



Terra Populus: Integrated Data on Population and Environment

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Terra Populus, part of the United States' National Science Foundation's new DataNet initiative, is developing organizational and technical infrastructure to integrate, preserve, and disseminate data describing human population and the environment over time. Terra Populus will incorporate microdata and aggregate census data from around the world, as well as land use, land cover, climate and other environmental datasets. The population microdata in Terra Populus come from the Minnesota Population Center's IPUMS-International project, which has collected, harmonized, and made available to researchers census microdata from 211 census samples in 68 countries. Terra Populus is developing methods of integrating data from different domains and translating across data structures based on spatio-temporal linkages among data contents. The key to linking IPUMS-International's microdata to other spatially referenced data is boundary files of the low-level administrative districts coded in the microdata records. Terra Populus will disseminate data in a variety of formats, including microdata, area-based aggregates, and gridded data. The infrastructure created by Terra Populus will enable researchers to identify and merge data from heterogeneous sources to study the relationships between human behavior and the natural world.

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