

## **International course 'GIS and mapping for agricultural decision support'**

An international course on "GIS and mapping for agricultural decision support" was held in Bangkok, from the 8-12 December 2003 under the auspices of the International Cartographic Association (ICA), the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), and Land Development Department of Thailand. The instructional team consisted of Dr. Graciela Metternicht, Vice-Chair of the ICA commission on Mapping from Satellite Imagery, Dr. Joel L. Morrison, Professor Emeritus of The Ohio State University, and Mr. Makram Murad-al-shaikh, Senior Instructor of ESRI, Redlands.

The workshop combined a tutorial on modern cartography with special emphasis on the use of Geographic Information Systems and remote sensing, and a hands-on workshop using ESRI's ArcMap software. Mr. Murad-al-Shaikh presented a tutorial on the basic principles of cartography, the use of ArcMap for data classification and map presentations. Dr. Morrison discussed the effects of the shift to electronic technology used in cartography, the need and use of standards, outlining existing international standards that are available to the geo-spatial data community. Lastly, A/Prof Metternicht lectured on the use of remote sensing with specific emphasis on data collection and image processing techniques related to soils and vegetation. She summed up the discussion by touching on applications of remote sensing for topographic map revision and database maintenance and revision. The workshop was attended by 25 staff from the Land Development Department of Thailand.

Mr. Ard Somrang, Director General of the Land Development Department opened the weeklong workshop by welcoming the students and instructors to Bangkok. The gracious hosts of the Land Development Department, under the leadership of Ms. Wanarat Thothong, were superb in providing the local logistics including a banquet with Karaoke on Thursday evening. Graduation ceremonies on Friday afternoon were presided over by Mr. Chaiwat Wittibutr, Deputy Director General of the Land Development Department. The instructors and students were impressed with the first class facilities made available by the Land Development Department. The week proved beneficial to instructors and students alike.



Participants of the 'GIS and mapping for agricultural decision Support' workshop



Participants during a hands-on session taught by Makram Murad-al-Shaikh, Senior Instructor of ESRI, Joel Morrison and Graciela Metternicht (Vice-Chair, ICA Commission on Mapping from Satellite Imagery)