urban applications but regional and rural issues have always been well represented and have grown recently in importance. All accepted papers will be published and distributed to all participants at the symposium. For more information, see: <http://www.udms.net>

1st International Conference on ICT for Development, Education and Training, 24—26 May 2006, UNCC, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. eLearning Africa intends to become the eLearning capacity-building event for the entire African continent and a forum for all stakeholders engaged in the planning and implementation of technology-supported learning and training. The event is supported by the United Nations Commission for Africa and the European Commission's DG Information Society and has the patronage of The Ethiopian Ministry of Capacity Building. The conference will be accompanied by an exhibition. Organisers: ICWE GmbH, www.icwe.net, Hoffmann & Reif www.hoffmann-reif.com Contact: Rebecca Stromeyer, info@elearning-africa.com, Tel.: +49-30-327 6140. Website: www.elearning-africa.com

Workshop on the Applications of Global Navigation Satellite System Technologies in Sub-Saharan Africa, Lusaka, Zambia from 26 - 30 June 2006. For further information and to download the application form, see <http://www.eis-africa.org>.

ISPRS Commission VI Symposium, Tokyo, Japan, 27—29 June 2006. For more information, see <http://www.commission6.isprs.org>.

ISPRS Commission I Symposium, Marne-le-Valle, France, 3—6 July 2006. For more information, see <http://www.commission1.isprs.org>.

GEOINFORMATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (gi4dev): Bridging the divide through partnerships, agit_SPECIAL, July 7, 2006 - Salzburg, Austria. The event is hosted and organised by Z_GIS (Centre for Geoinformatics, Salzburg University) and sponsored by AARSE, GTZ, UNOOSA and UNU-EHS. gi4dev is one thematic focus of the annual AGIT Symposium (www.agit.at/en). Conference scope: Development topics are emerging more and more in daily discussions. Affected by natural disasters and the consequences of global change, economic development and human security issues, actors require explicit spatial information for improved decision making. The geoinformation community is aware of these potentials and application fields. However, there are still many obstacles in the way of successful implementation. The lacking awareness about GI applications, inadequate human resources or missing institutional provisions all hamper improvements. gi4dev wants to address these topics by means of an open discussion forum. Keynotes will prepare the ground from where discussions will start. Contrary to classic conference scenarios, this event will focus on result-oriented discussions by using moderation methodologies. Conclusions and recommendations will be evaluated in [a final panel discussion](#). [Information and a Call for Papers & Workshop topics is also available online](#): web: www.agit.at/gi4dev , email: gi4dev@agit.at

12th International Symposium on Spatial Data Handling, Vienna, Austria, 10—12 July 2006. Web http://www.agile-secretariat.org/docs/12th_SDH.pdf

ISPRS Commission II Symposium: "GICON 2006—Geoinformation Connecting Societies", Vienna, Austria, 12—14 July 2006. For more information, see <http://www.commission2.isprs.org> or <http://www.gicon2006.at/>

Training Programme

Under the aegis of the United Nations University <<http://www.unu.edu/>> a short training programme will be presented under the title Geo-Information for Land Administration in Africa: Trends and Innovation

The two week course will run in June and will be presented jointly by the department of Geodetic Engineering, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology <<http://www.knust.edu.gh/>> (KNUST), Kumasi, Ghana, and the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation <<http://www.itc.nl/>> (ITC) in the Netherlands.

Modern systems of land administration require sound institutional frameworks, as well as the latest technological tools and techniques to function prop-

erly. This is essential for the collection, processing, maintenance and dissemination of data concerning ownership, value and use of land for a range of purposes: securing property rights, the land market, taxation, land use planning, and the implementation of land management policy within environmental constraints.

The course will address the following main subject areas:

- a) Land administration and registration systems; from existing manual-based to strategic ICT-based systems emphasis on modern trends
- b) Land administration and changing environments; from concept to practice including innovations
- c) SDI for land administration

The course will be held in Kumasi,

Ghana and is meant for professionals and researchers dealing with land administration issues in countries in Africa.

Tuition Fee: Euro 500 (limited and partial financial support is available).

Deadline for applications: end of May

For more information:

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(tuladhar@itc.nl)

* Tom Loran (loran@itc.nl)

* <http://www.knust.edu.gh>

(Department of Geodetic Engineering, KNUST)

• <http://www.itc.nl> (ITC)

Submitted by Janneke Kalf, ITC, The Netherlands

Introducing the Southern Africa Trust

The Southern Africa Trust is an independent, southern African regional non-profit agency established to support organisations in the region to participate more effectively in policy dialogue so that policies and strategies across the region work better to overcome poverty.

While the Trust will be formally launched in May 2006, we wanted to inform you now that we are already operational.

The purpose of the Southern Africa Trust is to support processes to deepen and widen engagement in policy dialogue with a regional impact on poverty.

The overall aim of the Southern Africa Trust is for the poor to have a better say in shaping policies to overcome poverty in southern Africa.

The Trust will provide grants in a targeted manner that promotes regional civil society integration and strengthens the impact of the voices of the poor in policy dialogue. The primary focus of the Trust's support of better policy processes will be to create the conditions to sustain and improve the livelihoods of the poor in a sustainable

manner. The Trust therefore intends to support partner initiatives in the region that have an impact on improving the material conditions of the poor.

The Trust intends to be as engaged as possible with all groups that have an interest in its work and looks forward to developing a working relationship with your organisation. More information about the Trust's objectives, partners, and ways of working can be found at www.southernaficatrust.org

Please offer us your advice about what you think we should be doing or inform us of any initiative that you think we should be aware of by contacting our executive director at our office in Midrand, South Africa.

If you want to receive regular communications including calls for grant applications from the Trust, please send an e-mail with your contact information to info@southernaficatrust.org

Sincerely,

The Trustees:

Denis Kadima (DRC) (chairperson), Joseph Komakoma (Zambia), Perks Ligoya (Malawi), Reginald Matchaba-Hove (Zimbabwe), Alice Mogwe

(Botswana), Shirley Moulder (South Africa), Prakash Ratilal (Mozambique), Elinor Sisulu (South Africa), and Neville Gabriel (executive director)

The Prospects and Simulation Of The Establishment Of Khartoum Continuous Operating Reference Stations

The proposed Khartoum Continuous Operating Reference Stations (CORS) system consists of seven stations and one central processing center for the processing and distribution of GNSS data. These stations are designed to form a precise geodetic network of permanent stations continuously track the visible GNSS satellites and where satellite receivers are to be installed. The GNSS receivers will telemetry the data to the Central Processing Center via internet or a GSM media at a measurement interval of 1 second.

The initial core product of the CORS data will be collected from the permanent stations using dual frequency GPS receivers to collect carrier phase and code observations, as well as precise GPS satellite ephemeris, earth rotation parameters, ionospheric and atmospheric information, coordinates and velocities of the permanent network stations.

The objectives of establishing Khartoum CORS network are to increase and to improve the real time and post

processing capabilities of GNSS and their geomatics and engineering applications, monitoring of recent crustal movements and atmospheric and geodynamic studies.

The raw GPS data from all the stations is to be processed, modeled, and adjusted applying various methods including Area Calculations Parameters, for Ionospheric, tropospheric effects and distance dependant errors. The processed data is then available for the whole Coverage area in RTCM Format either through GSM or Internet Network. The concept of having the GNSS reference stations is to have homogeneous network all over Khartoum state area. Users can log into the main control room through GSM/ internet link and send their navigated position to the system, and the system in turn will send the user RTCM corrections for that navigated position, enabling the user to have 1-2cm RTK position accuracy anywhere within the coverage area of the whole Network.

Data is fully controlled and archived and only authorized users can be linked to access the data.

The technical details of the Khartoum CORS system are investigated, including network design, site selection, hardware configuration, modeling, monitoring and handling of satellite and receiver biases and atmospheric propagation delays.

For the rest of the article, see <http://www.eis-africa.org>.

Submitted by By: Dr. Kamal Abdellatif Abdalla, Department of Surveying Engineering, University of Khartoum, P. O. Box 321, Khartoum, Sudan, drkmal@yahoo.com

School for Land Administration Studies Established

On 23 March 2006 the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC) and the Netherlands Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency ('Kadaster') signed an agreement to cooperate in the establishment of a School for Land Administration Studies at ITC.

The issue of land and land administration is increasingly claiming the attention of the international community. In a recent interview in ITC News magazine Professor Hans van Ginkel, rector of the United Nations University of which ITC is an Associated Institution, said: "We have to start work and find solutions that are fair and humane to all parties involved. Zimbabwe has attracted the attention of the international media, but in many countries there is a problem as to who owns the land and how it is registered. Redistribution is a touchy subject. It is in the collective interest to reassign functions to land in both urban and rural areas but with adequate government compensation. And this is a major issue in Europe too. For example: once land is known to be eligible for urban expansion,

the price rises. It should be possible to set a price on such plots early on and so reduce the element of speculation. This is a problem shared by developed and developing countries."

The School will deliver land administration education and research within ITC, and will manage and execute a joint land administration programme with the United Nations University. This programme consists of a series of seminars, short courses, and networking. ITC's rector, Prof.dr.ir. Martien Molenaar, said: "ITC is very much dedicated to good governance issues of which administration of land is an important part. As ITC students are mid-career professionals, ITC is fully aware that they are not only interested in academic knowledge, but also in organisational and institutional issues." Therefore he welcomed the cooperation with the Dutch Kadaster, as a prerequisite for good education and research in land administration.

Mr. Godfried Barnasconi, member of the Executive Board represented the

Kadaster in the signing ceremony. Mr. Barnasconi said: "the Dutch Kadaster's organisational strategy is to enhance its performance by use of modern management approaches and by the application of advanced information technology. The organisation is aware that in order to eradicate poverty and sustainable development-knowledge and expertise of how to create a good working land registry and cadastre is necessary and the organisation is prepared to share its knowledge with other countries." Mr. Barnasconi is convinced that the School is a very appropriate channel to the developing world.

Submitted by Janneke Kalf, ITC, The Netherlands

Call for Projects for the Promotion of Science and Technology

The French Institute for Research and Development (IRD) will finance projects aimed at promoting science and technology in the countries members of the Priority Interdependent Zone (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, Chad, and Yemen). The projects should aim at promoting science communication, establishing science and technology networks at national and regional levels, train and reinforce the competence of professionals, and inform policy makers of the

stakes of science and technology. NGOs, science associations, schools and universities, public and private research institutions, and members of the media are welcome to apply. The awards will range between 5000 and 15000 euros. Deadline for submission of applications is May 29th, 2006. For more information (in French), and to obtain the application form, visit:

<http://www.latitudesciences.ird.fr/pcst/appel.htm>

Source: CropBiotech Update,

21 April 2006

Rural Poverty Portal

Powered by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the rural poverty portal is a web site where policymakers, donors, research institutes, nongovernmental organizations, and other development partners can share information about eradicating rural poverty. On the portal, the

information can be browsed by topic, region, or country. It aims to streamline the search for information on rural poverty by providing access to millions of links from a single entry point. For more information, visit <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/>.

Source: IFPRI-LCSP Newsletter, Vol 6 No 4

CODATA workshop on Strategies for Permanent Access to Scientific Information in Southern Africa

The Report, Executive Summary, and presentations from the September 2005 CODATA Workshop on Strategies for Permanent Access to Scientific Information in Southern Africa are now available for access and distribution. The workshop was held in Pretoria, South Africa with special focus on issues related to the preservation of and access to scientific informa-

tion resources in the SADC countries. The South African and the U.S. National Committees for CODATA presented the workshop in collaboration with the South African National Research Foundation and the CODATA Task Group on Preservation of and Access to Scientific and Technical Data in Developing Countries.

The workshop reports, program, and presentations are available at the following URL:

<http://stardata.nrf.ac.za/html/workshopCodataPublications.html>

The International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing

ISPRS Priorities and Progress 2004 - 2008 (cont.)

Working Week in Cairo and the FIG Regional Meeting in Accra. ISPRS will be organising sessions and a pre conference workshop at the AARSE Conference in Cairo in November. At these conferences I have taken the opportunity to organise meetings for ISPRS members, and for those interested in joining. These have been very valuable for meeting people and understanding local problems. Topics discussed at these meetings include:

Travel grants to attend ISPRS meetings

Help with Regional meetings

Access to publications

Representation of Africa on Council

Support for capacity building activities

We will address these issues in Council, and with our sister societies, and look for ways of assisting. Members do benefit from ISPRS publications such as the *International Archives of the Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Sciences* and the *ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing* which contain scientific and technical articles. Most of the former are now on line at the ISPRS website and available free of charge. *ISPRS Highlights* is the official bulletin of the Society and from June 2006 will be published in electronic form. Anybody who wishes to receive this can do so by contacting Orhan Altan, ISPRS Secretary General (oaltan@itu.edu.tr) or through the ISPRS website. The *ISPRS Book Series* was started in 2003 and contains collections of high quality scientific papers, usually presented at ISPRS events, after peer-review.

ISPRS has an excellent website which is maintained by the webmaster, material is however only in the English language. We are discussing how other languages can be used to give more comprehensive and up to date information. We are also looking at how key presentations at meetings can be made available to a wider audience through webcasting, and using the same technology, at how presentations may be made remotely by key speakers.

Other activities in this area include the preparation of a video to promote photogrammetry and remote sensing, and the Society. Copies of this are being sent to ISPRS members, and copies can be purchased from Secretary General Altan (oaltan@itu.edu.tr).

Most of the work of ISPRS is done through the Commissions and Working Groups which organise meetings and workshops. The bulk of these are in the northern hemisphere, but we have 4 working groups with an African Chair or Regional Co-ordinator. This is not enough, but we recognise that Council has to provide support for these working groups to hold meetings in Africa.

Besides the quadrennial Congress, the next most important activities of the Commissions are the Symposia, to be held in 2006. The programme is given below. Limited funds are available from the ISPRS Foundation to assist people from developing countries to attend these meetings: details for each Commission can be found on their Symposium websites.

Capacity Building

ISPRS Council has decided to concentrate capacity building efforts on Africa as there is a clear need in this region, and it also an area where ISPRS members need support. We will maintain contact with African members through an email network, by attendance by a member of Council at one meeting in Africa per year and the organisation of a members meeting every 2 years. We will also support capacity building through collaboration with other organisations, such as ESA, CEOS or UN OOSA, to run tutorials and training courses; through sponsorship of people to workshops and regional meetings, possibly jointly with our Ordinary and Regional Members, and to collaborate with the ICSU (International Council for Science) GeoUnions in GeoScience for Africa. ISPRS is strongly supporting the Group on Earth Observation (GEO) and joined with IEEE and AARSE to organise a GEOSS (Global Earth Observation System of Systems) workshop at Africa GIS. As a member of

the GEO Capacity Building Committee (CBC) we will work with GEO to complete the tasks in the two year plan, and to organise capacity building activities. ISPRS is also a member of the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies (JBGIS), which includes FIG, ICA, IHO, IAG, The International Map Traders Association and the International Steering Committee for Global mapping, (see <http://www.fig.net/jbgis/>). JBGIS has a committee on capacity building in Africa which is compiling an inventory of organisation involved in capacity building for geospatial information, this will continue in collaboration with the GEO CBC. We are planning to hold a training school for students in Addis Ababa in collaboration with UN ECA.

Challenges for ISPRS and for Africa

ISPRS is seeking to establish its position as a recognised player at the highest level of international activity where the scientific and strategic background of ISPRS is needed. We have the human resources and the expertise: we need to ensure that these are used for the advantage of society as a whole. However we have a long way to go. We need more Africans involved in ISPRS; we need more meetings to be held in Africa; and we need more collaboration between other organisations involved in geospatial data which are working in Africa to ensure that our joint resources are used to the best advantage. We also need to hear from Africans on what they want from ISPRS, and we will then do our best to fulfil these requirements. We welcome any suggestions or offers of participation. Please look at the ISPRS website (<http://www.isprs.org>) and the JBGIS website (<http://www.fig.net/jbgis/>), and let me have your comments.

Further information on activities and on membership can be obtained from our website <http://www.isprs.org> or from myself (idowman@ge.ucl.ac.uk) or the Secretary General Orhan Altan (oaltan@itu.edu.tr)

Submitted by Ian Dowman, President, ISPRS

The South African Institute of International Affairs – SAIIA – Launch APRM Resource Website

SAIIA's Nepad and Governance Programme has been involved with APRM since 2002, training civil society groups, working with governments, facilitating seminars and writing reports.

SAIIA has launched a new portal on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as a resource and training tool for African countries and civil society groups participating in the process. The portal aims to inform and keep the public abreast with issues around peer review as well as showcase the most recent academic papers on the subject. Official country reviews as well as SAIIA country research has been posted

on the site. Countries and civil society groups wishing to sign up or those that are already in the process and need assistance are encouraged to contact the Nepad and Governance Programme at SAIIA.

To view the website go to: <http://www.saiia.org.za/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=846> or go to www.saiia.wits.ac.za and click on APRM Resource and Training Centre. For more information or enquiries do not hesitate to contact Peroshni Govender at goverp@saia.wits.ac.za or +27-82-921-0860.

South African GIS Week, 15 – 19 May

The Geo-Information Society of South Africa (GISSA www.gissa.org.za) initiated GIS week in May instead of in November, when the northern hemisphere have GIS day. It has become an annual event on the GIS calendar in South Africa, the aim being to expose the public, particularly schools, to the technology. GIS became part of the Grade 10 curriculum this year in South Africa, and teachers around the country are having to learn about the technology.

An education page has been set up on the GISSA web site with links to other interesting sites for the teachers. Links to software that can be downloaded will be provided and as well as a few exercises to learn the basics. In support of this initiative, South African TV will be covering GIS week for their teacher's weekend programme 'Beyond the Classroom', the date for which is still to be fi-

nalized.

Each of the provinces in which GISSA is represented is undertaking different functions, from a 3 day GIS fare for teachers and learners, to adopting a school and providing assistance where necessary in many of the other provinces. We encourage the GIS community to become involved in the initiative by assisting schools and creating awareness about GIS at their work.

Activities for schools:

adopt a school and offer to speak to the teachers/learners about GIS/GPS

provide posters and maps for school libraries for the week

encourage teachers to register with their local GIS body to receive industry news and participate in events.

Activities for the workplace:

organize a GPS demonstration – request assistance from your local vendor if you don't have any.

demonstrate google earth www.googleearth.com

contact your local university Geography Department to assist with demonstrations if you are not currently using GIS.

promote GIS week in your organization and demonstrate your work.

GIS is becoming an integral part of many environments, and we are hoping that by taking the initiative, the GIS community can create awareness and promote its optimal use.

Submitted by Carrin Martin

Upcoming Events (cont.)

Biodiversity in inhabited areas of Eastern Africa, Makerere University, Uganda, 19—21 July 2006. Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources (MUIENR), supported by the DANIDA-ENRECA Programme at Makerere University and the University of Dar es Salaam, will be hosting this Conference. Papers are particularly invited on the main theme, Biodiversity in Inhabited Areas of Eastern Africa and can include the results of the original studies on related aspects indicated below:

Biodiversity, people and agriculture (including such aspects as conserving biodiversity on farmlands and pastoral areas; biodiversity goods and services; traditional conservation; medicinal plants)

Biodiversity surveys and databases for conservation (species and habit modelling; monitoring; atlasing)

Use of GIS and Remote Sensing for natural resources management

Those interested are invited to send abstracts to the address below not later than 31st March 2006. Authors whose abstracts are selected will be informed by 30th April. Completed manuscripts should be brought to the conference and will be considered for publication in a peer reviewed journal. Abstracts which should not exceed 300 words should be submitted electronically to nbdb@mueinr.mak.ac.ug. Financial support will be offered to a limited number of residents of Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. A number of distinguished scientists are expected to give key note addresses. For further information please contact Ms Marjorie Nakibuka, MUIENR, P.O.Box 7298, Kampala. Tel +256 41 530135. Fax +256 41 530134. E-mail nbdb@mueinr.mak.ac.ug.

Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa 2006 Conference, Harare, Zimbabwe, 14-18 August 2006. The 24th year of the EEASA conference promises to offer all of the regular presentations and workshop styles of past conferences. Paper presentations, workshops, field trips, round table discussions and formulation of recommendations for regional actions in line with the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) will be offered. A market place will be available for displays. The conference will feature a special open day for young people with both the presentations and the displays focusing on the participation of the youth in EE.

The sub-themes for presentations at the EEASA 2006 conference will be:

- * Organising for Action in EE
- * Environmental Policy in Practice
- * Industrial Initiatives for the Environment
- * Challenge of Sustainable Development
- * Working Towards Best Practices in EE
- * Translating UNDESD into Action

For more information, see: www.action.co.zw

International Disaster Reduction Conference, Davos, Switzerland, 27 August—1 September 2006. For more information see <http://www.davos2006.ch/>

ISPRS Commission VIII Symposium, Haifa, Israel, 3—7 September 2006. For more information, see <http://www.commission8.isprs.org>.

ISPRS Commission III Symposium: "Photogrammetric Computer Vision", Bonn, Germany, 20—22 September 2006. For more information, see <http://www.commission3.isprs.org>.

International Water Management Institute (IWMI) is organizing an **International Workshop on Global Irrigated Area Mapping (GIAM)** during September 25-27, 2006 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Goals of the Workshop are to:

- 1) Gather a group of experts on global applications of RS and GIS to present, discuss, and refine products and associated methodologies, with specific focus on mapping irrigated area;
- 2) Disseminate GIAM products, data, methods, techniques, and protocols to a wide group of user's and experts;
- 3) Define a future work programme to refine and improve products and methodologies;
- 4) Write a book and/or bring out a special issue of a journal on irrigated areas of the World;
- 5) Provide hands-on training for interested participants in irrigated area mapping methods and techniques, used by IWMI and possibly by FAO and other partners;
- 6) Involve stakeholders in product use and dissemination.

Please register on-line (preferred) at: <http://www.iwmidsp.org/iwmi/giam-workshop/>.

Upcoming events (cont.)

Call for papers for the planned **2nd Gi4DM** which will take place in Goa, India from 25—26 September 2006. Deadline for submission of abstracts is 31 January 2006. For more information, see: <http://www.eis-africa.org>.

IFPRI Commission V Symposium: "Image Engineering & Vision Metrology", Dresden, Germany, 25—27 September 2005. For more information, see <http://www.commission5.isprs.org>.

IFPRI Commission IV Symposium: "Geospatial Databases for Sustainable Development", Goa, India, 27—30 September 2006. For more information, see <http://www.commission4.isprs.org>.

6th African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE) Conference, Cairo, Egypt, 30 October—2 November 2006. Theme: Earth Observation & Geoinformation Sciences in Support of Africa's Development. For further information, visit <http://www.narss.sci.eg/aarse2006>. For information concerning AARSE go to: <http://www.itc.nl/~aarse/>. The AARSE conference is the largest gathering of remote sensing and GIS users in Africa. The conference is a premier forum in Africa which brings together scientists, practitioners, educators, developers and vendors and policy and decision makers to discuss advancements (Latest developments), applications, capacity building and promotion of geo-information technologies in sustainable development of Africa. It is a forum in which participants learn and exchange ideas on the latest advancements in the technologies and their applications in different fields. Strategies for promotion and use of the technologies in Africa are also discussed. **The last date to submit an abstract is 15 April 2006.** More than 1000 participants are expected under one umbrella.

Young Scientists' Global Change Conference 2006, Beijing, China, 2—8 November 2006. Applications: http://www.start.org/links/announce_oppo/YSC_Application%205.doc. Wherever possible, those having papers/posters accepted will have their full costs (including travel and accommodation) covered.

The **Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association** is pleased to invite the global spatial data community to attend their 9th international conference in Santiago, Chile. The primary sessions will occur Monday through Friday November 6-10, 2006. Continuing with their organizational goal of fostering spatial data infrastructure developments in support of important worldwide needs, the theme of GSDI-9 is "Spatial Information: Tool for Reducing Poverty." The conference will be held at the Diego Portales Convention Center in the heart of the lovely city of Santiago. The program promises to be the most exciting and best yet. For further information, see: <http://www.igm.cl/gsd9/>

ESSP Open Science Conference, 9—12 November 2006, Beijing, China. Call for contributions: We invite scientists, policy makers, practitioners, scholars, members of the private sector and journalists to participate in the ESSP Open Science Conference and to submit online abstracts (poster or parallel session presentations) through the OSC website (http://www.essp.org/ESSP2006/CallPapers_index.html). Please note that this call for contributions will primarily be for poster presentations, and that poster sessions will be an integral part of the Conference. Poster sessions will also relate directly to OSC parallel sessions. A list of the session titles and their keywords/brief descriptions can be found on the online submission form and on the Conference website (see web link above). Please note that we cannot accept late submissions (deadline: 01 May 2006) and that abstracts should not exceed 250 words. Thank you for your interest in the ESSP OSC.

2nd Annual International conference of the African Science Academy Development Initiative (ASADI) on "Prioritizing Food Security Policies for Health and Development in Africa", hosted by the Cameroon Academy of Science in Yaoundé Cameroon, November 12—16, 2006. The second meeting would consist of a first day of joint and executive sessions involving the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC) and the Board on African Science Academy Development (BASAD); a 2-day public launch and scientific event focusing on the use of science and technology in improving policy decision-making related to food security for health and development in Africa and a 2-day learning collaborative involving African science academy leaders and staff, including a 1-day session involving media representatives from each African country. Resources held by the US National Academies have been set aside under the African Science Academy Development Initiative (ASADI) for an annual Africa-US joint symposium and learning collaborative over the ten years of the project. The goals for this annual event are to raise the visibility of science academies in Africa and to promote their potential role in informing government decision making in a variety of areas, to establish and build long-term partnerships among the US National Academies and African academies of science, to strengthen African partnerships, and to provide a venue for specific training opportunities for African science academies. For more information, see <http://www.assaf.co.za>.



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May Newsletter

Any contributions, which are welcomed, must reach us by 22 May 2006. Contributions can be sent to svorster@eis-africa.org.

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Report Shows Agricultural Soil Declining in Africa

A recent report by the International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development (IFDC) shows that 75% of farmland in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is plagued by severe degradation, and is losing basic soil nutrients needed to grow the crops that feed Africa. The highest rates of nutrient depletion were found in Guinea, Congo, Angola, Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda, where nutrient losses are more than 60 kilograms per hectare per year. Africa's crisis in food production and battle with hunger are largely rooted in this "soil health crisis."

The report also found that: 1) About 50,000 hectares of forest and 60,000 hectares of Africa's grasslands are lost to agriculture yearly, due to low levels of soil fertility and increasing population pressures; 2) Loss of nitrogen and phosphorus through soil erosion

by wind and water, and leaching of nitrogen and potassium contribute to soil nutrient depletion; and 3) About 33% of the sub-Saharan population is undernourished, and most of the undernourished live in East Africa, where nutrient mining rates are high.

To address this issue, President Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman of the Implementing Committee of the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, is calling on African heads of state, ministers, donors, industry leaders, farmers' organizations, and others to support the transformation of African agriculture, beginning with the "Africa Fertilizer Summit." The summit will tackle the soil health crisis and adopt strategies to revitalize African agriculture, and will take place on the

9th-13th of June, 2006, in Abuja, Nigeria.

The summit will be implemented by the IFDC. For more information, read the press release at http://www.rockfound.org/Library/Summit_Press_Release.pdf.

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