

## **Drivers of Change: Patterns and Processes of Urbanization in Developing and Developed Areas**

The United Nations estimates that 51.3 percent of the world's population will be urban in 2010. With over 87% of the earth's land cover modified due to human activity, the world is experiencing unprecedented impacts of urbanization, infrastructure changes and development on the global environment. In each region, urban development takes a unique form as a result of interactions among local, regional and international policies, traditions of conservation and global trends of economic growth, resulting in unique spatio-temporal configurations of urbanization and development, and significant changes in infrastructure which often serve as a precursor to such changes. In addition to the land cover impact, the environmental "footprint" can greatly exceed the land area, due to the far-reaching material and social connections among urban systems, and between urban systems and rural areas.

This special session aims to fill a crucial gap by bringing together research from multiple contexts, to provide a systematic study of the patterns and processes and environmental implications of land use/land cover change in developing regions, urban areas and their hinterlands. Submissions addressing a wide range of issues under this broad theme are welcome. We anticipate that the presentations contained here will be inherently comparative, with examples from different ecological, social and institutional contexts, giving us an opportunity to understand how the human dimensions of urban change vary over time and space in different parts of the world, from areas just beginning their processes of development and infrastructure changes, to regions of complete urbanization over much longer time frames.

The 7th International Science Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change will be held from 16-19 October 2008 in Delhi, India. Abstract submissions for sessions, oral presentations, and posters are open until November 30th this year. For information on the IHDP meetings, see <http://www.openmeeting2008.org/>. If you wish to submit an abstract for consideration for this special session, please contact one of the organizers directly.

### **Organizers:**

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