

Governance and Integrated Assessment (GISA)

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GISA started in 2008 as the youngest research theme in the Programme of ITC. With the appointment of Anne van der Veen as professor in Governance and Spatial Integrated Assessment, collaboration between departments and between disciplines has now been formalized.

GISA aims at setting up integrated projects between the social and the technical sciences within ITC in order to facilitate societal decision-making, and to publish innovative papers at the frontiers of interdisciplinary research.

Scientific level

GISA produced 4 articles in ISI-listed Journals in 2008. Moreover two articles were published in Other Peer Refereed Journals. Thirdly, 1 Book chapter was published. Finally, 6 contributions to Conference Proceedings were delivered.

For 2009 4 ISI articles are already in a process to be published.

We can report one PhD thesis by G. Peters Guarin on GIS based flood risk assessments.

In December 2008 an Integrated Programme application was approved by NWO WOTRO on "An earth Observation- and Integrated Assessment approach to the Governance of lake Naivasha in Kenya". Funding is for 5 years with € 800.000 for 5 PhD students and 1 Post Doc. ITC is matching the project with one PhD student. A collaboration has been set up with the University of Twente, Nairobi University and with Egerton University in Kenya. The funding of this project is judged by us as a positive qualification by NWO of the potential for interdisciplinary research at ITC. It forms a perfect base to revive the former ITC UNESCO Centre for Integrated Surveying and rename it into ITC UNESCO Centre for Integrated Assessment.

In 2008 we continued with the BSIK project PROMO on the relation between perceptions and flood risk. This project is a collaboration between the Deltares (formerly Delft Hydraulics), the Technical University of Delft, the University of Twente, TNO/Delft and ITC. Part of the project is a nation-wide survey under 1000 households and 250 firms investigating perceptions on flood risk. Reports are expected to be delivered end of 2009.

GISA is involved in 2 EU FP7 projects that started in 2008:

1. ENSURE, a EU wide collaboration on social and technical concepts of vulnerability to natural hazards. Here a collaboration is also established with the ITC-UNU School of Disaster Geo-Information management.
2. FORESTCLIM, a project on Transnational Forestry Management Strategies in response to Climate Change Impacts.

In collaboration with the University of Twente, GISA continues with the Kyoto Think Global Act Local (TGAL) project financed by DGIS, the Netherlands Development Cooperation. This project constitutes a multi-ITC disciplinary research and capacity building effort based on community forest management (2 Postdocs)

For the period 2010-2012 a new project has been formulated on "Payment for Watershed services in Houhe National Nature Reserve of Hubei Province, China ", to be funded by the EVD, Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Netherlands in the Asia Facility for China 2009. The project is a collaboration with International Consultancy Europe BV, and College of Bioscience and Technology, Beijing Forestry University.

In 2009 most probably 3 PhD students will join GISA:

1. A PhD student on Payment for Environmental Services and forest management (February 1, 2009)
2. Two PhD students on industrial risk management in India

In the collaboration between ITC and CIGA-UNAM Mexico several projects are in a phase of project formulation and sent out for funding. The current stay of Mike McCall in Mexico is meant to re-establish the relationship between ITC and UNAM.

In conclusion, we are confident with the scientific level we achieved so far, in such a short period, with so many projects.

Relevance

GISA has set up multi-disciplinary research in order to facilitate collaboration within ITC. Given the upcoming move to the University of Twente research covers not only projects in developing countries, but also projects within the Netherlands and the EU. Consequently, GISA supports the new mission of ITC.

As an example we mention the television attention of the PROMO project in the western regions of the Netherlands in order to promote risk communication strategies.

Partners

Through her partners in the Dutch, EU and NWO research projects GISA has gained cooperation with a wide range of institutes in the world. We trust that in the years to come this network will generate new projects for graduate students and for postdocs.

Coherence

Based firmly in the social sciences the experience in e.g. Payment for Environmental Services has led to collaboration with technical sciences within ITC and other institutes in Europe generating large interdisciplinary projects. This idea of Integrated Surveying was established within ITC already decades ago. There are now ample opportunities to formulate more projects and seek funding within the international community. A relationship with the newly established MSc program of GSIM (Governance and Spatial Information Management) guarantees a constant flow of students towards research positions.

Evaluation

GISA is now on track: funding is guaranteed; and publications are appearing in relevant journals.