

Sand Seas and Dune Fields Annual Report 1 of the BSG Fixed-term Working Group ~ 2008

This fixed term working group was established late in 2007 to co-ordinate the UK input into the digital atlas of sand seas and dune fields being developed by INQUA (http://www.dees.dri.edu/Projects/Dune_Atlas/) and to explore the ways in which data held in the atlas can be used to explore research questions in aeolian geomorphology.

During 2008 the group met formally on four occasions: March 20, Northampton; July 22, Loughborough; October 16, Northampton; December 22, Oxford. During this period the aim of the group has been to produce a pilot of a digital atlas of the Namib Sand Sea. By the end of 2008 the group had produced a digital map of the dune patterns in the sand sea and started production of a digital terrain model using ASTER data. Some consideration of vegetation and climate mapping and also been undertaken and first steps made towards making a bibliographic database. The group has been represented at international discussions about developments of the INQUA digital atlas and reported progress to the annual meeting of UK aeolian geomorphologists (Windy Day) at King's College London on 24 October 2008.

In addition, the group has been involved in developing a collection of images of aeolian geomorphology for the GEES (Geography Earth and Environmental Sciences Subject Centre) databank, co-ordinated by Jo Bullard (Loughborough). This databank will be available online in 2009.

The group has successfully bid to the RGS/IBG for further funding to extend our activities. In particular, this funding will support a one-day meeting to be held in London in 2010, provisionally titled *Global Sand Seas: past, present and future*. During 2009 the group intends to complete its digital atlas of the Namib Sand Sea and to consider bids for further funding to undertake research in aeolian and desert geomorphology.

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January 2009