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### **Alliance Welcomes Southeastern Universities Research Association**

Arlington, Va.-- Southeastern Universities Research Association, a nonprofit consortium of more than 60 universities across the United States, has joined the Alliance for Earth Observations. SURA, best known for developing one of the first open-access regional information technology networks in the early 1980s, fosters collaboration among its member institutions in science and engineering.

SURA's Coastal Ocean Observing and Prediction (SCOOP) program helps support the goals of the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). SCOOP brings together coastal and computer scientists to develop a service-oriented architecture for an information system that integrates oceanographic data with predictive models.

SCOOP, along with other SURA initiatives in science and technology, ties in well with the Alliance's efforts to promote the use and integration of Earth observations for social and economic benefit. Improved environmental data and predictions will enable better planning for natural hazards and increased protection of life and property in coastal communities, according to SCOOP program director Philip Bogden.

"The more data you can have to start your prediction, the closer to reality that prediction will be," Bogden said. "Accurate predictions of the environmental response to extreme weather keep disaster recovery costs down and help save lives."

IOOS is considered a key component of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), a cooperative effort by 65 countries and more than 40 international organizations to link the world's Earth-observation instruments and data into an integrated system, one that is expected to aid decision-making in areas such as energy and water management, public health, agriculture, transportation and emergency response.

The Alliance was formed in 2004 to facilitate participation by the private sector in U.S. and international planning for Earth observations, especially as it relates to GEOSS and the U.S. contribution to the system, the Integrated Earth Observation System. More than 20 companies, research centers and nongovernment organizations make up the Alliance, an initiative of the nonprofit Institute for Global Environmental Strategies.

Alliance activities include the convening of meetings and workshops that bring together industry and government leaders, providing congressional testimony on the status and importance of Earth observations, and conducting outreach and education efforts that highlight the value of environmental data.

For more information, please visit:

SURA

<http://www.sura.org>

SCOOP

<http://scoop.sura.org>

Alliance for Earth Observations

<http://www.strategies.org/alliance>

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