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1. Earth scientists are beginning to live what they once considered an impossible dream. They are establishing systems to monitor our entire planet continuously, from the outer fringes of the atmosphere to the deepest seabed. They even are beginning to track the grinding of rock upon rock that generates earthquakes. 1、地球科学家们开始将以前被认为是不可能实现的梦想变为现实。他们正在建立可以持续不断地监控我们整个地球的系统，上至大气外层边缘，下至海床最深处。他们甚至开始追踪导致地震产生的岩石间的摩擦。 2. They are linking communications systems to shunt these data to whomever can work them into useful knowledge. Often this now can be done in minutes instead of hours, days, or weeks. An unprecedented cooperation is developing among nations so that earth scientists will no longer look at our planet in the old, fragmented way. 2、科学家们正在将各个通讯系统连接起来，从而将收集到的数据资料传输给任何可将其转化为有用知识的使用者。这项工作现在往往只需几分钟而不是几小时、几天或几星期就能完成。一项空前的合作正在各国间展开，从此以后地球科学家们再也不需要用陈旧和零敲碎打的方式来研究我们所在的行星了。 3. These technological developments have brought humanity to the brink of "great opportunities," said American Geophysical Union president John Orcutt at a meeting of

the group last week in San Francisco. A few of many instances of such opportunities presented at the meeting illustrate this.

3、美国地球物理学会主席约翰奥克特在该组织上周于旧金山召开的会议上指出，这些技术上的发展已使人类十分接近“大好机遇”。这次会议上介绍了与这些机遇相关的许多实例，其中几个说明了这一点。

4. Scientists at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, Calif., where Dr. Orcutt is deputy director, have developed a way to use the worldwide seismic observing network to image earthquake ruptures. Within 30 minutes or less, they can trace the entire crustal rupture that produces a quake anywhere in the world. This information is much more valuable than merely pinpointing the quake epicenter. "This is important for tsunami warning systems in which you need to know a path - - not just the original location of an earthquake," explains Scripps scientist Peter Shearer.

4、由奥克特博士任副所长的加利福尼亚拉霍亚市斯克里普斯海洋研究所的科学家们已经开发出一种利用全球地震监控网络来形象地描绘地表断裂的方法。在30分钟或更短的时间内，他们就能完整地追踪到地球上任何一处导致地震的地壳断裂带。这一信息比仅仅确定震中的位置要有价值得多。斯克里普斯的科学家彼得希勒解释说：“这对于海啸预警系统来说很重要，因为在预警过程中，不仅仅需要知道震源所在，而且需要了解地震波的路径”。

5. Meanwhile, in North America, the EarthScope project is establishing a continent-wide network of GPS locators, seismographs, and other instruments to study what's happening below the crust.

5、与此同时，在北美开展的“地球透镜”计划正在建立一个包括全球定

位系统定位仪、地震仪和其他仪器所组成的洲际范围的网络，以研究地壳下面的活动情况。6. The network, which will cover the United States and reach into Canada and Mexico, is beginning to track the interaction of the two great crustal plates that respectively carry the Pacific Ocean and the continent. Its prime feature is an observatory in Parkfield, Calif., which has placed instruments nearly two miles deep into the Earth right up against the San Andreas fault to record every creep, rattle, and grind. The goal is "to get into the heart of this earthquake machine" and test scientists speculations as to how it works, says William Ellsworth, a geologist with the US Geological Survey in Menlo Park, Calif. 6、该网络将会覆盖美国并延伸至加拿大和墨西哥。目前，它正在追踪分别承载太平洋和美洲大陆的两大块地壳板块之间的相互作用情况。其显著特色是设在加州帕克菲尔德市的一个观测站，它在圣安德列亚斯断层的正上方距地表近两英里处，安装了各种仪器，用来记录这里的每一次地壳移动、撞击和摩擦情况。加州曼罗帕克美国地质勘探局的一位地质学家威廉埃尔斯沃斯表示，这样做的目的是为了“深入这部地震机器的中心地带”，并检验科学家们关于其活动情况的各种推测。7. Networks of satellites already on orbit or soon to be launched are beginning to provide detailed observations of the workings of the atmosphere, ocean, and continental crust over the entire planet. These data are shared globally through an unprecedented cooperation among 58 nations called the Global Earth Observation System of Systems. 7、由已经进入轨道或是即将发射的卫星所形成的网络已开始提供有关整个地球的大气、海洋和陆壳运

动情况的详细观测资料。这些数据资料通过由58个国家参与、名为“全球对地观测系统”的空前合作实现全球共享。8. Orcutt noted that it will take high-volume high-speed communications to make the most of such sharing. Such a system, now under development, will shunt data a thousand times faster than current "high speed" broadband Internet links. Orcutt added that a strong commercial incentive exists to develop this system. It would allow movie studios, for example, to transmit a digital motion picture directly to theaters, where it could be shown in real time. 8、奥克特指出，要最大限度地利用这种共享，需要依靠大容量、高速度的通讯系统。正处于开发阶段的这一系统将会以比现在的“高速”宽带因特网连接快1000倍的速度传送数据。奥克特还补充说，开发这个系统存在巨大的商业动机。例如，它将使电影制片厂直接将数字电影传输到电影院并实现实时放映。100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)