

## Floor Discussion

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Ms. Roberta Balstad Miller of CIESIN presented the first paper which discussed both the new opportunities and the problems facing researchers because of the increase in use of electronically stored data. The paper also discussed the implications of changing data access, storage, and dissemination technologies.

The second paper was presented by Mark Wallace of the Bureau of the Census. His paper presented the improvements that the Census Bureau is making to their Economic Programs data dissemination plans. The Census Bureau plans to release the majority of its Economic data electronically from now on either on CD-ROM or on the Internet.

The third paper was presented by Cavan Capps of the Bureau of the Census. This paper explained the new interactive tool, FERRET, that the Census Bureau has developed in collaboration with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. FERRET allows data users to access microdata and any related metadata and allows the user to browse and manipulate the data.

Mr. Wouter J. Keller of Statistics Netherlands said he was very impressed with the work presented by Mr. Capps, but it sounded like the FERRET tool focused mostly on microlevel data and Mr. Wouter wanted to know if there was any access to macrolevel data through multidimensional databases. Mr. Capps response was that they do have some macrolevel data and that the plans for FERRET are to build a system that can interact with many different multidimensional databases rather than any specific data set.