



WILLIAM T. PECORA AWARD

Gilberto Camara

For his many contributions to remote sensing leadership

Dr. Gilberto Camara, Director General of Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE), has contributed to the field of Earth observation as a scientist, program director, manager, and agency head. His championship of broad, open data-sharing policies and practices has resulted in their implementation within INPE and has significantly influenced other domestic and international organizations to emulate this progressive approach. As a scholar, he has authored 150 journal papers, edited 6 books, and advised 24 Masters and 17 Doctoral students. As of March 2012, nearly 4,000 citations have been generated from this work, illustrating the downstream impact of his scientific contributions. In addition, Dr. Camara has significantly advanced the linkages between and among remote sensing technologies and applications and Geographic Information System technologies and applications.

For most people, these scientific and technical contributions would constitute an entire career's body of work. Yet, for Dr. Camara, these early contributions were only the foundation upon which he built another career's worth of work in capacity building and public policy. Since 2001, he has held two key leadership positions at INPE—first as the Director for Earth Observation and then as the Director General. During this time, INPE's budget increased almost threefold, an unprecedented increase for any public institution in Brazil or elsewhere. One area that benefited from this funding increase was linking moderate resolution imagery from the China-Brazil Earth Resources Satellite, Landsat, and other Earth observation missions with the policy needs of the Brazilian government, most notably those concerned with forestation and deforestation in the Amazon. Lying at the very heart of these capacity building and public policy accomplishments is Dr. Camara's leadership for broad, open access to remote sensing data. He has been an international voice for leveraging the investments countries make in their satellite programs by distributing the data from these satellites over the Internet at no cost to the user.

In addition to his position as Director General of INPE, Dr. Camara chaired the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites in 2010, and for the last 5 years, has served as the Brazilian Senior Executive to the Group on Earth Observation's Executive Committee. In each of these three posts, he has significantly advanced national and international thinking on data policy. Brazil's no-cost, Web-enabled data policy became a model for many nations. Dr. Camara has been a strong proponent on the use of satellite imagery, rather than in the data itself. Under this construct, academicians, government agencies, the private sector, value-added providers, and citizens can all benefit from increased access to remote sensing information. Usage statistics are showing exponential uptake of imagery as soon as the data policies are revised for online delivery and access.

In recognition of his many significant accomplishments increasing our understanding of the Earth through remote sensing, the Department of the Interior and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration take great pleasure in presenting the 2012 William T. Pecora Award to Dr. Gilberto Camara.

Secretary
Department of the Interior

Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration