

## **AfricaGIS™ 2009 in Uganda is a huge success**

AfricaGIS™ 2009 conference will go down in history as a remarkable edition of the biennial international conference held at the Commonwealth Speke Resort in Kampala, Uganda.

The conference was opened by the Minister for ICT Hon. Aggrey Awori representing the President of Uganda General Y. K. Museveni and accompanied by the Minister of Water and Environment Hon. Maria Mutagamba as well as the State Minister of Environment Hon. Jessica Eriyo. During the opening the Minister also launched the UNEP/NEMA interactive atlas on "Our Changing Environment" which features on Google Earth.

The conference attracted a total of 481 delegates from five continents and 40 exhibitors from Africa, Europe, America, Middle East and Asia. A total of 126 papers and 48 poster presentations were given at the conference and demonstrated the value addition of geo-information to Africa's sustainable development.

The keynote addresses will be remembered for the intuitive and provoking ideas reminding Africa about the potential in the GI human resource and infrastructure that it is time to build on capacity, generate knowledge and accelerate knowledge-based development on the continent.

The conference was supported by the Government of Uganda, Makerere University and several international Geo-Information companies and bilateral governments including US Department of State, ESRI, Google Earth, Trimble and UN-Habitat among others.

Kicking off with three pre-conference on Geo-Information for e-Governance, the GEOSS/Geonetcast and Google Earth workshops, young scholars were refreshed with new advances in utilization of geo-information for improved governance being a key factor in sustainable development.

A series of special sessions were held throughout the week notably GDEST, ESRI, Google Earth, WhereKampala, IALE, ISPRS, CIESIN and UNOOSA workshops. These workshops spiced up the conference atmosphere and provided opportunities for networking, collaboration and transfer of skills and knowledge among the delegates.

The International Organizing Committee, Local Organizing Committee would like to express their appreciation for the support and enthusiasm by delegates that really made AfricaGIS™ 2009 a wonderful conference. The Local and International Organizing committee recognizes too the participation of members of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) and their contribution in making this event a success.

EIS-Africa and LOC also made special recognition of individuals who have greatly contributed to the development and promotion of geo-information on the continent. The IOC and LOC wishes to once again congratulate Hon. Dr. Wilber Ottichillo, Mr. Charles Sebukeera, Mr. Frank Turyatunga, Mr. Andre Bassole, Mr. Partrice Sanou and Mr. Paul Bartel for their awards and their great work.

The conference closed with a set of key resolutions being drafted and presented to EIS-Africa to action. These resolutions will be published on the ESI-Africa and AfricaGIS™ 2009 websites.

Finally we are proud to announce that AfricaGIS™ 2011 will be hosted by NARSS in Cairo, Egypt. AfricaGIS™ 2011 will be the tenth edition of Africa's leading geospatial science and technology showcase and we hope to see you there!

From the organizers of AfricaGIS™ 2009 we thank you all again for your support.

(A more detailed report will be posted on the conference website). **Report by Dr. Shuaib Lwasa and Sives Govender.**

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A Network for the Co-operative Management  
of Environmental Information in Africa

### Declaration of Pan-African Parliamentarians Network on Climate Change

Nairobi: We, members of the Pan-African Parliamentarians' Network on Climate Change (PAPNCC) having met in Nairobi, Kenya, for the Second African Parliamentarians Summit on Climate Change, from 12 to 15 October 2009 under the theme "Climate Change: One Africa, One Voice, One Position":

Aware that climate change is a reality,

Recalling the objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and in particular Article 2 which provides that "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system...within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner,"

Further recalling the pertinent provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and in particular Article 3.1 which provides that "the Parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities...Accordingly, the developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof,"  
Concerned that Africa makes insignificant contribution to global warming; yet the continent bears the brunt of the negative impacts which have become a serious threat to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the continent,

Taking into account the special circumstances of Africa and particularly its high vulnerability because of multiple stresses and low capacity to adapt,

Mindful of all African Union assembly of Heads of State and Governments decision in Sirte, Libya in July 2009 and the declaration of the Third Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in Nairobi, Kenya in May 2009,  
Mindful also of the efforts of the African group of negotiators under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in

**Dear Reader,**

**Can you believe that AfricaGIS™ 2009 is over!?! It was another truly remarkable event and despite a freak storm that caused havoc with the exhibition, the conference proved to be a great showcase of Geospatial Science and Technology talents from International and African participants.**

**The technical programme for AfricaGIS™ 2009 was really strong and I believe that the technical training sessions and the daily keynote plenary sessions were the best in the history of the event.**

**In 2011 EIS-AFRICA will be taking our tenth AfricaGIS™ to the "land of the Pharos", Egypt.**

**It will be only the 2nd AfricaGIS™ conference in North Africa . The first being in Tunisia in 1993, so it is perhaps appropriate that the tenth anniversary should be celebrated so close to the inaugural AfricaGIS™ meeting.**

**EIS-AFRICA also hosted its AGM and exhibition at AfricaGIS™ and we were able to recruit many new members. Thank you to all of you who have joined our ever growing network and please look out for your membership to the Association of American Geographers (AAG) in the post. Thanks too, to Dora and Rita for assisting EIS-AFRICA during the conference.**

**Lastly we want to say a fond farewell to Vilde Ulset who assisted the EIS-AFRICA Secretariat for the past 10 months. Vilde, thanks very much and all the best in your future activities in Norway.**

*Sives Govender*

**Declaration of Pan-African Parliamentarians Network on Climate Change (Continued)**

forging a united common African Negotiating Position in the international negotiations for the Post 2012 climate change agreement,

Reaffirming the Declaration of the First Pan-African Parliamentary Conference on Climate Change held in Yaounde, Cameroon in June 2009,

Further Re-affirming that Africa, in the context of environmental justice, should be equitably compensated for environmental, economic and social losses,

Determined to protect the African people and her environment against adverse effects resulting from climate change,

Recognizing the impacts that climate change will have on national poverty eradication and sustainable development strategies in African countries,

Further Recognizing the paramount importance of Parliament and Members of Parliament not only to take interest in the climate change negotiations, but also to actively contribute to the formulation and enactment of enabling national climate change policies and legislation in a robust governance system,

**HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:**

1. To underscore the importance of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol as it is the only most important legally binding instrument embedding the commitments of Annex 1 Parties, and therefore, any post 2012 agreement must build on Kyoto Protocol and not abandon it altogether.
  2. To call for ambitious and binding commitments on reducing global emissions by developed country Parties by at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by between 80 and 95 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050 in order to maintain concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide below 450 ppm and temperatures below 2oC.
  3. To demand that as adaptation needs for Africa are already an urgent necessity developed countries must commit at least 1.5 percent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) over and above the official development assistance (ODA) so as to provide the requisite resources to support adaptation actions in Africa, including climate change-related disaster risk reduction.
  4. To further demand the acknowledgement that the contribution of the rainforests and savannahs make to climate protection through support of the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest degradation (REDD plus) and Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), including agriculture and other land uses and ensure their incorporation in the new climate change agreement.
  5. To further also demand that in accordance with Article 4.5 of the Convention, developed countries should fulfill their commitment to promote, facilitate and finance the transfer of, and unconstrained access to, environmentally sound technologies, innovations and know how.
  6. To stress that the financial resources required to address climate change should be new, additional, adequate, predictable, sustainable and provided primarily in the form of grants and other innovative financing mechanisms and instruments.
  7. To further call for a specific mechanism to support enhanced actions on capacity building in developing countries within the framework of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, including strengthening regional and national capacities, skills, capabilities and institutions.
  8. To encourage African Governments to create enabling environments and strengthen governance systems including development of the necessary climate change legislation, policies, strategies and action plans.
  9. To urge African Governments to fully integrate climate change issues into national and sub-national planning, management, budgeting and implementation.
  10. To urge African Governments to proactively involve all stakeholders, particularly women, young people and physically challenged persons in climate change response measures.
  11. To further urge African Governments to incorporate and involve Members of Parliament in climate change negotiations and events, including the post 2012 climate change negotiations in 7-18 December 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark.
  12. To request H.E the President of the Republic of Kenya as the host of the Second Pan-African Parliamentary Summit on Climate Change to transmit this declaration to the African Heads of State and Governments to strengthen the African Position to the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) serving as the Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.
- Adopted this 14th day of October 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya

Website of the month:  
<http://www.africacimatesolution.org>

Africa-wide Civil Society Climate Change Initiative  
for Policy Dialogues  
- ACCID -



The Position of African Civil Society

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Home

## The Africa-wide Civil Society Climate Change Initiative for Policy Dialogues (ACCID)

### Background

The current global climate crisis has led to the creation of a global market for developing country emission credits. In 2007, the World Bank valued these emission credits at over US\$7.5 billion. This carbon market allows projects that reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions to sell their credits to companies and governments in industrialized countries that have committed to cut their GHG emissions. The income from selling the credits could help beneficiary countries to invest behind climate-friendly and sustainable development. The Kyoto Protocol and the resulting carbon markets have a narrow focus on industrial and energy-related emissions which only benefits a few African countries with a sizeable industrial base such as Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt. As a result of this biased focus, out of more than 1,100 Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects registered by June 2008, only 17 are located in Africa, and of those 17, Uganda, Tanzania and Nigeria have one project each, whilst the remaining 14 are located in South Africa.

### The issue

In Sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture, forestry, and land use (commonly referred to as AFOLU) holds the most promising potential for carbon finance. Presently the carbon market is driven by buyers' preferences and has shown little interest in supporting genuine poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa's largely agro-based economies. Notably, the less industrialized African countries already store significant amounts of carbon in their soils and forests. It is the conviction of COMESA, SADC and EAC regional blocs that these countries should be recognized and rewarded for contributing to addressing climate change through sustainable agriculture, forest management, and other environmental conservation practices.

The November 2008 Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change adopted by the COMESA Ministers of Agriculture and Environment advocates for the inclusion of all bio-carbons in the post 2012 climate change regime. It also notes that the continent cannot afford to wait any longer, and demands that the rules for a post-Kyoto agreement must change. AFRICA is PRO-REDD and PRO-AFOLU.

Civil Society in Support of African Governments COMESA, in conjunction with SADC and EAC, mandated FANRPAN to mobilise African civil society organisations (CSOs) under the Africa-wide Civil Society Climate Change Initiative for Policy Dialogues (ACCID) and facilitate dialogue around the Africa Bio-Carbon proposal. The main objective of these dialogues is to ensure alignment between African governments and CSOs with regards Africa's approach to tackling the current Climate Change negotiations and beyond. AFRICA is advocating for a post 2012 protocol that is PRO-REDD and PRO-AFOLU.

### Road to COP15

A user-friendly guide to the major African and international events preceding COP15 Copenhagen (United Nations Climate Change Conference - December 2009)

[View schedule...](#)

### Features

**FANRPAN 2009 Regional Policy Dialogue and Annual General Meeting**  
2009-08-31

Maputo, 31 August 2009 - 4 September 2009

Theme: **True Contribution of Agriculture to Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction in Southern African countries**

[Read more...](#)

**Up-coming Carbon Markets Conferences**  
2009-09-01

1. Seize the business opportunities in the budding US carbon market Washington D.C., USA
2. Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation Washington D.C., USA
3. Understanding key market changes and carbon reduction opportunities Istanbul, Turkey
4. Accelerating the regions participation in global carbon markets Mexico City, Mexico

## ABOUT ACCID:

### Vision

- To reduce climate change impacts and enhance community resilience
- Enhance access to rural energy and empower rural populations, leading to increased agricultural productivity and improved food security

### Goal

A post-2012 climate change framework that:

- acknowledges Africa's current efforts
  - rewards its future climate change mitigation in agriculture, forestry and other land-uses
- promotes adaptation

### Objective

To call for release of funding for research and the development of demonstration activities to enhance learning and ensure that agriculture/forestry/land use activities are rewarded and eligible for funding in the international post-2012 framework.

### Principle

- Africa reaffirms its commitment to climate change mitigation
- Initiative advanced and driven by African leadership
- Reflects African realities and priorities - poverty reduction and community benefits
- Builds on existing African institutions and frameworks (e.g. NEPAD - CAADP, EAP and TerrAfrica)
- Establishes stronger linkages between climate change and global environmental conventions such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
- Avoid Duplication of Effort.

For more information on how to subscribe to this service contact: **Richard Humphries** ([humphriesrg@gmail.com](mailto:humphriesrg@gmail.com))

### AfricaGIS™ 2009 DRAFT Resolutions

#### **AfricaGIS™ 2009 CONFERENCE**

**KAMPALA, UGANDA**

**26 to 30 OCTOBER 2009**

#### **DRAFT RESOLUTIONS**

We the delegates gathered here during the 9<sup>th</sup> AfricaGIS™ 2009 conference and exhibition held from 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> of October in Kampala, Uganda on the theme 'Geospatial Information and Sustainable Development in Africa; Facing Challenges of Global Change' representing the Geospatial Science and Technology community of Africa, realising the critical importance of geo-information in addressing these challenges and the role of geo-information in galvanizing the sustainable development of Africa resolve:

To contribute towards the societal costs of not adequately managing and disseminating spatial data-information, by accelerating Africa's Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) initiatives through support to continental and country-specific SDIs to respond to the regional and global challenges.

Also recognising that climate change is a global phenomenon and that there needs to be a global response which means the full support of a Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI), built on the basis of continental, national SDIs. Under the auspices of the AU – EU Partnership established in Lisbon in 2007 the AU and EU should take a common position to the Copenhagen negotiations in December on support of the GSDI, of which an African and a European SDI (INSPIRE in Europe) would form integral parts.

To communicate effectively with policy makers that Geo-spatial Information is fundamental to understanding and supporting governance in Africa to address the social, economic and environmental challenges on the continent. And that this is critical in enhancing of actors in decision-making, stimulating innovation and good governance.

To build sustainable partnerships embedding multi-stakeholder strategies to making geography accessible to people with Open Source organisations, international private sector and international agencies. This is to leverage the interactive, enjoyable and high value geographical information already available to communities around the continent. Accelerating information dissemination in simple language understandable by the larger community and utilising the wide array of information technologies.

To increase Africa's visibility and participation in GEO and GEOSS in order to accelerate the generation of fundamental datasets critical in use for sustainable development, realisation of the MDGs and climate change adaption. Therefore the representatives endorse the ongoing initiatives such as gROADS, GAR-NET-E, Ecosystem mapping, AFREF, Mapping Africa for Africa (MAfA) and the downscaling of climate change models.

Recognise, appreciate and continue to pursue the acquisition of high resolution commercial satellite imagery to support the generation of fundamental geospatial datasets, generate knowledge for sustainable development and promote good governance. Therefore support the GDEST initiative of the US Department of State.

To establish new partnership mechanisms and strengthen existing ones for capacity building with inter-continental institutions and agencies. Recognising that capacity building is a process encapsulating training, resourcing, equipping and building functional knowledge bases. And that this will enhance the process of spatial data generation, integration, re-integration, deriving information products and dissemination to the wider community.

Investigate with international partners based on requests from African GI scientists to develop a GI Certification system of GI professional programme that will enable continuous human resource development.

And we gathered here, therefore mandate EIS-Africa as the custodians of AfricaGIS™ to act on these resolutions and to report on progress during AARSE 2010 conference and AfricaGIS™ 2011 conference.

## A new generation Atlas on Risk and Vulnerability (SARVA)

As global change research reveals rising evidence of climatic and associated changes, it is becoming increasingly clear that these changes are likely to impact many sectors of South African society.

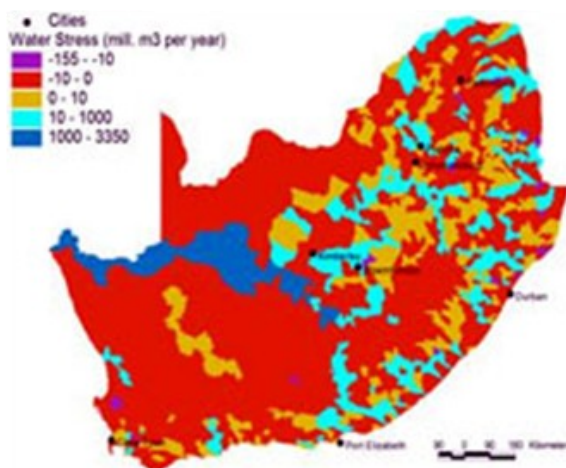
South Africa's Department of Science and Technology (DST) was quick to rise to the challenge. In its Ten Year Innovation Plan the DST identified global-change science with a focus on climate change as one of its five "grand challenges".

Fuelled by government-led and government-funded initiatives, South African scientists have gained recognition for their significant contribution to international global change research.

"South Africa has a long-standing research interest in global change," says CSIR Principal Global Change Scientist, Dr Emma Archer, "and South African research is globally acknowledged for its contribution to the climate debate."

What is needed now, according to Archer, is to translate global change science into concrete strategies and policies. Decision-makers in relevant sectors need information associated with the impact and risk of global environmental change.

This implies that risk and vulnerability need to be defined and examined in the context of global change. Raw global change data need to be analysed and reworked into practical information sets to assist policy-making in South Africa. Scientists and decision-makers at all levels of government need to start collaborating to address this critical issue that threatens our very existence on this planet.



### Why a risk and vulnerability Atlas?

The DST has identified a risk and vulnerability Atlas as one of the best and most practical ways to bridge the science/policy divide. Funded by the DST, a fully fledged project was launched at the beginning of 2009 to lay the foundations for the new South African Risk and Vulnerability Atlas (SARVA).

The Atlas is aimed at equipping decision-makers with information on the impact and risk associated with global change in the region. It will provide easily understood global change sensitivity and vulnerability information at regional, national, provincial and municipal levels. It will also help support national initiatives such as the National Disaster Management Framework.

"A hardcopy prototype of the Atlas will be launched in January 2010," says SARVA project manager Dr Rebecca Maserumule, "but the Atlas will be much more than that - it will be a continuously growing, continuously updated electronic data repository on global change in South Africa." The Atlas will enable SA researchers from various disciplines to continuously update the content with new research. It will capture data related to aspects such as groundwater, surface water, forests, biodiversity, human health, crops, demographics, economics and social dimensions. The project is managed by the CSIR, with key content and technological inputs from South African institutions and research groups.

"The Atlas will provide a platform from where South Africa's world-class research can inform world-class policy and adaptation measures," Archer explains. [Source: SARVA e-news](#)

## Implementing GEOSS

INPE distributes 1 million free satellite images

A pioneer in the free distribution of medium-resolution satellite data, the Brazilian National Institute for Space Research (INPE) announced on 29 September that it had exceeded the mark of one million images downloaded via its catalogue at <http://www.dgi.inpe.br/CDSR/>.

The free data policy adopted by INPE has provided an essential stimulus to the global trend towards free access to satellite data and images. It has also generated momentum for the implementation of the GEO Data Sharing Principles. INPE started to implement the policy in June 2004 with the distribution of CBERS-2 images (China Brazil Earth Resources Satellite).

Later, INPE established free access to historical images of LANDSAT satellites. Presently, the INPE Remote Sensing Data Center, located in Cachoeira Paulista (SP), is providing images from the CBERS-2 and 2B satellites as well as from the US's Landsat 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7 satellites to anyone in the world interested in accessing them.



Out of 1 million-plus free images distributed so far, 716,889 images are from the CBERS program; of those, 460,480 are from CBERS-2 and 256,409 from CBERS-2B). From the LANDSAT family, 283,123 images have been distributed, including 8,569 from Landsat-1, 16,247 from Landsat-2, 7,022 from Landsat-3, 230,783 from Landsat-5 and 20,502 from Landsat-7.

Brazil has one of the oldest satellite image repositories of the world. It started to receive LANDSAT data in 1973 via the INPE Ground Station in Cuiaba (MT). Launched in 1972, Landsat-1 was the first orbital remote-sensing monitor of Earth resources. Brazil became the third country in the world, after the United States and Canada, to receive this kind of data.

The South American countries in the footprint of the Cuiabá station have also benefited from the INPE repository. Soon, African countries will also be able to receive free images of their territories. A memorandum has been signed for the reception of CBERS data in the Canary Islands, South Africa and Egypt, and an antenna in Gabon is under negotiation.

### A user survey

INPE recently conducted a survey to evaluate the level of satisfaction of users regarding the CBERS image quality and the number of people hired to work on satellite data.

The survey results made it clear that the free distribution of satellite images has helped to greatly expand the number of Brazilians that make use of the space program. Of the 15,000 registered users, 3,470 answered the survey. Of those, 1,100 confirmed that the availability of CBERS images has helped them with their scientific research. Another important finding was that more than half stated that they did not use satellite images before having access to the CBERS images from INPE. **Source: GEO newsletter**



1<sup>ST</sup> AMESD FORUM, KINSHASA  
1- 4/DEC./2009



[www.amesd.org](http://www.amesd.org)

Surveillance de l'Environnement en Afrique pour le  
Développement durable

**1<sup>ER</sup> FORUM AMESD  
KINSHASA, RÉPUBLIQUE DÉMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO  
1<sup>ER</sup> AU 4 DECEMBRE 2009**

### 2<sup>ÈME</sup> ANNONCE



Comme suite à notre première annonce sur le 1<sup>er</sup> Forum AMESD qui se tiendra à Kinshasa du 1<sup>er</sup> au 4 décembre 2009 sur le thème "*Vers un Partenariat et un Réseau Pan Africain pour le Suivi de l'Environnement Africain par Satellite*", nous avons le plaisir de vous informer qu'un site web spécifique au forum est maintenant opérationnel via le lien : <http://forum.amesd.org/>.



**Tous les participants sont invités à compléter la fiche d'enregistrement en ligne** (y compris ceux ayant déjà reçu une invitation) et à consulter le programme mis à jour et les informations pertinentes par rapport à la logistique. Veuillez noter que l'enregistrement est ouvert aux participants sponsorisés par le programme AMESD ainsi qu'aux participants extérieurs (autres projets, firmes, Institutions, etc.) dans la limite des places disponibles. Les participants sponsorisés sont en cours de sélection finale avec le support des Centres de Mise en Œuvre Régionaux d'AMESD (CMOR) et leur Ministère de tutelle dans chacun des pays des 5 Régions Economiques Régionales (CER). Ils seront contactés personnellement à la fin de ce processus le 30 octobre 2009. Les participants extérieurs se prenant en charge doivent tout d'abord s'enregistrer en ligne. Ils recevront ensuite une invitation officielle après approbation de leur candidature par le Comité d'Organisation. Ces participants prendront à leur charge les coûts de voyage et de logement. L'inscription et la participation au forum sont gratuites. Une exposition sous forme de posters ou de stand est également organisée pour la durée du forum pour les participants/firmes intéressés.

Au plaisir de vous accueillir à Kinshasa.  
Le Comité d'Organisation

## Vacancies at UNECA for Geo-information and GIS officers

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa based in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia is looking to fill two vacancies for the post of Geo-information Officer and Geographic Information Systems Officer. Both these post are on the United Nations P3 level.

Deadline for applications is 27 November 2009.

Please visit the EIS-AFRICA website for more details of the post and the job descriptions. Go to [www.eis-africa.org](http://www.eis-africa.org) now!

### **AEGOS: the Spatial Data Infrastructure for Georesources in Africa**

The sustainable use of resources of geological origin (georesources) such as groundwater, fossil energies and mineral resources requires knowledge based on data, information and expertise. In Africa, the largest single component of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, it is a key issue, not only for development of the African countries, but also for the world's future in order to face the rising demand for raw materials, better infrastructures and services. Identifying and providing controlled access to data and information collected and mapped over several decades represents a major stake for sustainable public policy-making across the various levels of public authority. Thus, the availability, traceability, accessibility and processing of geological and geology related information is essential when using Geographical Information System (GIS) technologies on heterogeneous data from multiple sources.

In February 2009, a consortium of 23 African and European partners launched the Phase 1 of the African-European Georesources Observation System (AEGOS - [www.aegos-project.org](http://www.aegos-project.org)). This project (2008-2011) is a Support Action of the 7<sup>th</sup> European Commission's Research and Technology Development Framework programme (FP7). The objective is to design the pan-African infrastructure of public, interoperable geological and geology-related data as well as user-oriented services to foster and strengthen the sustainable use of georesources in Africa. AEGOS aims to safeguard, share and add value to the data archived in African and European geological surveys and to support further knowledge development on Africa's geology and georesources. This observation system will provide support to a wide panel of end-users: policy-makers at all geographic levels, development agencies, private sector actors, geoscientific communities and civil society.

The expected results of AEGOS include: i) operational procedures for data management (Spatial Data Infrastructure, metadata, data specifications and systems architecture based on open standards such as ISO/CEN, OGC/web services, IUGS/CGI); ii) user-oriented products and services including the preparation of innovative spin-off projects; iii) the African-European partnership network; iv) a geoscience contribution to the GEOSS (Global Earth Observation System of Systems), in the context of the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe (INSPIRE); v) a common strategy for capacity building and training programmes. Thus, AEGOS contributes to the GEO (Group on Earth Observations) work plan 2009-2011 as a sub-task in the capacity building area, and to the development of a Solid Earth Observing System by exploring interoperability and interdisciplinarity scenarios with GEOSS societal benefit areas.



Depending on their technical or non-technical profile and on their level of interest, all concerned African states and organisations may be involved in AEGOS either as associate partners or as end-user committee members. They will be regularly informed to take part to the conferences and workshops. They include ACP states, African national and regional institutions in charge of economic development or of science and technology; non-governmental organisations, geoscientific communities, academia and research institutes, enterprises, investors in the domains of mineral resources, natural hazards, water and hydraulics, energy, environment, land use, agriculture, social and economic development.

During AEGOS Phase 1 (2008-2011), two major conferences (mid-term and final) will be organised with participation of all project partners, associated partners and the user-committee. In between, each project work package will organise thematic and specialised workshops on the various components of this new observation system.

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## AGCommons Job Opportunity

Agriculture is intimately tied to location, particularly climate, soil and water availability. This link to geospatial factors is probably stronger for agriculture than any other economic sector. Geospatial information is critical to good decision making throughout the agriculture sector – from farmers to input suppliers, researchers, extension agencies and policy makers. With rapid progress in information and communications technology, the potential for using spatial information in Africa to improve the livelihoods and productivity of poor farmers has never been greater.

Recognizing the importance of geospatial information, while acknowledging the inadequate access to existing geospatial data, tools, and analyses, especially in Africa, the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) initiated its Geospatial Technology Program through the Agricultural Development initiative of its Global Development Program. **AGCommons (Agricultural Geospatial Commons)** was launched under the administrative oversight of the [Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research \(CGIAR\)](#) in partnership with [Spatial Development International](#).

The first nine months of 2009 were spent identifying opportunities and selecting the focus for AGCommons. The AGCommons team, working with a steering committee of subject matter experts covering agriculture and geospatial technology, conducted interviews, consultations and conferences that engaged more than 300 individuals across West and East Africa. The focus is now on developing and supporting an Africa-based service bureau that can provide innovation and expertise in the development, delivery and use of location-specific data and information services for improved decision making by smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as by the public institutions and private sector who serve them.

### The Opportunity

The AGCommons team has been hard at work identifying gaps in data, technology and services as well as determining potential clients, collaborators and funding sources to carry the Program into the future. The Program is now seeking an established, Africa-based entrepreneur to lead and shape the future direction of this challenging information technology initiative.

The ideal candidate should have a strong entrepreneurial drive, a proven track record of successful business starts, and experience working in Africa. The ability to build and coordinate an effective team to develop the service bureau, deliver services and establish and maintain a technical platform are also necessary attributes.

### Specifically the candidate should have:

- *Technology domain expertise and a desire to apply that knowledge for economic and social benefit and/or the application of technology to agricultural development*
- *The ability to contribute or mobilize external resources to support the effort*
- *An understanding of the cultural dynamics of working and developing a business in Africa*
- *A proven track record of successfully running or operating a business or organization in Africa*
- *Domain knowledge of geospatial and mobile technology and/or the application of technology to agricultural development*

The successful candidate will be involved in all aspects of the business, including staffing, business development, and financial accounting, as well as the overall vision and business direction. He or she will enjoy the partnership and support of committed donors and established institutions including The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and [USAID](#). The [ICT-KM Program](#) of the CGIAR is providing transition leadership, and institutional support in forming the business and meeting administrative needs. In addition, [NASA](#) and [RCMRD](#) are technical partners in platform development and stakeholder outreach.

### Looking Ahead

The most immediate tasks to be undertaken by AGCommons now include:

- *Developing the infrastructure to broadly deliver and potentially collect geospatial information on a variety of platforms while providing a place to store and a means by which to share geospatial data, along with common solutions to achieve economies of scale and consistency across agriculture development projects*
  - *Developing a business plan for the service bureau, engaging potential client partners to understand their requirements for geospatial services and establish working relationships*
  - *Identifying strategic investment opportunities and potential co-funders for the business moving forward*
- Defining and launching the venture and identifying core staff.*

While these activities are being carried out over the transitional period by the Program team under the programmatic and administrative leadership of the CGIAR, the entrepreneurial AGCommons leader should be involved at an early stage to take ownership of the endeavor as it develops from a funded development initiative to an independent stand-alone business over the next several years.

**Timing** The AGCommons team is seeking candidates for this extraordinary opportunity through the end of 2009 and will make a selection in early 2010.

**For more information please contact:** [ictkm@cgiar.org](mailto:ictkm@cgiar.org)



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A Network for the Co-operative Management  
of Environmental Information in Africa

## Upcoming Events Announcements

- **2009 International Hydrographic Conference**, 10-12 November, Cape Town, South Africa. Contact: [admin@hydro9.co.za](mailto:admin@hydro9.co.za) for more information.
- **GEO Plenary session, GEO-VI**, Washington DC, 17 and 18 November 2009.
- **World GIS Day** - November 18, 2009 [www.qisday.com](http://www.qisday.com)
- **African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD)** 1st Forum, 1-4 December 2009, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo on the theme "Towards a Pan African Partnership and Networking for the monitoring of the Environment by Satellite in African". [www.amesd.org](http://www.amesd.org) Mailto: [info@amesd.org](mailto:info@amesd.org) for more information see see PDF version at [www.eis-africa.org](http://www.eis-africa.org)
- **Geo Tunis**, the Tunisian association of digital geographic information invites you to participate in this fourth session on December 16-20, 2009. Go to [www.geotunis.org](http://www.geotunis.org) for more information.



### 2010 AAG ANNUAL MEETING April 14-18, 2010 – Washington, DC

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