



Editorial

Dear Readers,

I was reminded after we sent out the last newsletter by many of our readers that we made no mention of the fact that we had published 50 editions of EIS-NEWS. Quiet an achievement I would say! But I must admit the both Sonja and I had completely failed to pick this up. I guess we are working too hard to give ourselves a pat on the back. But we would be the first to admit that none of this would have been possible without the contribution and support of our readers. We thank for your input and advice in making our services and products better and more professional. Hopefully we can get to magical 100th publication mark in the future. But our 50th edition has also marked an urgent re-think in the way we distribute the newsletter. Due to funding constraints, EIS-AFRICA will not be able to provide a separate English and French newsletter. The cost of professional

translation is high and we desperately seek monetary support to be able to continue to offer you this service. As of next month, we will be publishing a single newsletter with a mix of English and French articles. If funding does become available we will definitely publish both versions of the newsletter. It is also that time of the year, when members of EIS-AFRICA get to nominate other members to stand for election onto our Board of Directors. There is an article below that provides you will all the relevant information. Finally, amongst all the other interesting articles you will find a call to host the 2008 AARSE conference, we appeal to you to please support our sister organization in putting forward your country as a potential host of one of Africa's leading geo-information events. Until next month, enjoy the read.

Sives Govender

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO HOST THE 7TH CONFERENCE OF AARSE IN 2008

The African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE) was founded in 1992 and was registered as a Regional Member of the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) in 1994. The primary objective of the association is to increase the awareness of African governments and their institutions, the private sector and the society at large, about the empowering and enhancing benefits of developing, applying and utilizing responsibly, the products and services of Earth Observation Systems and Geo-information Technology.

To achieve its objectives, AARSE conducts biennial (once every two years) international conferences across Africa apart from other awareness and capacity building activities. Up to 2004, AARSE, with the support of local and international organizations, has organized five of such conferences in Harare (Zimbabwe) in 1996, Abidjan (Cote D'Ivoire) in 1998, Cape Town (South Africa) in 2000, Abuja (Nigeria) in 2002 and Nairobi (Kenya) in October 2004. The respective themes of these conferences were as follows:

The Application of remotely Sensed Data and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in Environmental Resources Assessment in Africa;

Lessons of Experience and the Way

Forward for Integrated Development and Application of Remote Sensing and GIS for Sustainable Development in Africa;

Information for Sustainable development;

Geo-information for Sustainable Development in Africa; and

The Role of Geo-Information Technologies (GIT) in the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

The attendance at each of these conferences is usually more than 600 international participants and exhibitors.

The 6th conference will take place from 30 October to 2 November 2006 in Cairo, Egypt with the theme: Geoinformation Sciences & Earth Observation in Support of Africa's Development (see www.narss.sci.eg/aarse2006)

AARSE is hereby inviting expression of interest from national institutional members and other organizations/agencies in Africa for the hosting/organisation of the 7th Conference of the Association in 2008 or other future editions of the conference. The conference is usually held in the month of October (of every even number year).

Upcoming Events

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

FOSS4G2006 is a four day conference, bringing together all the Free and Open Source Software for Geoinformatics (FOSS4G) communities. The conference incorporates the OSGIS Conference, Mapserver User Meeting, GRASS Users Conference, Java oriented FOSS4G and EOGeo Workshops. Lausanne, Switzerland will host the conference, making it the first time many of these groups will meet in Europe. It builds on the success of the Open Source Geospatial'05 conference held in Minneapolis, USA. This conference is an exciting opportunity for both users and managers to network, learn about products and services, and develop both technical and management skills for adopting open source technologies. The event is expected to draw over 500 people from around the globe, representing the existing user and developer communities as well as those interested from government, non-government organisations, academia, and industry. Finally, with the recent creation of the Open Source Geospatial Foundation, FOSS4G2006 will be an exciting opportunity to network with foundation members and projects. Dates: from 12 September 2006 08:00 to 15 September 2006 18:00 Location: Lausanne, Switzerland. For further information, see <http://www.foss4g2006.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. Please register on-line (preferred) at: <http://www.iwmidsp.org/iwmi/giam-workshop/>.

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>.

First Eastern Africa ESRI User Conference (EAUC), Nairobi, Kenya, 5 - 6 October 2006. Oakar Services Ltd, ESRI's Eastern Africa Distributor invites you to join current and potential users of ESRI software and members of the regional spatial data community at the very 1st Eastern Africa ESRI User Conference. **2-4/10/06 Pre-conference Program** will include (a) ESRI Instructor-led GIS training sessions (b) Pre-conference seminar *GIS in Law Enforcement & Homeland Security*. The EAUC will feature paper presentations, a user poster display, commercial exhibitions, technical workshops and also an inspiring Student Assistantship Program. Paper Abstracts are now invited on any of the following tracks: (a) Environment & Natural Resources (b) Planning, Land Management & Economic Development (c) GIS Science, Technology & Education, Business Services (d) Transportation, Utilities & Public Works (e) Health & Public Safety. **Abstract submission deadline is 30 June.** For full conference details, contact eauc@esria.co.ke

SARETI: African Health Research Ethics Symposium 2006. The South African Research Ethics Training Initiative (SARETI) is an Africa-based research ethics training programme funded by the Fogarty International Center of the US National Institutes of Health. SARETI is currently in its fourth year of programme activity, with several Masters-level and fellowship students close to completing their degrees and training. In October this year, SARETI plans to host the first African Health Research Ethics Symposium (AHRES). The meeting will be held from Wed 11th to Fri 13th October 2006 at the Meridien Hotel in Dakar, Senegal. The medium of the meeting will be in English. We invite expressions of interest for the submission of papers and presentations at this SARETI symposium. The focus of AHRES will be the presentation of new research and scholarship on ethical issues in research in Africa, or by African researchers and scholars. Preference will be given to scholars or fellows of Fogarty International bioethics programmes. We will have several distinguished keynote speakers, each of whom will have expertise in African research ethics and developing country issues more generally. The remainder of the programme will be scholarly and research papers on aspects of research ethics in Africa. Although the focus will be on Africa, interested delegates from other countries will be welcome to apply to contribute. Interested colleagues are invited to Email Ms Debbie Marais maraisd@ukzn.ac.za to be kept on the mailing list as the programme develops. You may also indicate whether you would be interested in delivering a paper, and provide a 20-line abstract of your intended topic. For more information, see: <http://shsph.up.ac.za/sareti/sareti.htm>

6th African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE) Conference, Cairo, Egypt, 30 October—2 No-



Expression of Interest

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Botswana is in the process of identifying potential consulting firms for the **Development of a national Environmental Information System (EIS)**.

The consultancy falls under the Government of Botswana - UNDP Environment Support Programme (ESP). This consultancy intends to develop an Environmental Information System which will include the development of a core set of environmental indicators. The system will contain various data sets and environmental indicators which will inform environmental decision-making and will aid in the production of the next State of the Environment Report (SoER).

This announcement relates to the **Development of a National Environmental Information System (EIS)**. Detailed documentation is available from The Operations Manager, UNDP-Botswana, #22 Khama Crescent, Gaborone, Botswana.

UNDP Botswana invites qualified potential consulting firms to express their interest in providing the above services. **The expression of interest should specify "Development of a National Environmental Information System (EIS)"** and be received by UNDP Botswana no later than 1700hrs (GMT+2:00), Thursday August 31st, 2006. Electronic submissions will be accepted only in non-editable PDF-version.

Only consulting firms able to provide the required services and prevailing from past experiences delivering similar services in the region of destination will be considered.

The expression of interest must include the following documentation:

- A company profile indicating the number of staff, core areas of expertise and experience, number of years in the consulting business
- Certified financial reports for the last three years. These reports in the form of balance sheets will display the annual turnover, annual profit and company's own capital
- Past successful experiences (names of projects, contact persons, country of use) in supplying similar type of consulting services.
- Local knowledge or ability to work in the region

The deadline for invited firms to submit proposals would be advised later. It should be noted that UNDP Botswana is not obliged to invite to participate in the subsequent bidding process any particular potential consulting firm that expressed an interest in this project.

Interested potential consulting firms should forward their expression of interest with the above documentation to the following address:

The Operations Manager

Tel: +267 395 2121

Email: Kenae.Ramodimoosi@undp.org

16 weeks postgraduate certificate course

Applications of Earth Observation and GIS in Integrated Water Resources Management, 8 January-27 April 2007, Nairobi and Njoro, Kenya

for Development, Nairobi, Kenya

- Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya

- Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Organised by:

- International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation

For more information:

http://www.itc.nl/itc_worldwide/kenya_brochure.pdf

- Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources

<http://www.itc.nl/itc_worldwide/kenya_brochure.pdf>

Interesting sites

Geosoft has released its new OS technology called Dapple. It's an advanced new way to search for and view massive amounts of geo-scientific, earth data in a globe environment. It is not the first of its kind - there are others, such as NASA's World Wind and Google Earth. Dapple is unique, however,

because it is purpose-built to support the data needs and workflow of the geoscience community. We believe that global earth explorers are the new standard for viewing spatial data, and Dapple is our contribution to the open, geo-science community. It was derived from NASA's World Wind's open

source technology.

Interested parties can download the free software from

<http://dapple.geosoft.com>

Consultancy Opportunity

WETLANDS AND POVERTY REDUCTION PROJECT

Best Practices and Lessons Learned: Poverty-Environment Issues in Wetland Areas

Wetlands International (WI) is implementing a 4-year, €6.2 million Wetlands and Poverty Reduction

Project (WPRP) funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS). The project aims to

influence policy and practice at all levels to enhance the recognition of the interconnection between

human well-being and wetland management.

As a contribution towards this aim and the on-going development of WI programming in this area, WI

seeks to engage a consultant(s) to undertake an investigation that examines best practices and lessons

learned in addressing poverty-environment issues in development programmes addressing wetland

areas. This investigation will result in the development of a guidance and evaluation framework that will

be used to assess the five demonstration projects recently funded by the WPRP. WI would expect the

consultant(s) to maintain involvement with these demonstration projects throughout their funding

period

(end of 2008), and to measure their effectiveness according to the evaluation framework.

For further information, see

<http://www.eis-africa.org>

Ghana Urged to Boost Agri Production

Ghana has to be innovative in addressing problems of land preparation, low yielding crops, livestock, and water management, among others. This was stated by Mr. Sylvester Adongo, Northern Regional Director of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA), as he addressed agricultural extension officers in a recently concluded two-day training workshop.

"Conservative estimates show that the country imports 100 per cent of

wheat, 90 per cent of sugar, 66 per cent of rice, 50 per cent of meat, 33 per cent of chicken and 15 per cent of milk. This shows that we are virtually eating outside and not at home. How long can we depend on other people to feed us?" Mr. Adongo asked.

With reports from

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200608150629.html> and <http://www.accra-mail.com>.

For more information, contact Daniel Otunge of the East-

ern and Central Africa Biotechnology Information Center (ECABIC) at d.otunge@cgiar.org.

Source: Crop Biotech Update, 18 August 2006

KCC receives Shs15.6m for environment management

KAMPALA City Council has earmarked Euros 6.6million (about Shs.15.6billion) to improve the environment in the city.

The money for the project dubbed Kampala Integrated Environmental Management Project (KIEMP) is a grant from the Belgium government.

Targeting city slums

While launching the project at City Hall in Kampala on August 14, Mayor Nasser Sebagala said KIEMP would tackle mainly environmental management and planning issues in city slums.

"Kampala city particularly faces challenges of environmental man-

agement and planning mainly in the slum communities because they lack adequate water supply, solid waste and excreta disposal facilities," Sebagala said.

"I am confident that with the launching of this project we will go a long way in enhancing environmental planning and management in the poor suburbs as we move towards realising a cleaner and modern city."

Beneficiaries

The three selected slums to benefit from the project are Bwaise III, Katwe I and Kisenyi II. Sebagala said slums were selected to benefit from the grant, saying they had

the worst environmental conditions.

The project activities would include among others planting grass and flowers, improving roads, drainage, waste management and sanitation facilities.

The project has come at a time when KCC is embarking on demolishing ramshackled structures along the highways ahead of the Commonwealth summit slated for November next year.

Source: Daily Monitor

Role of NGOs in environmental conservation stressed

The Permanent Secretary in the Vice-President's office, Abubakar Rajabu, has underscored the need to highlight the role of NGOs in conserving the environment.

According to Rajabu, NGOs would play an important role in protecting the environment from destruction and keeping water catchments safe from pollution.

The PS, was officiating at the opening of a one-day meeting that brought together about 15 NGOs engaging on the environmental sector held in Dar es Salaam at the end of last week.

"The government is committed to bring back joint meetings between the government and NGOs aimed at reviving the challenge and forge better ways for curbing environmental problems for national interests," he said.

Rajabu said his office would keep on co-ordinating steps being taken in follow ups to the government directives regarding environmental protection and conservation.

He said the steps covered a number of areas including protection and conservation of land and water resources, and added that his office was working closely with respective ministries, institutions and other stakeholders in the sector.

He also reminded that the government was working hard to implement an environmental strategy on the protection and conservation of land and water resources it revealed a couple of months ago.

Rajabu reiterated the government's commitment to conserve the environment and said as part of efforts geared to achieve the goal, a special cabinet committee has been formed to oversee its implementation.

He said the committee is headed by Vice-President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein and Chief Permanent Secretary Philemon Luhanjo.

Rajabu commended the NGOs that participated actively in protect-

ing and conserving the environment, despite limited resources.

On his part, the Chairman of a network of NGOs on environment, Dr Hermann Mwageni, expressed satisfaction on the way the government was willing to work with civic organisations in dealing with environmental issues.

He said members of the network would like to meet government leaders at various levels from time to time to discuss on environmental programmes, including progress of action in the sector.

Source: GUARDIAN

GLCN WEST-AFRICA

Start-up pilot phase launched this week at the CSE, Dakar, Senegal

The Global land Cover Network (GLCN) Program for West Africa moved into an operational phase on Monday August 28, 2006, with the launch of its start-up pilot program at the headquarters of the “Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE)” in Dakar, Senegal.

GLCN West Africa was initiated by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), with the assistance of the Italian Government and the Istituto Agronomico per l’Oltremare (IAO) in November 2003, when twenty six (26) experts from Western and Central Africa attended an awareness and training workshop on the Global land Cover Network in Dakar, Senegal, soon after the AfricaGIS Conference and Exhibition.

The GLCN West Africa Program is a sub-regional component of the FAO/UNEP-led global coalition aiming at “improving the availability of global information on land cover and its dynamics, harmonizing land cover mapping and monitoring at national, regional and global levels. GLCN will generate essential data needed for sustainable development, environmental protection, food security and humanitarian programs of the United Nations, and of other international and national institutions. The GLCN initiative will bring together national technical staff in the fields of remote sensing/geographic information system (GIS), agriculture, forestry, pasture/rangeland, environment, and food security to develop a network at the regional and global scale to adopt the standardization of land cover measurement methods and develop regional and global land cover products. The collaboration will involve not only data providers but also data users and policy-makers”(proceedings of the Dakar awareness and training workshop, 10-14 November 2003).

In accordance with this vision, national GLCN interdisciplinary teams involving the key institutions producing and using Land Cover data in every country are being set up in the sub-region. A sample of these national teams, selected from Burkina Faso, The Gambia, and Senegal are represented at the launching of the start-up pilot phase of the GLCN West Africa program in Dakar. Seven (7) experts are being trained on the GLCN methodology and tools, including the Land Cover Classification System – LCCS. After this training, they will be in charge of producing the national LC database of their respective countries. The “Centre de Suivi Écologique” has been chosen to play the role of GLCN incubator for the sub-region.

The author is thankful to the GLCN coordinator in Rome, the FAO Representatives in Burkina Faso, The Gambia and Senegal for their assistance during the planning and the implementation of this workshop. Many thanks to the CSE for the availability of its staff and the facilities provided, and to the trainers team.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

André Bassolé, Regional Coordinator, GLCN Program for West Africa (abassole@fasonet.bf) or

Gianni Pinucci, Regional Coordinator, GLCN Program for Africa (g.pinucci@svaltec.it)

John Latham, Coordinator, GLCN Program (John.Latham@fao.org)

Submitted by André Bassolé, GLCN Regional Coordinator for West Africa

Firm to exploit plant grown in Ethiopia

A British firm, Vernique Biotech, would soon commercially exploit a plant grown only in Ethiopia, Business in Africa reported.

Vernonia, a plant with shiny black seeds, when pressed gives oil that offers a source of epoxy compounds that, to date, have only been produced from petrochemicals, it was stated.

The plant is disliked up to now by Ethiopian farmers who considered it a weed, the network said, adding that it is grown in the valleys of eastern Ethiopia.

Experts in the field have conducted studies during the last three years by growing vernonia throughout Ethiopia and were now ready to develop vernonia as a commercial oilseed crop, according to Business in Africa online News.

The Ethiopian Government signed an agreement in July with Vernique Biotech who would commercialise vernonia oil as a "green" chemical. It said the oil would offer a green base for the manufacture of paints, plastics and adhesives and has pharmaceutical potentials. McClory, an environmental businessman, believes that vernonia oil does not give off the volatile organic compounds that cause pollution when extracted petrochemically. "Once grown on a commercial scale vernonia will compete economically," he was quoted as saying.

The deal took place under the auspices of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's Access and Benefit Sharing Agreement, one of the few existing deals of its kind, it said.

The deal would benefit the govern-

ment and hundreds of local farmers who would be paid to grow vernonia on land that was too poor to produce good food crops.

Environmental Protection Authority Director General Dr. Tewolde-Berhan Gebre-Egziabher, said the vernonia access agreement was the second negotiated by his country, according to the network.

A first agreement, signed in 2004, offered Dutch company Health and Performance Food International the right to exploit an Ethiopian cereal called "teff."

Source: The Ethiopian Herald

GRASS GIS 6.1.0 released 11 August 2006

A new technology preview version of GRASS GIS is being released today in preparation for the next benchmark release, GRASS 6.2. This feature release, version 6.1.0, improves upon the previous stable version of GRASS by adding hundreds of new features as well as support for the latest GIS data formats.

The Geographic Resources Analysis Support System, commonly referred to as GRASS, is a Geographic Information System (GIS) combining powerful raster, vector, and geospatial processing engines into a single integrated software suite. GRASS includes tools for spatial modeling, visualization of raster and vector data, management and analysis of geospatial data, and the processing of satellite and aerial imagery. It also provides the capability to produce sophisticated presentation graphics and hardcopy maps.

GRASS is currently used around the world in academic and commercial settings as well as by many governmental agencies and

environmental consulting companies. It runs on a variety of popular hardware platforms and is Free open source software released under the terms of the GNU General Public License.

Joining GRASS's well-developed raster engine the GRASS 6 series introduced a new topological 2D/3D vector engine featuring support for vector network analysis and SQL-based DBMS management of linked attributes. This release improves the integration and functionality of the raster and vector engines, and 3D raster (voxel) support has been greatly enhanced.

A new graphical GIS manager and menu system has been implemented, while the old GUI display manager has been retained and improved for legacy support. The NVIZ visualization tool has been enhanced to display 3D vector data and voxel volumes and supports the creation of on-the-fly MPEG animations. Additional improvements include substantial message translation (i18n) with

support for FreeType fonts, including multi-byte Asian characters, and tools to allow new project locations to be automatically generated from input data or EPSG code.

This is the first release of GRASS as a proposed founding project of the new Open Source Geospatial Foundation. In support of the movement towards consolidation in the open source geospatial software world, GRASS is tightly integrated with the latest GDAL/OGR libraries. This enables access to an extensive range of raster and vector formats, including OGC-conformal Simple Features. GRASS also makes use of the highly regarded PROJ.4 software library with support for most known map projections and the easy definition of new and rare map projections via custom parameterization.

Full announcement:

http://grass.itc.it/announces/announcement_grass610.html

Upcoming Events (cont.)

vember 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.

International Symposium on Agricultural Innovation Systems in Africa, Kampala, Uganda, November 2006. Researchers and practitioners are invited to submit abstracts on good practice in studying and enhancing innovation in agricultural research, development, and education. Papers need not be directly linked to agriculture and natural resource management. Contributions are also sought for an interactive marketplace in the form of posters, videos, slides, photographs, websites, maps, group interactions, participatory theatre, and other lively ways of showing how work on innovation systems is being conducted in Africa and elsewhere. The deadline for submissions is August 15, 2006. For more information, see http://www.ciat.cgiar.org/africa/eri_symposium06_fulltext.htm

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.

2ND ArcGIS WEST AFRICA USER CONFERENCE (AWAUC 2006), 8th – 9th November, 2006, La Palm Royal Beach Hotel, Accra, Ghana. *"Unlocking the power of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for attaining development goals in West Africa"* is the theme for this year's ArcGIS user conference for West Africa. This conference provides the ArcGIS user as well as those unfamiliar with the benefits of GIS, an opportunity to meet GIS professionals and peers to focus on the growing use of GIS in the West African sub region. Paper and Poster Presentations would cover industry and application areas highlighting three sub-themes:

GeoSpatial Information: A foundation for Sustainable Environment

Driving the business forward: Unlocking GIS for Services Planning

Meeting our millennium challenge goals: Transport, Agriculture, *et al*

Technical workshops, map gallery, raffle draw and more available, visit www.sambus.com to learn more about the conference.

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: www.gsdi9.cl

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.

International Symposium on Geoinformatics in Nature Protection Regions, Dresden, Germany, 13—14 November 2006. For further information see <http://www.natureprotection-gis.de>.

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

Upcoming events (cont.)

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>.

The Australasian Ontology Workshop (AOW 2006), Held in Conjunction with the 19th Australian Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI'06), December 4 or 5, 2006, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia. AI'06 Conference website: <http://www.comp.utas.edu.au/ai06/>. The workshop will seek submission of papers on original and unpublished research on all aspects of ontology research, including, but not limited to

- * ontology models and theories,
- * ontologies and the semantic web;
- * interoperability in ontologies;
- * multi-agent systems and ontologies;
- * description logics for ontologies;
- * reasoning with ontologies;
- * ontology harvesting on the web;
- * ontology of agents and actions;
- * ontology visualisation;
- * ontology engineering and management;
- * ontology-based information extraction and retrieval
- * ontology merging, alignment and integration;
- * web ontology languages;
- * formal concept analysis and ontologies.

The authors of selected papers from the Workshop will also be invited to submit longer, extended versions of their papers to a Special Issue on Advances in Ontologies of Expert Systems: The Journal of Knowledge Engineering published by Blackwells (<http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/journal.asp?ref=0266-4720&site=1>). The special issue will seek submissions of papers dealing with all aspects of ontology research, including the theoretical foundations, design, implementation and prototype development issues, ontologies in multi-agent systems and the Semantic Web, comparative studies, and applications, as well as those describing new challenges arising out of applications. Each paper will go through a rigorous review process. The special issue is scheduled to appear in late 2007. Further details including paper submission and important dates are available from http://www.comp.mq.edu.au/conferences/aow/EXSY_CFP.html.

3rd International Conference: “Earth from Space—the Most Effective Solutions.”, 4—6 December, Moscow, Russia. The goal of the conference is to show the experience of practical use of satellite monitoring in different branches of economy together with the recent developments in remote sensing as the backbone of cost-efficient functioning economic systems. For more information please visit conference web site www.transparentworld.ru/conference

2nd Space and Society Conference “Space Options for the 21st Century”, ESTEC, Noordwijk, The Netherlands from 27 February – 1 March 2007. The first announcement and call for papers can be found on the European Space Agency's Conference Web site: <http://www.congrex.nl/06a12/>

The National Organising Committee of the World Environmental Education Congress 2007, is pleased to announce that the **Fourth World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC 2007)** is due to take place in South Africa from Monday, 2 - Fri-



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*A network for the co-operative
management of environmental information*

www.eis-africa.org

September Newsletter

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

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EIS-AFRICA's 2006-2007 Annual General meeting; nomination of board members

It was agreed at our last Annual General Meeting, held in Pretoria, South Africa, in November 2005 that EIS-AFRICA should identify ways to save costs associated with running an AGM.

In light of this, a decision was taken to have a "virtual" AGM i.e. an AGM that will be done electronically via the web and email.

The election of three new Board members will be held by proxy in October 2006. All nominations for new Board must be submitted, via email, to svorster@eis-africa.org no later than Friday, 29 September 2006. In nominating a candidate, please provide a short

reason for nominating them to serve on the board. The secretariat will circulate a list of eligible and willing nominees to the EIS-AFRICA membership, by 10 October 2006. You will have until 20 October 2006 to vote for up to three candidates of your choice.

Please remember that only fully paid up members can nominate and be nominated to the Board.

Also note that the following board members will be coming to the end of their term:

- Ms Anna Ballance,
- Dr Mamadou Fofana,
- Mr Patrice Sanou

Please note that they can be nominated for re-election.

We look forward to receiving your nominations.