

Clark Labs Donates to Training Institute

Clark Labs has recently signed a memorandum of understanding with RECTAS to equip RECTAS training laboratories with the IDRISI and Land Change Modeler software and provide all trainees with free software licenses.

RECTAS, located in Nigeria, was established in 1972 under the auspices of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) with a mandate for training, research, consultancy and advisory services in Geoinformatics. The Centre is a joint African regional project with current participating countries of Benin, Burkina, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.

RECTAS provides course programs at three levels: Technician, Technologist and Post-graduate. They also provide short course programs. Trainees are normally career officers currently employed at various levels of governmental organisations, especially the National Mapping Agencies, in member states of UNECA with the majority of them coming from RECTAS' member states. As of December 2007, the Centre had trained about 1300 public servants at various levels, excluding short-term training, from 27 African countries. The centre also runs a joint MSc programme in Geoinformatics with International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation, (ITC) Enschede, The Netherlands.

RECTAS will also become a Resource Center in Clark Labs' International Resource Center (IRC) program. The IRC program was started in 1995 to better address the needs of the Clark Labs' international user community. These Centers distribute product information, offer procurement assistance, host training sessions and user group meetings and represent the Clark Labs at local tradeshow and conferences. In addition, IRCs may offer specific products and services designed to meet the needs of a local or linguistic community.

In order to maximise the effective use of the technology, Clark Labs and RECTAS plan to jointly develop workshops and refresher training for various applications of IDRISI or other Clark Labs technologies.