

UCGIS TO SPONSOR SYMPOSIA ON GISCIENCE AND VECTOR-BORNE DISEASE

The U.S. Geological Survey has given UCGIS a grant to hold a series of symposia on GIScience and vector-borne disease. Dr. Arthur Getis, UCGIS member from San Diego State University, is organizing the first meeting together with Drs. Lee DeCola and Steve Guptill of USGS. Also, participating on the planning committee are Professors Gerard Rushton (Iowa) and William Huxhold (President of UCGIS), Dr. Antonino Catanzaro (UCSD Medical School), and Suzy Jampoler (Executive Director of UCGIS).

USGS is currently using geographic information systems, remote sensing, and spatial analysis tools to: define geographic distributions of disease cases and relationships to environmental factors; develop and test a model predicting disease activity and transmission rates; characterize the human population at risk; and, devise ecology-based prevention and control measures. Many problems are confronting researchers in this field, including issues of multi-scale complexity (spatial and temporal) and autocorrelation.

A major goal of the meetings is to facilitate the development of a network among researchers interested in the integration of geographic analysis to understand vector-borne diseases, such as malaria, dengue, and West Nile virus. This network will be instrumental in identifying these problems, and discussing solutions. GIScientists from UCGIS member institutions, researchers working on vector-borne disease and participants from USGS will be invited to attend the symposia. In addition, the host universities (University of California San Diego, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, San Diego State University), who have organized a Center for Pacific Rim Health Studies, will participate. The results of the meeting will be published on the UCGIS web site, with links to USGS, the Pacific Rim group, and other participating organizations.

The symposium will be held in San Diego, California, on January 3-5, 2001, at Scripps Institute of Oceanography. For more information contact Arthur Getis at arthur.getis@sdsu.edu or Suzy Jampoler at execdir@ucgis.org.