



Forum on Earth Observations II	1
US4—Better, or Best, Practices for VOs and DDSs	1
The eGY Stamp Exists!	2
UN Year of Planet Earth, 2008	2
eGY at the Fall AGU Meeting	2
Reserve the Date: eGY General Meeting	3

Forum on Earth Observations II: Managing Risk in the 21st Century, to be held Feb. 15-16 in La Jolla, Calif.

Sponsored by Lockheed Martin, the Forum will provide a networking opportunity for national and international leaders from the private and public sectors as they discuss:

- Creating the Global Earth Observation System of Systems
- Balancing Public and Private Interests
- Climate Change and Managing Risk
- All-Hazards Emergency Response Strategy
- Shaping the GEOSS Marketplace

In addition, roundtable discussions will focus on the following:

- Energy
- Insurance and Banking
- Public Health
- Water
- Cyber Infrastructure
- The Human Component of GEOSS

Register now at www.ForumOnEo.com.

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

US4—Better, or Best, Practices for Virtual Observatories and Distributed Data Systems

European Geosciences Union General Assembly, Vienna, Austria, 2-7 April 2006

It is now at least five years since the virtual observatory (VO) paradigm appeared and about fifteen years since dis-

tributed data systems (DDS) started appearing. These efforts have produced numerous successes, failures, lessons, new concepts, new designs, and copious experience with changing technologies. Science communities (especially Geosciences) and agencies stand ready to utilize these concepts to their fullest extent in meeting the challenging explosion of data from instruments and models in the present and next decade.

Motivated by the eGY, this Programme solicits contributions from those involved in VOs and DDS at all levels: science and education users, designers/architects, developers, and data providers to contribute their experiences under the theme of emerging better and, where appropriate, best practices.

Some possible outcomes of this session may be:

- Are VOs (or an analog paradigm in fields where ‘observatories’ are not the usual construct) changing or ready to change the way our communities perform science on ever increasing amounts and diversity of data?
- What have we learned in developing and deploying distributed data systems and virtual observatories?
- How can educators make use of VOs and DDSs that were designed for experts to use? How will knowledge representation technology help educators?
- How can proper attribution of sources of data be made and tracked in a data-world that is increasingly ‘virtual’?
- Clarifying the role semantics (ontologies, knowledge representation) may play in developing search and access systems and how these capabilities may change the way our communities develop interdisciplinary and diverse science applications.

<http://www.egy.org/>

Both Oral and Poster contributions are sought from a wide variety of disciplines. Contributions that span disciplines and/or focus on significant experience and lessons learned in DDS/VOs, grid-based systems, ontologies, and/or education and outreach applications are particularly encouraged.

Conveners: Peter Fox and Robert Bentley

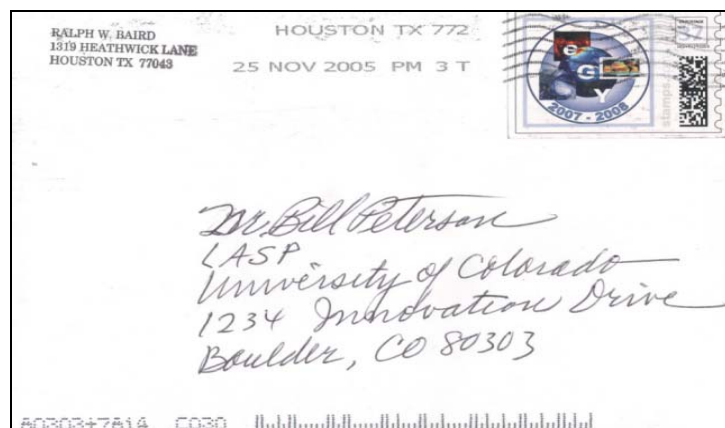
Click [here](#) for the event website.

Abstract Submission via COSIS (see website to [submit](#) or [how to submit](#)): After the compilation of an abstract the author uses the link “Programme” → “Call-for-Papers” or “Abstract Management” → “Abstract Submission” to get the list of all sessions/events. Study the list and the aims and scope of the sessions/events of interest carefully (public link “Information”), select the part of the programme you would like to submit an abstract to and then use the link “Abstract Submission” amongst the “Public Links” of your session/event in question.

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The eGY Stamp Exists!

Ralph Baird used one of the companies that can generate custom postage stamps from photographs to obtain the stamp on the image below. You can go to Zazzle.com or PhotoStamps.com to customize your own eGY US postal stamp or find similar companies by Googling the text string “custom US postage stamps.”



Ralph has also graciously offered to send an eGY stamp to anyone who wants their own copy if they send him a SASE (self-addressed stamped envelope) with the equivalent of \$1.00 in US stamps.

For anyone who can't make out the return address on the image, Ralph's address is as follows:

Ralph W. Baird
1319 Heathwick Lane
Houston, TX 77043

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ralph@bairdpetro.com*

UN Year of Planet Earth, 2008

On 22 December 2005, the UN General Assembly resolved to declare 2008 as the UN Year of Planet Earth. UNESCO is designated to organize activities to be undertaken during the Year, in collaboration with UNEP and other relevant United Nations bodies, the International Union of Geological Sciences and other Earth sciences societies and groups throughout the world. Member States, the United Nations system, and other actors are encouraged to use the Year to increase awareness of the importance of Earth sciences in achieving sustainable development and promoting local, national, regional and international action.

The UN Year of Planet Earth 2008 will form the centrepiece of the International Year of Planet Earth that will span the triennium, starting in 2007 and closing by the end of 2009. eGY and the International Year of Planet Earth have formal agreements of mutual support and discussions have commenced to seek ways to incorporate eGY thematic objectives into Planet Earth programs.

Ref: <http://www.yearofplanetearth.org/>

Received from e.demulder@planet.nl

eGY at the Fall AGU Meeting

The eGY Virtual Observatories Working Group in association with the new AGU Informatics Focus Group sponsored two very successful sessions addressing questions of how to best set up and operate virtual observatories and how to organize the data (i.e. Ontologies). The eGY Education and Public Outreach Group organized a session on Global Geoscience Outreach. eGY also hosted a lunch time gathering of the I*Y initiatives to discuss and share their plans with each other and interested individuals. Notably in attendance were representatives of the major funding organizations.

Received from bill.peterson@lasp.colorado.edu

Reserve the Date: eGY General Meeting

We are in the process of planning a general meeting of eGY Participants in Boulder, Colorado, March 13-14, 2006. Please reserve the date and plan to join us.

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