



Prof. John Townshend
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Dr. Townshend's broad interests are in how and why the vegetative land cover of the earth is changing and how this impacts key biogeochemical cycles especially the carbon cycle. The tools that are used in his research are primarily remote sensing earth observation sensors. He is also interested in the development of new earth science information systems to ensure the improved use and distribution of key products and data sets. In particular, the research has focused on improving our abilities to depict and monitor changes in land cover at regional and global scales. This work is carried out in the context of the importance of such changes on climate variability, especially through the global carbon cycle, biodiversity and sustainability. This is done with the philosophy that monitoring the rates and character of change is important in its own right, separate from model and theory testing, because some observations are so fundamental that consistent long-term monitoring must be ensured. Associated with his research is his chairman ship of the GOFD/GOLD (Global Observations of Forest Cover/Global Observations of Land Cover) Panel of the Global Terrestrial Observing System.