



International Society for Digital Earth

Dear Colleagues,

As President of the International Society for Digital Earth (ISDE), I am delighted to invite you to attend the 5th International Symposium on Digital Earth to be held June 5–7, 2007, in San Francisco, USA.

In 1999, more than 500 participants from 27 countries attended the 1st International Symposium on Digital Earth in Beijing, and discussed the Digital Earth theory, technology, application potentials as well as understandings to Digital Earth. At that meeting, a Beijing Declaration, approved by the international participants consisting of scientists, engineers, educators, managers and industrial entrepreneurs, was announced, and agreed that the symposium should be continued biannually on a rotational basis. After that, an International Steering Committee for the symposia was created, and the 2nd, 3rd, 4th International Symposium on Digital Earth were successfully held in Canada (2001), Czech Republic (2003), and Japan (2005) respectively. In May 2006, the International Society for Digital Earth was officially inaugurated, and the first Executive Committee was formed. This marks a milestone of an international effort to promote Digital Earth in the world. In August 2006, the Digital Earth Summit on Sustainability was held in Auckland, New Zealand. The coming symposium in San Francisco will be a big gathering to discuss and explore the vision of digital earth and its related technologies, and it is also the first symposium of our society since its official launch.

The theme of the symposium is “Bring Digital Earth Down to Earth”. As described in the web page of the symposium, the Digital Earth community is dedicated to building a virtual global commons to promote “down to Earth” solutions supported by cooperative web-based protocols using standards, databases, analytical and visualization tools that will foster the creation of appropriate applications for a sustainable future. We believe, as we are in nowadays the information era, that the digital earth solution will

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be greatly facilitated by the use of modern information technology to make interconnection for 3-D and virtual representation of the earth with vast amounts of spatially referenced data of scientific, natural, and cultural information to our knowledge of the planet to describe and understand the Earth, its systems, and human activities.

The coming of the era of an information and knowledge based economy is changing the people's way of living quietly but dramatically. Future human development is closely related to digits and information in every possible sense. It is reasonable to believe that digital earth is significantly important to sustainable development of human society, improvement of life quality and advancement of Science and Technology. ISDE was born as a valuable endeavor of the world academic community to face the challenge, and it is expected to make its own unique contribution to the development of Digital Earth. This symposium will be a good platform for all of you to exchange experience, knowledge and ideas about the digital earth in both the fields of technologies and applications.

We sincerely hope that you will join us in making the 5th International Symposium on Digital Earth a success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yongxiang Lu', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Prof. Dr. LU Yongxiang

President of the International Society for Digital Earth