

Interview

**JACK DANGERMOND,
PRESIDENT AND CEO**



ESRI FOUNDING PARTNER OF PLANET ACTION

ESRI has agreed to be a founding partner of the Planet Action initiative led by Spot Image. Can you tell us what motivated you to join this programme, and share a bit about ESRI's long history of working on projects like this?

The continuous impact of human influences on the natural habitats of our planet is real, and ESRI is reminded of it every day through our relationships with the conservation community. Our

belief is that Spot Image's contribution of Earth imagery to the conservation community will make an important difference in understanding the impact of global climate change. By equipping these NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) with a marriage of Earth imagery and geographic information systems (GIS) technology, software and data, Planet Action is giving them access to the valuable information and visualization required to conduct their research. GIS is a powerful tool for the conservation community to use when storing, managing and analysing their findings. Because of this, ESRI has done its best to make our GIS software and technology experience readily available to conservation programmes of all sizes. By our donations of software, financial support, training and hardware to NGOs, we believe researchers will have a geographic advantage in developing solutions toward resolving climate change issues. In the case of Planet Action, ESRI is happy to be a part of an organization with such a strong and innovative partnership of technologies that have come together to make a difference.

What is your vision for Planet Action?

Our vision is a very worthwhile one, offering a place where the NGO conservation community can go for the technology and data that allow them to work more effectively and to understand what changes are required to make the world a better place. I see Planet Action as a framework for this vision where ESRI, Spot Image and others join as an effective alliance in understanding and fighting global climate change.

What can the geoinformation industry do to help combat global warming?

The GIS and the Earth observation industries can continue to provide technology and solutions that will open the world's eyes to the significance of global warming. By integrating our technologies, we can provide better information and insight into how the world's actions and decisions affect the planet. Planet Action is taking a step in this direction because it is building a stronger link among researchers, sci-

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PLANET ACTION, AN INITIATIVE FROM SPOT IMAGE



Planet Action is an initiative launched by Spot Image in June 2007. Its aim is to encourage the remote-sensing industry and geoinformation professionals to support efforts to combat and adapt to climate change. To this end, satellite imagery, geographic information systems and image display and processing software are vital for studying the global and local impacts of global warming on our planet.

Planet Action is supporting projects focused on:

- human issues and coping strategies
- water resources, drought and desertification
- vegetation, biodiversity and ecosystems
- oceans
- ice and snow cover.

Planet Action is already supplying free satellite imagery for a number of projects. Among these, three projects are studying forests in Brazil and Ivory Coast, one is concentrating on coral bleaching in Guadeloupe, one is monitoring glaciers in Iceland and another is looking at invasive plant species in Madagascar.

► **If you want to be a Planet Action partner or put forward a project, go to www.planet-action.org where you will find additional information about the initiative and the projects it is supporting, as well as instructions on how to submit a project.**



"For Spot Image, Planet Action is about being a good corporate citizen"

Hervé Buchwalter,
Spot Image Chairman & CEO



entists and users of geospatial technology by giving them the tools to research, analyze, visualize and present their findings.

How can GIS contribute to this effort in particular?

GIS is a technology for creating, managing and analysing data collected in the field using various methods and procedures, and then turning that data into geographic knowledge. With that geographic knowledge, GIS helps hundreds of thousands of organizations



around the world to raise the level of what they do and how they do it, by providing more efficient tools, promoting better communication and improving the decision-making process. GIS can contribute to the Planet Action effort by providing the conservation community researchers with the tools

to conduct their analyses, and by giving those researchers the ability to show the world their findings through maps, graphs and tables. Based on those findings, policymakers can better decide the actions we should take to help restore the planet. Rapid population growth and man-made innovations are among the causes of climate change, but, as the Planet Action initiative states, innovations such as GIS can be part of the solution. ■