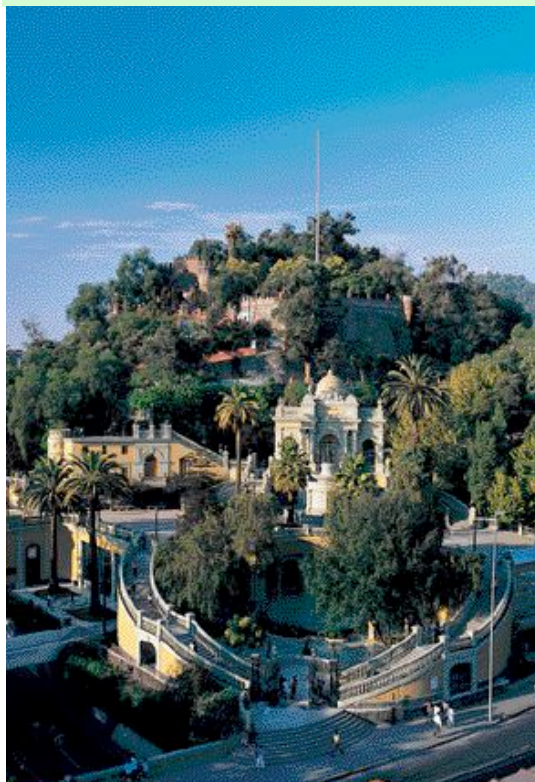


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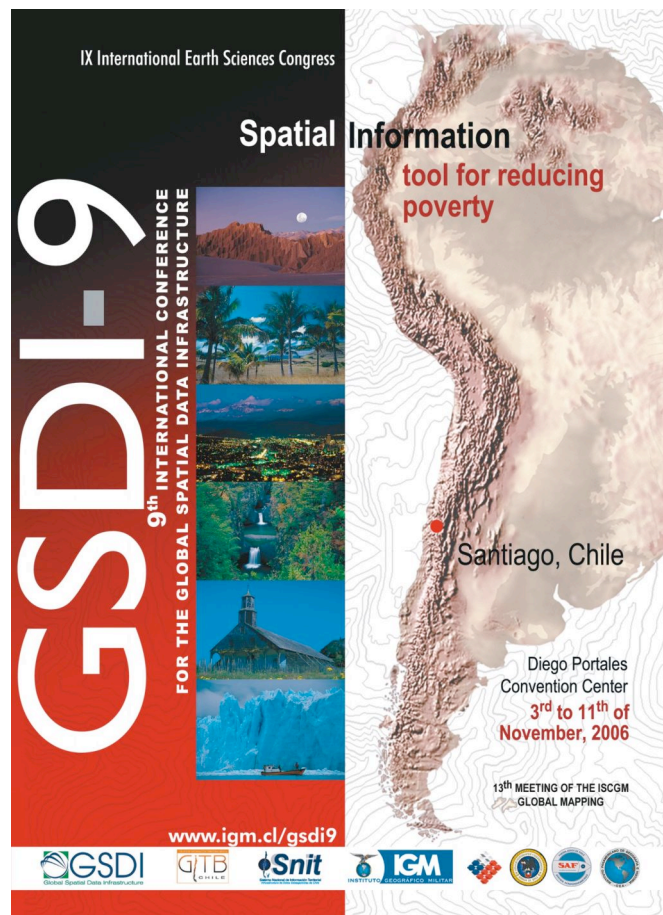


Photographer: Augusto Dominguez,
 Source: C.P.T. Chile

9th International GSDI Conference

The highlight of the next year will once again be our international conference. As 2005 closed, planning for the GSDI Association's next global conference was well underway. GSDI 9, with the theme ***Spatial Information: Tool for Reducing Poverty***, will be held in Santiago, Chile on 6-10 November 2006. GSDI-9 will offer plenary sessions, technical sessions, regional discussions groups, workshops, poster sessions and commercial exhibits. See <http://www.gsdi9.cl>

At this conference, the GSDI Association will hold its first ***Developing Nation Fund Silent Auction***. Funds raised at the auction will increase the opportunity for professionals from developing countries to participate in the GSDI Association. All attendees and other interested parties are invited to donate items for the auction. Donated items might include books, rugs, handicrafts, shawls, jewelry, carvings, baskets, hats, pottery, pillows, artwork, musical instruments, software, hardware, training, a vacation house for a period of time, etc. Use your imagination! This is a wonderful opportunity for global exchange while benefiting the Developing Nation Fund.



IX International Earth Sciences Congress

Spatial Information
tool for reducing poverty

GSDI-9
 9th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
 FOR THE GLOBAL SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

Santiago, Chile

Diego Portales
 Convention Center
 3rd to 11th of
 November, 2006

13th MEETING OF THE ISGM
 GLOBAL MAPPING

www.igm.cl/gsd9

GSDI | QTIB | Snit | IGM | SAIF

As this newsletter goes to press the following organizations are intending to meet in conjunction with GSDI-9, with facilities coordinated through the GSDI-9 Local Organizing Committee:

November 2-4, Thursday-Saturday
UNGIWG - United Nations Geographic Information Working Group
<http://www.ungiwg.org/>
(more than 30 UN funds, programs and specialized agencies)

November 5, Sunday
PCIDEA - UN Permanent Committee for the Infrastructure of Geospatial Data of the Americas
<http://www.cpidea.org>
(involves representatives from 24 countries)

November 6-10, Monday through Friday
GSDI-9 - Ninth International Conference on Global Spatial Data Infrastructure
<http://www.gsdi9.cl>

November 11, Saturday
ISCGM - International Steering Committee for Global Map
<http://www.iscgm.org/cgi-bin/fswiki/wiki.cgi>
(active representation from approximately 35 countries and contacts in many more)

November 12-16, Sunday through Thursday
PAIGH (or IPGH in Spanish) - Pan-American Institute for Geography and History
<http://www.ipgh.org/english/>
(involves 21 South, Central and North American countries plus 4 observing countries)

Chile is a land of majestic beauty, with rugged desert in the north, a fertile central valley, volcanoes and lakes toward the south, a rugged and complex coastline to the west and the Andes Mountains on the eastern border. The people are warm and friendly and the weather should be lovely. We look forward to seeing you in Santiago!

Developing Nation Fund

The GSDI Association administers and solicits funds for a Developing Nation Fund to support such items as membership dues and travel expenses of individuals and organizations in developing nations, in order to allow worthy individuals to participate more fully in GSDI meetings, workshops, and grant opportunities. The GSDI Small Grants Program, as described below, was expanded in the last year to increase support for SDI projects in developing nations.

Grant Programs

In the last three years, worthy organizations in countries around the world have received grants from the GSDI Association and its members.

GSDI Small Grants Program

In 2003 and 2004, the GSDI Small Grants program provided grants to a wide range of deserving organizations to initiate or expand spatial data infrastructure activities. Listed on the next page is a sampling of progress made in using funds from some of these early small grants.

(continued on next page)

What are spatial data infrastructures?

Spatial data infrastructures (SDIs) provide a basis for spatial data discovery, evaluation, and application, and include the following elements:

- **Geographic data:** the actual digital geographic data and information.
- **Metadata:** the data describing the data (content, quality, condition, and other characteristics). It permits structured searches and comparison of data in different clearinghouses and gives the user adequate information to find data and use it in an appropriate context.
- **Framework:** includes base layers, which will probably differ from location to location. It also includes mechanisms for identifying, describing, and sharing the data using features, attributes, and attribute values, as well as mechanisms for updating the data without complete re-collection.
- **Services:** to help discover and interact with data.
- **Clearinghouse:** to actually obtain the data. Clearinghouses support uniform, distributed search through a single user interface; they allow the user to obtain data directly, or they direct the user to another source.
- **Standards:** created and accepted at local, national, and global levels.
- **Partnerships:** the glue that holds it together. Partnerships reduce duplication and the cost of collection and leverage local/national/global technology and skills.
- **Education and Communication:** allowing individual citizens, scientists, administrators, private companies, government agencies, non-government organizations, and academic institutions with local to global interests to communicate with and learn from each other.

(GSDI small grants program continued)

- **Argentina - The Cadastre Agency in the Province of Chovut** for the creation and production of an SDI Ibero-America Newsletter in Spanish. This was organized, instituted and edited by Mabel López of the Cadastral Agency. While the initial principal focus of the newsletter was cadastral and land administration aspects in the context of spatial data infrastructures the project is now being merged with the SDI-LAC Newsletters of GSDI.
- **Botswana - Department of Surveys and Maps** to facilitate the overall goal of establishing a metadata clearinghouse node and a web map service for the Botswana National Atlas. To achieve the overall objective, a coordinated metadata service and a web map service was to be established to ensure wider distribution of the Atlas information. Incrementally, the grant was used to conduct training of local staff for Internet map service, identify a common metadata standard to use, conduct clearinghouse node registration, and develop a work plan for metadata development. The implementation of the IGIS project, Phases I and II, at the Department of Surveys and Mapping was key to the development of a National Spatial Data Infrastructure for Botswana.
- **Czech Republic - The Association for Geoinformation in Praha** to document the changes in the INSPIRE project development plan. Essentially, the grant helped the Czech Republic prepare and publish the document on how the implementation of the INSPIRE principles will be instituted within the Czech Republic. The document is patterned after the GSDI cookbook with chapters on the following topics: INSPIRE overview, proposed framework of CZ INSPIRE, coordination and control of INSPIRE, subprojects and coordination, and possible financing models. The document is also treating the components of NSDI such as: architecture, geo-portals, meta-information systems, information and data services, standards, reference data, and data for environmental policies.
- **Mauritius - J. Beedasy at the University of Mauritius** for sourcing material for and editing the SDI newsletter for Asia and the Pacific in collaboration with the GSDI Association and the Permanent Committee GIS Infrastructure (PCGIAP.) The now long-standing SDI-AP Newsletter is known in SDI circles throughout the region and currently edited by Changsup Han, a visiting scientist at FGDC from the Republic of Korea. <http://www.gsd.org/newsletters.asp>
- **Mongolia - MonMap LLC/MSPRS**, the principal Mapping Agency in Mongolia to put on an SDI workshop in Ulaanbaatar. As a result the State Ministry of Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography under the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development have been preparing the National plan-program on NSDI development in Mongolia for

submission to the Government of Mongolia. The plan includes development of a new geodetic reference system in Mongolia based on GPS reference stations network, building of digital base map database and the establishment of a Nation Wide Land Information system. The NSDI program is still underway, involving discussions and approval at various government levels, and still has a long way to go for completion.

In 2005, the GSDI Association Sponsored Projects Committee evaluated and recommended awards for 15 of the 71 proposals submitted. In the latest round, we were very fortunate that *GISCorps of URISA* participated in the grant program, awarding some individual grants as well as increasing the total number of grants possible. Through the combined efforts of GSDI and the GIS Corps, a total of 15 grants ultimately were awarded in 2005: nine proposals received \$2500 USD grants, three received \$2500 USD plus approximately \$2000 USD in equivalent services from the GISCorps and three received up to \$2500 USD in services from the GISCorps. Although the grants may be viewed as small from western economy perspectives, the cash grants may represent the equivalent of one to three years of annual salary for a typical worker in some of the nations in which the grants are awarded. Special appreciation is extended to the U.S. Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) for its strong continued support of this program.

Intergraph/GSDI Interoperability Grants

Intergraph and the GSDI Association have been working closely to support the establishment of spatial data infrastructures around the globe. Below you will find a few examples of this extensive and successful collaboration. In 2002, Intergraph made available 100 Intergraph/Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) Interoperability Grants valued at over \$5.5M USD. To date, Intergraph has provided such grants for projects that span the globe. Programs in India, Indonesia, South Africa, Chile, the Philippines, Romania, and Thailand are among those that have recently received support provided by Intergraph/GSDI Interoperability Grants.



Photographer- Peter Adams,
Source: Index Stock Imagery



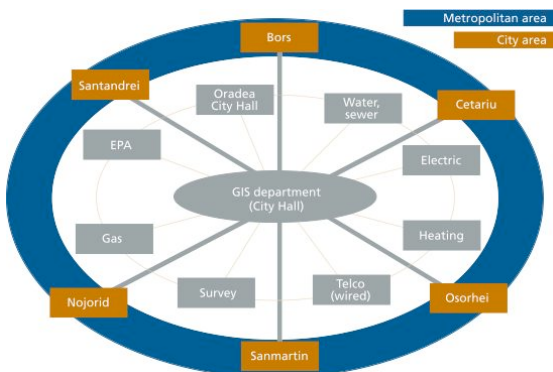
Photographer: Mistral Images,
Source: Index Stock Imagery

A. *The Royal Thai Survey Department* - The Royal Thai Survey Department (RTSD) is a major producer of map data of Thailand with the produced map data forming a

GIS database for Thailand. The RTSD is also the major center for distribution of geoinformatic data. Historically, imagery map data queries and searches were undertaken by making contact in person or via telephone. This limited the query capabilities and often caused problems as the queries could only be dealt with during public working hours. These two core functions have recently been brought together with the implementation of the RTSD's GIS Data Web Map Query System. The query system uses Intergraph Web-based technology that implements the Open Geospatial Consortium's standards, which will provide all services to the users and allow access to the RTSD data at any given time, thereby significantly enhancing both operating efficiency for the RTSD and the end-user experience

B. Oradea Municipality, Romania - Oradea Municipality in Romania initiated a GIS project in 1998 called Oradea GIS Local Consortium. The objective of the project was to develop an open management information system to manage the city which was subsequently extended to the neighboring villages of Bors, Cetariu, Paleu, Osorhei, Sântandrei, Nojorid, Biharia and Sântandrei as a metropolitan area. City Hall of Oradea's partners in the project include the Fire Department, and the Water, Electricity, Heating, Telephone, Cadastral, Gas, and Environmental Protection Agencies.

Prior to the commencement of the project, there was a lack of regional and national standards with critical information for development owned by different actors, leading to an inefficient uncoordinated approach. The initiative is meeting both European and international standards through INSPIRE and the Open Geospatial Consortium. The expected benefits at the end of the project include more effective geospatial cooperation between key organizations; metropolitan data and workflow integration; readily accessible, up-to-date geospatial information; and multi-criteria scenarios to support decision making within a standards-based approach. The enhanced decision making will also benefit the bottom line through cost and time efficiencies.



Oradea Municipality schema diagram for GIS Local Consortium initiative

As the effort has evolved, Oradea has gained two internationally financed projects, including the Infrastructure Management Informational System financed by the Flemish government and an Interoperability Grant

provided by Intergraph. The initiative is being used as a model of "best practices" to promote spatial data infrastructures on a national level within Romania.

ESRI, Global Map and GSDI Grant Program

ESRI is supporting a grant program and working closely with Global Map and the GSDI Association to support the development of geographic data sharing in the context of GSDI. This grant program is a valuable resource for national mapping organizations or spatial data development organizations that are leading the effort to build a national spatial data infrastructure within a country and that are, or wish to become, participants in Global Map. To date, over 100 countries have become participants.

Over the past decade, a network of national, regional, and international organizations and individuals have developed the vision of a distributed interoperable Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) involving the development and open sharing of digital map data. One facet of this vision might be to map the entire land area of the globe at a 1-km resolution, with boundaries, drainage systems, transportation networks, population centers, elevation, land cover, land use, and vegetation. The *International Steering Committee for Global Mapping* (ISCGM) has been working to develop Global Map, a digital map at 1:1 million scale with these eight environmental data layers. A key element of the program is that participating nations are trained to complete and verify their own contribution to Global Map.

To help Global Map and GSDI become realities, ESRI donates within the context of the program the following to support the technical backbone of national spatial data infrastructures: one copy of the ArcGIS system, maintenance (technical support and upgrades), Virtual Campus training for free for one student for Learning ArcGIS 8 and Introduction to Visual Basic 6, a specially designed intensive three-week course designed to make the process of creating and publishing Global Map data easy to understand and easy to accomplish, and one free pass for the annual ESRI International User Conference in San Diego, California, for the first year of the program. Grantees agree to participate in global mapping and develop Global Map for their country, within their capacity, and agree to publish and make available on the Web their national map data at a scale of 1:1,000,000 or better using ArcIMS to provide an OpenGIS Web Map Server interface to participate both as a node of the GSDI Clearinghouse and a member of the Geography Network. Publishing includes the preparation of basic data descriptions, called metadata, to facilitate search within GSDI and the Geography Network. The publishing of other appropriate data sets is encouraged. ESRI temporarily hosts national data sets on their Geography Network server in Redlands without cost, where needed. The total monetary commitment by ESRI for the program has been \$5 million (U.S.).

GSDI-8 Conference in Cairo

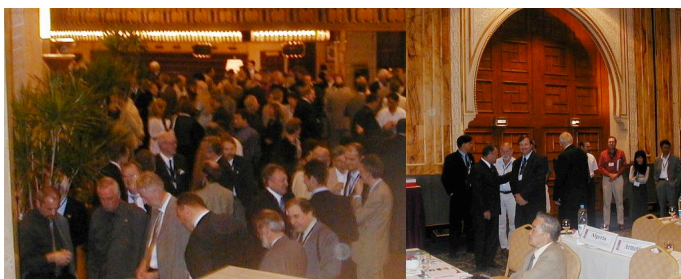


"Spatial Data in an Information Society" was the theme of the 8th Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) Conference held 16-21 April 2005 in Cairo, Egypt. Scientists, engineers, GIS and GPS specialists, land administrators and surveying practitioners participated in 51 technical sessions, several workshops, and five plenary sessions. Over 400 papers were presented. This joint collaboration between the GSDI Association and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) was a great success, attracting over 1000 registrants from 80 countries, and it provided a major venue for the sharing of best practices, case studies, and related information between a range of professional disciplines. We thank the Egyptian Survey Authority for all of their hard work as the local hosts for this event.



Receiving special recognition in Cairo for each of their organizations' strong institutional support of the GSDI Association, were Jack Dangermond, President of *ESRI*, Preetha Pulusani, former/retired President of *Intergraph* Security, Government, and Infrastructure, and Ivan DeLoatch, Director of *FGDC*. Mukund Rao (left) and Harlan Onsrud (right).

At the Cairo Conference, the GSDI Association elected Professor Harlan Onsrud of the University of Maine, USA as President and Jarmo Ratia, Director General, National Land Survey of Finland, as Vice-President. Dr. Mukund Rao, former Deputy Director, Indian Space Research Organization, Bangalore, India, became the immediate past-president. These three along with fifteen other elected representatives from organizations spread across the globe make up the Board of Directors.



Outreach

1. GSDI Association Website (<http://www.gsd.org>)

The links for the Newsletters, News List Archive and Upcoming Conferences continue to support some of the heaviest traffic on the website. We upgraded our website so that we can now accept on-line credit card payments for new and continuing memberships. The website also contains a new "members only" section providing access to minutes of the monthly Board teleconference minutes as well as contact information for other members. We also support numerous discussion lists for those desiring to discuss regional interests and to support the work of the association's committees. A conference paper submission, review, and management system has been added.

2. Regional Newsletters Support SDI Outreach

The GSDI develops mainly through SDI activities that occur at the local, national and regional levels. The Association's monthly electronic regional newsletters continue to be coordinated and posted on the GSDI site. They have been extremely popular in keeping people around the globe informed about SDI-related activities in their locales. Our Association's newsletters include the *SDI-Africa Newsletter*, edited by Kate Lance; the *SDI-Latin America & Caribbean Newsletter*, edited by Nancy Aguirre on behalf of PAIGH; and the *SDI-Asia & Pacific Newsletter*, edited by Changsup Han. Current and past issues are available on our website. The GSDI Association website also contains links to other SDI-related newsletters, such as the US Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) Newsletter. We also archive the EUROGI, UNGIWG SALB, and EIS-Africa Newsletters. The GSDI Association website is the world's leading aggregator of global SDI news.

3. GSDI Newslist

Our GSDI newslist continues to be very popular. New people from across the globe join the list virtually every day to receive announcements on SDI-related topics.

4. Discussion Lists

The GSDI Association supports 14 email lists. Some focus on thematic issues (e.g. technical list, legal and economic list), some focus on regional interests (e.g. Africa, Europe, etc.) and others focus on supporting discussions among members of the standing committees and administrative units of the organization (e.g. Communications Committee, GSDI Council, etc.).

5. Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Gateway (<http://gateway.gsd.org>)

The GSDI Gateway to Spatial Information and Services at <http://gateway.gsd.org> facilitates the registration, discovery, and access to diverse map and data services that are hosted around the globe. Implementing ISO and

OGC standards, this portal provides a model for the hosting and use of distributed geoprocessing services. This is a living and evolving project of the association.

6. Active Engagement in International Standards Development Forums

Standards are essential to GSDI best practices. The GSDI Association has International Standards Organization (ISO) Class A liaison status, allowing member organizations to review and provide comment on ISO/TC 211 documents. (ISO/TC 211 is the ISO technical committee responsible for standardization in the field of digital geographic information.) Various GSDI members continue to participate in standards development forums such as OGC and ISO TC 211.

Committee Progress

1. Legal and Economic Working Group

When the GSDI Legal and Economic Committee convened in Cairo in April at the GSDI-8 Conference, members suggested that news about research being done on legal, economic, and policy aspects of SDI development be included in the Committee web pages. Abstracts were gathered and now are online to help people with similar interests find each other, and to help students identify topics for potential research. The Committee invites others to submit abstracts and papers to be made available on the GSDI Legal and Economic page. See http://gsdidocs.org/lewg/GII_research.htm

The Legal and Economic Committee also set up a web page to provide examples of courses that introduce SDI concepts and components. It is useful to see how these courses are structured, which SDI elements they include, and how the concepts are conveyed. The Committee invites GSDI Association members and others to offer news of courses as they become available. See http://www.gsdidocs.org/lewg/SDI_education.htm. Further, the committee supports a Legal and Economic Discussion list that has been active since December 2004. See <http://lists.gsdidocs.org/pipermail/legal-econ/>.

2. Technical Working Group

Attending members of the GSDI Technical Working Group met in Cairo at the GSDI-8 conference, April 2005. Over 20 participants reviewed the development of the GSDI Cookbook and discussed opportunities for joint technical activities. A general request to refresh the content of the Cookbook was made prior to the GSDI-9 conference in Santiago, Chile. The planned development of a geospatial directory of services by the GSDI Association also was welcomed to promote global access to and advertising of geospatial web services. This will be integrated with the existing Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Gateway (<http://gateway.gsdidocs.org>). The proposed directory will act as a sort of "Yellow Pages" of available entry points to catalogs, map, and data services that are identified by

communities and their portals. A feasibility study to implement a global directory is being conducted and will be evaluated by the Technical Working Group in 2006.

The GSDI Cookbook received the Carlos A. Carvallo Yanez award from the Pan American Institute of Geography and History. The award was presented at the 20th Meeting of the Commission of Cartography in Caracas, Venezuela on November 18, 2005.

3. Conference Planning Committee

The Conference Planning Committee has been actively working with the Local Organizing Committee in Santiago, Chile to conduct the GSDI-9 Technical Meeting scheduled for 6-9 November 2006 in Santiago. The web site is up, featuring items such as registration information, technical program, social and accompanying persons activities, accommodation information and related data. See <http://www.gsdidocs.org>. The call for papers has been distributed widely and will close May 2, 2006 for abstracts for general papers. Additionally, there will be a suite of papers that will be peer reviewed. Those that pass the peer review process will be published in an edited book tentatively titled *Research and Theory in Advancing Spatial Data Infrastructure Concepts*. A March deadline was set for submission of full papers by authors wishing to participate in the referred volume.

Preparations are already underway for GSDI-10, which is tentatively scheduled to be held in Fiji in February 2008. The Committee also has sent a request for proposals to organizations potentially interested in hosting GSDI-11, planned for Spring/Summer 2009.

Reports from Around the World

How has the GSDI mission made a difference in the world? The following summarizes a few SDI efforts that are consistent with and leveraging the proven practices being extolled and defined by GSDI approaches.

1. SDI Implementation Guide Translated to French

In 2005, SDI Africa: An Implementation Guide, originally published in English in 2003, was made available in French. See <http://geoinfo.uneca.org/sdiafrica>. The French translation of the main chapters and key reference material was made possible through a fund from the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The translation is a work-in-progress and comments and corrections are most welcome. Post them to ecageoinfo@uneca.org. The handbook has been compiled as a cooperative effort of the ECA, the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association (GSDI) and EIS-Africa, with the collaboration of the International Institute for Geoinformation Science and Earth Observation (ITC). The objective of compiling this handbook is to assist African countries to improve the management of their geo-spatial data resources in a way that effectively supports decision-making by governments

and ensures the participation of the entire society in the process.

2. Return on Investment Study

The "Return on Investment Study on Geospatial Interoperability," conducted by Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH) and released by the NASA Geospatial Interoperability Office in 2005 will provide useful support for SDI developers around the world. The study focused on systems currently implementing ISO, FGDC, and OGC standards, comparing and contrasting two programs, one utilizing and one not utilizing voluntary, consensus-based interface standards, for a 5-year lifecycle. They found that the program that adopted geospatial interoperability standards resulted in \$1.00 investment netting a \$1.19 in savings in operations and maintenance compared to projects not based on open standards. This resulted in savings of 26.2% compared to projects not implementing standards.

3. Libya Spatial Data Infrastructure (LSDI)

In 2005, many nations made important progress in building their National Spatial Data Infrastructures. We present below one of the newest national SDI initiatives underway. This initiative is particularly noteworthy in its linkage of spatial data infrastructure with the country's broader information infrastructure efforts.

The Libya Spatial Data Infrastructure (LSDI) was initiated in 2005 as a matter of significant national priority. This is seen as a critical "building block" in the more broadly conceived Libya Information Infrastructure, and there are several large, national projects that are already underway that will generate many of the fundamental geographic data sets (FGDS) that are needed in common across most agencies, including:

- Third Generation Planning Program. Libya is undertaking the development of a multiple-level physical land use master planning effort for the entire country.
- National Infrastructure Plan. A comprehensive program is also underway to assess the current extent and condition of potable water and sanitary sewer services in the country, and to prepare detailed designs for the upgrade and extension of such systems.
- National Census. Libya has already started the planning for a new national census to be carried out in 2006.

A team of Libyan and international consultants has been mobilized to support the initial program activities that have included an orientation seminar attended by nearly 100 representatives from 45 government agencies. Coordinators have been assigned from 19 key agencies,

and the LSDI team is working with the Coordinators to carry out detailed interviews with management and staff representatives in each agency.

Happenings with Membership and Staff

1. ISCGM, ISPRS, ICA, PCGIAP and FIG accepted as Ex-Officio Members

The GSDI Association has previously accepted as ex-officio members of the GSDI Association Council representatives from ISCGM, ISPRS, ICA, PCGIAP, and FIG. These and perhaps additional organizations will be invited to fully participate as ex officio members in the next full member Council Meeting during our next major conference in Santiago, Chile in November 2006.

2. Farewell and Thank You to Oh-Sung Kwon

Mr. Oh-Sung Kwon, a citizen of the Republic of Korea and an employee of the Ministry of Construction and Transportation (MOCT), was assigned as a Visiting Scientist to the US FGDC for three years supporting the GSDI Secretariat. In addition to acting as an effective liaison with the Korean Government, he was principal editor for the SDI Newsletter for Asia and the Pacific during the latter part of his stay (<http://www.gsdi.org/newsletters.asp>). Mr. Kwon concluded his assignment with the FGDC in December of 2005 and we will miss him. He overlapped by two weeks with his replacement, Mr. Changsup Han also from the MOCT. We look forward to the same close collaboration with Mr. Han.

3. Daily Operations

We greatly appreciate the strong support provided by several independent consultants who work closely with the Executive in achieving much of the day-to-day tasks required to run the Association. We gratefully acknowledge Allan Doyle, Business Director, who acts as business coordination point for the organization handling correspondence, incoming invoices, sending dues notices, and similar tasks. Accountant Marilyn Gallant handles accounting work and tax form preparation. Richard Campbell supports our web hosting, coding and troubleshooting while we hire graduate students and others on an ad hoc hourly rate basis to accomplish well-defined specific tasks. Thanks to all of them!

GSDI Alliances and Partnerships

1. World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

The GSDI Association sent Dr.-Ing. Yola Georgiadou of ITC in the Netherlands to Geneva in February to attend and participate in the Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS.) The GSDI Association was voted in as an accredited participating non-government organization at that meeting. At the actual summit in Tunis from 13-18 of November, GSDI



President Harlan Onsrud presented for the GSDI Association three talks in three separate organized forums focusing on “The Importance of Geographic Data and Technologies in Supporting Sustainable Social, Economic, and Environmental Systems” and the need for an interoperable “Global Commons of Geographic Data and Services.” GSDI member organizations also leading and participating in some of the same sessions were the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) at Columbia University, represented by Robert Chen, and the U.S. Federal Geographic data Committee (FGDC), represented by Ivan DeLoatch.



2. Group on Earth Observations (GEO)

GEO has been charged with the elaboration of a plan for the creation of a ‘Global Earth Observation System of Systems’ or GEOSS. GEOSS will build on current cooperative efforts among existing observation and processing systems, while encouraging new research and development aimed at filling Earth observation gaps. GSDI was accredited as a participating organization in GEO at the February 2005 GEO-6 meeting in Brussels and the GEO 10 Year Plan was endorsed at that time by about 60 countries at the Earth Observation Summit.

3. WGISS/CEOS

The Working Group on Information Systems and Services (WGISS) is one of two subgroups supporting the Committee on Earth Observing Satellites (CEOS). CEOS addresses coordination of the satellite Earth Observation (EO) programs of the world's government agencies

responsible for civil EO satellite programs, along with agencies that receive and process data acquired remotely from space. WGISS promotes collaboration in the development of systems and services that manage and supply EO data to users worldwide. GSDI became a liaising organization of the WGISS of CEOS at its meeting in Argentina in the spring of 2005. Gabor Remetey-Fulopp, Secretary of the GSDI Board and Secretary General of the Hungarian Association for Geo-information, has been appointed by the GSDI Board as our representative to WGISS and will fully participate in upcoming meetings.

GSDI was also an Alliance Partner of the 2005 NOAA's Satellite and Information Service Remote Sensing Market Research Project. See <http://www.empliant.com/NOAA-remote-sensing-research/>

Overall Objectives

The GSDI Association staff and Board is focusing in the coming year on continuing and enhancing the level of support we've described and will dedicate more effort to membership recruitment at the organizational and individual levels. Conference attendance numbers and country distribution, newsletter readership, and our successful grant program show that there is significant interest in the idea of GSDI. We have shown that our association can deliver increasing value from year to year, and we are optimistic about being able to recruit new members to help us not only fund our progress, but also to attract new viewpoints and ideas.

Postscript: A hearty thanks to Mark Reichardt of the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) for coordinating the creation of this GSDI Newsletter and to the numerous volunteers that contributed content!

GSDI Officers

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Harlan Onsrud

Past President
Mukund Rao

Executive Director
Harlan Onsrud (interim)

Secretary
Gabor Remetey-Fulopp

Treasurer
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