GSDI AND IGS GLOBAL NEWS

News from the GSDI Association and the International Geospatial Society

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ASSOCIATION NEWS

GSDI 14 Conference Update!

The GSDI Association, EIS-Africa, the International Geospatial Society, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) continue their partnership in offering the joint *GSDI 14 World Conference* and *AfricaGIS 2013 Conference* in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November 2013. The theme of the conference is "*Spatial Enablement in Support of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction*. Pre-conference and post-conference workshops, meetings and seminars will also be supported. "

AfricaGIS is the largest regularly occurring GIS conference in Africa with participants from the whole continent. The GSDI World Conference moves to sites across the globe to offer geospatial specialists from all parts of the world opportunities to better exchange ideas and learn from peers in building spatial data infrastructure. For past conferences, see: http://www.gsdi.org/gsdiConferences.

The conference program is being designed to accommodate opening and closing plenary sessions with keynote speakers, daily plenary sessions focused on the conference theme and related topics, technical paper sessions in several parallel tracks, and pre-conference and post-conference workshops freely open to all registrants. The conference program will also include a poster exhibit and competition, an exhibition area highlighting agency initiatives and corporate product and service offerings, and numerous organized round table discussions to allow people from common regions of Africa or the globe or with common interests to present, discuss, and share issues, experiences and plans.

The selected theme of the conference is "*Spatial Enablement in Support of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction*" The pressing needs of African nations, their citizens, and the needs of economically disadvantaged nations generally are a particular emphasis of the conference and include such concerns as:

- sustainable development,
- economic development,
- business intelligence and business geographics,
- disaster prevention, warning, management, response, and recovery,
- alleviation of poverty and crime,
- lessening the digital divide including access to information technologies,
- ensuring food security,
- support of transportation, health and communication systems, and
- facilitating land ownership.

GIS, spatial data infrastructure concepts, and affiliated tools and technologies are being utilized worldwide to help address all of these issues.

Substantial reduction in registration fees will be available for local participants, members of EIS-Africa and members of the International Geospatial Society who are from low income per capita nations. Substantial reductions in Exhibit and Sponsorship fees will be available for companies and agencies that are members of the GSDI Association.

Consult the web site at http://gsdi.org/gsdi14 as the Call for Papers and details about the program, facilities and sponsorship opportunities become available. Come prepared to engage, learn and enjoy! More news on the conference in our next issue!

GSDI COMMITTEE NEWS

To keep abreast of what is happening in SDI and related fields around the globe, be sure to check out the various newsletters downloadable from the GSDI website (http://www.gsdi.org/newsletters). These include the *GSDI Regional Newsletters* for Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America & Caribbean; the *GSDI & IGS Global News* (covering GSDI Association and IGS Member activities), *FGDC Newsletter* (USA SDI news), EuroGeographics and *EUROGI Newsletters* (covering Europe), *EIS-Africa* (environmental news from Africa), *SALB Newsletter* (Second Administrative Level Boundaries from the UNGIWG project) and, now, the *UN-SPIDER Newsletter* (the UN Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response, published by UNOOSA – UN Office for Outer Space Affairs).

Outreach & Membership Committee

The O&M Committee finally agreed an ambitious work plan for the coming months, which is now available for viewing or download from the Committee's web pages

on the GSDI web site – visit http://www.gsdi.org/standingcomm and click on 'Current Work Plan'. Lots of work ahead prior to GSDI-14 in November 2013 for all Committee members!

During November, vice-Chair, Communications, **Roger Longhorn**, presented a paper on the relation between the EU's pan-European INSPIRE initiative and the needs of the coastal and marine communities across Europe, at the Hydro12 Conference in Rotterdam, Netherlands. Roger also participated in the Littoral 2012 Conference, held in Oostende, Belgium, in November, which featured sessions on policy and governance issues relating to marine and coastal information and stakeholders.

Committee vice-Chair, Middle East and India, **Dr Khalid Al-Haidan**, Director of GIS Directorate (CITO) in Bahrain, actively promoted the GSDI at the **GIS Day** event in the Kingdom of Bahrain on 21 November 2012, and as part of the opening speech, event patron Dr Mohammed Al-Amer, the president of CITO, pointed out the role and Importance of the GSDI Association and the GSDI logo was displayed on the main screen during the opening presentation.

Further promotion of the Association is planned for (UAE) during Esri User Conference for Middle East and Africa. Dr Al-Haidan also proposes to convene a meeting in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) on 2 December 2012 with major governmental organizations to continue his GSDI promotional work. Very well done, Dr Al-Haidan!

The Outreach & Membership Committee also manages the **GSDI Group** on **LinkedIn**, which has added seven new members in the past month, for a total of 227 members today. If you are not already a member of this group, please join today – and tell your friends! Visit http://www.linkedin.com to join, then find GSDI in the 'Groups' option, to join the group.

Legal & Socioeconomic Committee

L&SE Committee member **Gabor Remetey-Fülöpp** (HUNAGI) and vice-Chair, **Kathleen Janssen** (K.U. Leuven), co-authored a presentation with **Catharina Bamps** (EUROGI Secretary-General), titled "Shared and Open Data - European efforts and practices from an NGO perspective" which was presented at the Digital

Earth in Data-Intensive Era – 23rd CODATA Conference Taipei, 27-31 October 2012. The paper (presented by Gabor) focused on:

- Flashback on the evolution in shared and open GI
- HUNAGI and European programmes and projects in the context
- Data as assets: Legal aspects and Societal, SocioEconomic impacts
- European legislative framework INSPIRE: interoperability & data sharing
- European legislative framework on PSI and re-use
- European Open Data Policy
- New technologies, new challenges: benefits and threats
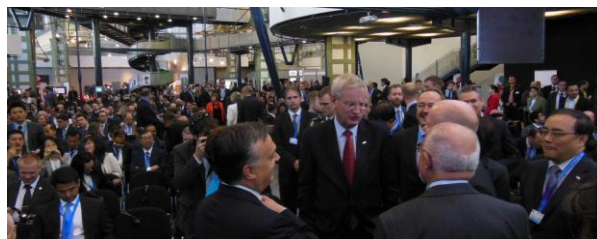- Example on European efforts: WWEC, Denmark

The full presentation can be downloaded (PDF) at:

http://www.hunagi.hu/G/pub/Globalis/RemeteyJanssen Bampsfinalc.pdf

Gabor also reports on the *Cyberspace Conference*, which started in London in 2011, and was hosted this year by the Hungarian Government, from 3-5 October 2012, with the slogan "With trust and security for freedom and prosperity".

The high profile event, with 600 participants from 60 countries, was opened by the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and attended by the high representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *Catherine Ashton, Vice President of the European Commission*, and many ministers from around the world. The Budapest Conference was welcomed in a video

broadcasted message by US State Secretary Hillary Clinton.

Among the invited participants were representatives of the Hungarian GI Association- HUNAGI. Gabor Remetey, member of GSDI Legal and Socioeconomic Committee, made an intervention in the discussion on Social Benefits and Human Rights with the subject of how privacy will be ensured in an era where the development and applications of new technologies in data and information gathering grows with unprecedented speed - as it is anticipated 50 billion wireless mobile devices will be connected to the Internet in 2020. Acknowledged Internet of Things experts of the panel, including Prof Wolfgang Kleinwaechter, discussed the issue addressed.

During the discussions, consensus was found on:

- the Internet - especially mobile Internet - is a major driver,
- everybody is a stakeholder in Cyberspace,
- broadband is a key for the society and economy,
- there is a need for confidence and trust,
- openness, transparency, responsibility and accountability are essential,
- international cooperation and use of standards is vital,
- dialogs should be continued,
- call the next generation to be involved,
- connectivity, innovation and communication are crucial,
- ability to transform and flexibility is needed,
- sharing skill and knowledge, best practices and lessons learned is important,
- sharing digital content, open access and use of data,
- crucial role of the government, industry, academia and NGOs, and
- balancing between security and freedom is a delicate task – they are not incompatible.

The next Cyberspace Conference will be in Seoul, South-Korea in 2013. For further reading:

- Conference website - including Chair's Summary: http://www.cyberbudapest2012.hu/index
- OECD Internet Economy Outlook 2012: http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/launchofoecdinterneteconomyoutlook2012atbudapestconferenceoncyberspacethursday4october2012.htm
- World Bank 2012 Strategy for Information and Communication Technology: http://web.worldbank.org
- HUNAGI photo album: http://picasaweb.google.com/hunagialbums/CyberspaceConferenceBudapest

- Group on Earth Observations: www.earthobservations.org

Technical Committee

Technical Committee Chair, **Eric van Praag**, took part in the *V GeoSUR Meeting* in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 14 November 2012, before the opening of the 44 Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH). Senior authorities from the geographic institutes of the Americas attended the meeting and heard about the GeoSUR accomplishments of 2012 and its plans for the period 2013-2015. During the meeting Mr Eric van Praag, GeoSUR Coordinator, announced that CAF – The Latin American Development Bank - will provide the funding needed to complete the first integrated map of Mesoamerica, at 1:250,000 scale. This project has been spearheaded by PAIGH and the geographic institutes of Mesoamerica, with technical support provided by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

Note: The Technical Committee is also responsible for updating of the *GSDI SDI Cookbook*, a wiki maintained at: http://www.gsdidocs.org/GSDIWiki/index.php/Main_Page.

Societal Impacts Committee

Following successful completion of the ICLPST (International Center for Land Policy Studies and Training) training Seminar on Geographical Information Systems and Land Management in Taipei in September (see one sponsored attendee's report elsewhere in this Newsletter), Societal Impacts Committee vice-Chair **Jeremy Shen**, Director of the Information Center at the Min. of Interior in Chinese Taipei, announced that the training opportunity will be offered again in 2013. As before, each selected participant will receive a round-trip air ticket, allowance and lodging expenses during the training period.

For those interested in this excellent training opportunity in Taipei, view the guidelines below. The guidelines for the candidates to participate in the training seminar are:

1. Candidates must be an individual member of the International Geospatial Society (IGS) or must be affiliated with an organization that is a member of the GSDI Association.

2. Candidates must be proficient in both spoken and written English in order to be able to follow lectures and instructions conducted in English.
3. Candidates must be persons who are presently working as an administrator, planner or project analyst in areas such as land use and management, urban planning, land surveying, spatial data infrastructure, geographic information systems, etc.
4. Candidates must be under the age of 55.

For more details, please watch for the formal announcement on the GSDI Association's website early next year (www.gsdi.org).

Consider joining the IGS by visiting the web site at http://www.igeoss.org/ and look at the Benefits of Joining the IGS on the GSDI and IGS web site at: http://www.igeoss.org/BenefitsOfJoining.

GSDI Small Grants - URISA GISCorps Support

Two additional GSDI projects supported by the URISA GISCorps are in full swing in November. Bill Huxhold is currently in Russia at the University of Ural lecturing about GIS applications and trends in the US and Nancy Von Meyer is assisting in reviewing documents related to the cadastral system in Uzbekistan.

Prof William Huxhold, chair and professor of Urban Planning at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to a GSDI mission in Chelyabinsk, Russia. Prof Huxhold presented a seminar at the South Ural State University on 1-2 November 2012. His lectures included several GIS related topics including the history and current status of GIS in the US (at all levels), the role of universities in the GIS industry, an overview of land record management, Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) and related standards, uses of remote sensing, and the state of various GIS datasets in the US.

The National Centre of Geodesy and Cartography (NCGC) in Uzbekistan requested assistance of a GIS professional via the GSDI Small Grant Program. NCGC is in the process of designing and implementing activities related to GIS strategic planning and capacity development. As part of this project, a number of land record management related papers/studies have been developed and the GISCorps volunteer's task will include reviewing these documents and making recommendations. The search for a seasoned volunteer in cadastral mapping resulted in recruiting **Dr Nancy Von Meyer**, the vice-president of Fairview Industries. Nancy is a GIS leader in the area of land record management and the recipient of URISA's Horwood Distinguished Service Award in 2007.

For information on the support from the URISA GISCorps volunteers on behalf of the GSDI Small Grants awards,

and other URISA GISCorps activities, visit the GISCorps Ongoing Projects website at: http://www.giscorps.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=96&Itemid=62

New Small Grants Funders Needed!

The GSDI Association Board and Members are seeking funding to help ensure that the Small Grants Program can be continued in 2013 and for the future. Anyone who can help with future financial support, please contact the Association President, Prof David Coleman, or Executive Director, Prof Harlan Onsrud.

A working group has been formed and a new information leaflet defined, to be used for fund raising (see the GSDI web site). This was finalised in October and fund raising actions are now underway, seeking contributions from both the industry and government agencies, plus major cooperation aid funding bodies, academic and research institutions – anyone wishing to offer support for this very worthwhile and highly visible GSDI Association activity. Watch this space for future reports on our success!

To see the final reports and for more information on the Small Grants Program visit our web site at http://www.gsdi.org/sic1. Those wishing to make donations to the Small Grants Program in any amount will now find a 'Donate' button on the web pages!

As always, we express the Association's grateful thanks for the past support of the US Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) and current support from the URISA GISCorps for making the grants programme possible.

THE INTERNATIONAL GEOSPATIAL SOCIETY (IGS)

The International Geospatial Society (IGS) is the individual membership arm of the GSDI Association whose members have geospatial, SDI, GIS or related professional or specialist interests. The Society enhances communications globally among individuals that are actively involved in promoting, developing, or advancing spatial data infrastructure and related concepts. The IGS web site is at http://www.igeoss.org.

IGS Member Profiles

In last month's Newsletter, we reported that three IGS members were selected for the ICLPST (International Center for Land Policy Studies and Training) training Seminar on Geographical Information Systems and Land Management in Taipei, courtesy of **Jeremy Shen**, Director of the Information Center at the Min. of Interior, Chinese Taipei. This month, we report on the experience of **Patricia Llanos Torrijo**, one of the three sponsored attendees.

Patricia reports: I want to transmit the extraordinary experience I had of being in Chinese Taipei. As a member of the International Geospatial Society (IGS), and due to the interest in participating in a training seminar for members of Latin American countries, I was lucky to be chosen for this event, together with the representatives from Brazil and the Virgin Islands.

This training was sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chinese Taipei, organized by the Societal Impacts Committee of the GSDI Association, to attend ICLPST (International Center for Land Policy Studies and Training) at the Seminar on GIS and Land 2012. The lectures of the seminar included topics on GIS, Remote Sensing and Disaster Monitoring, GIS and Tourism Planning, Management and Administration of the Territory.

The main topics focused on GIS, SDI, and the presentation of SDI (Spatial Data Infrastructure) of Chinese Taipei, called the NGIS (National Geographic Information System). NGIS is the product of many years of work, under the coordination and organizational efforts of many members and stakeholders. The main roles of stakeholders in SDI can be clearly identified in Chinese Taipei - including suppliers, producers, policy makers, agents, third parties that incorporate added value, and end users. NGIS is supported by the government through specific projects that have been improving over the last ten years. Also for the presentation of the representatives of different countries could know the landscape of SDI in other countries, progress and achievements.

Patricia receiving her training course attendance certificate.

The organization for the training course was excellent, demonstrated by the meticulous care that the organizers had in conducting the event, being on the lookout for the smallest needs of participants. Interaction with involved people on the issue of Taiwan GIS, in addition to visits to the institutions working in the field of Geographic

Information Systems: Taiwan Geographic Information Center, Home Office, GIS Research Center, Feng Chia University, Soil and Water Conservation Bureau, made a very productive theoretical and practical experience.

As well as participating in the training, the attendees were treated to a host of other wonders, such as Taipei Eye (Chinese opera), Sun Moon Lake, "101" (the second tallest building in the world), the incomparable view of the wildlife in Taipei Zoo and many other wonders – especially the excellent food!

I know words are not enough to express how wonderful this experience was, but I want to express my gratitude to all the organizers and those who made Bolivia's participation possible in this important event: Mr Jeremy Shen, vice-chair of the Societal Impacts Committee of the GSDI Association, Mr Bruce Lan, Sr. Simon Lee, Hui-ling Wu Director of the ICLPST, Mabel Alvarez, International Geospatial Society President - and all the wonderful people I had the opportunity to meet in that event.

Report by Patricia Llanos Torrico, Geographic Engineer, Instituto de Investigaciones Geográficas –IIGGEO, Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, Post code: 120, La Paz- Bolivia

Participation of IGS in the National Spatial Data Infrastructure Conference of Argentina

The IDERA VII Conference (Spatial Data Infrastructure of Argentina) took place on 27 and 28 of September in the province of Jujuy, Argentina. As part of IDERA VII Program, the Assembly was held, made up by representatives nominated by the highest authority of provincial and local governments and also by representatives of national organizations and federal councils. Representatives of provinces, municipalities, national organizations and federal councils were chosen in the Assembly as members of the Coordination Team of IDERA. The position of Executive Coordinator will be carried out by the National Geographic Institute.

Among the main tasks to be performed by the Coordination Team of IDERA in the near future, is the Project of National Spatial Data Infrastructure law. The main principles to be considered to draw up the project of law, were presented by the Institutional Working Group of IDERA, discussed during the Assembly and agreed over the principal points.

The International Geospatial Society (IGS) was present at the IDERA VII, through the first Conference in the Program on September 27. As chosen by the participants in the Assembly, the next Conference on Spatial Data Infrastructure of Argentina will take place next year in San Carlos de Bariloche City, Río Negro province.

IGS Reminders

Subscriptions to GIM International

As a member benefit of IGS, you may receive a free subscription of GIM International. GIM International carries GSDI news, including IGS news, in a monthly column. If you want to stay up to date with this column and read up on other developments in Geomatics, please follow this link and subscribe if you are not already receiving a hard copy of the magazine: http://www.gim-international.com/GSDI.

Subscription to SDI Magazine

SDI Magazine is a specialist, free, online e-zine, focusing principally on SDI issues, as opposed to general geomatics topics. Subscription is free (visit www.sdimag.com) and GSDI Association and IGS Members are encouraged to subscribe. The magazine regularly carries news from both the Association and IGS, as well as updates on what is happening with regard to SDI developments around the globe.

Participation in GIKNet

IGS members are also reminded that information is uploaded in GIKnet in the Society Web Forum:

- Topics of general interest (English)
  http://www.giknet.org/forum/post.php?topic=41

- Topics of general interest (Spanish)
  http://www.giknet.org/forum/post.php?topic=42

- Task 5. Promote the work of IGS members as a network sharing information, knowledge and publications among IGS members
  http://www.giknet.org/forum/post.php?topic=12

Members are invited to actively participate in the Society Web Forum, as a means of sharing news.

LinkedIn IGS Sub-Group

If you have not already signed up for the IGS sub-group on LinkedIn (see prior Newsletters), please do so ASAP! To date, we have over 200 members in IGS – yet only 25 have joined the LinkedIn group. If you are already a member of the GSDI group, then you can request to join from the *Subgroups* page by clicking "Groups" at the top of your home page. Then click the parent group's name (GSDI). Under the "More" dropdown menu, select *Subgroups*. The click "Join this subgroup." You can view the status of your membership from the Your Groups page at: http://www.linkedin.com/myGroups.

Joining IGS

Remember that individuals in low and very low income nations can apply to join the International Geospatial Society (IGS) by providing specific information of value to the global community in lieu of annual cash dues. The listing of low and very-low income nations may be found at http://www.gsdi.org/RankingTable.To join for free, simply add your professional profile to the growing interconnected network of geospatial specialists across the globe on the Geographic Information Knowledge Network (GIKNet) at http://giknet.org and then apply for membership in IGS at http://www.igeoss.org/join. **To maintain your free membership, simply update your professional profile each year on or about December or January. You have the ability to view, edit, or delete your individual profile at any time.** Members who joined IGS via this route, i.e. without paying the annual members fee, are reminded to update their information annually, or lose their membership of IGS.

Help us reach our goal of 1000 IGS Members by November 2013 – get your friends to join today!

IGS Members – submit your news, please, so that we can learn more about what our membership is doing! There are nearly 200 of you out there now, so please communicate with us. News can be sent by e-mail either to the IGS officers - President Mabel Álvarez or vice-President Lilia Patricia Aria, who can be contacted via the IGS web site - or directly to me, Roger Longhorn, Editor GSDI & IGS News at roger@alum.mit.edu.

ASSOCIATION & MEMBER NEWS

Abu Dhabi Spatial Data Infrastructure Program Update

In 2007, GSDI Association member Abu Dhabi Systems & Information Center (ADSIC) initiated the Spatial Data Infrastructure (AD-SDI) Program in collaboration with 9 government stakeholder entities. Within five years of implementation, the AD-SDI program has reached international recognition with a vision to empower government and society with open and timely access to up-to-date geographic information and spatially enabled e-government services. The AD-SDI program portfolio includes a suite of services ranging from policy and strategy, organizational and technology infrastructure. The AD-SDI Community comprises 55 stakeholder entities with representation from all sectors, i.e. urban planning and local government, utilities and infrastructure, natural and cultural heritage, safety and security, businesses, information agencies, and others.
In celebration of the AD-SDI program 5th anniversary, the AD-SDI Community is organizing a major outreach event on 10-12 December 2012 in Abu Dhabi in

collaboration with the Esri MENA User Conference, which is expected to attract more than 1000 participants from around the globe. The event will host an exhibition area featuring the Abu Dhabi Government, Esri and other technology companies in addition to a plenary session, and several technical workshops organized by themes, e.g. spatial data infrastructure, utilities, government, defense, etc.

During the event, ADSIC, on behalf of Abu Dhabi Government, will sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with GSDI Association member Esri for a three-year licensing agreement comprising technical support and training to the stakeholders. The MoU is an integral component of the GIS capacity building strategy for Abu Dhabi that has been endorsed by Government. GIS capacity building strategy, an outcome of the AD-SDI strategy update 2010-2014, comprises components for spatial education, planning and performance management. S*ource: GPC Group newsletter.*

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Don't forget to check out the GSDI Association's *Capacity Building Resources* web pages at http://www.gsdi.org/sic3 to view some of the videos relating to SDI implementation provided by our members. If you have any videos to contribute, please notify us by contacting Harlan Onsrud, Executive Director (Onsrud (at) spatial.maine.edu) or the editor, Roger Longhorn (ral@alum.mit.edu).

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

In this issue of GSDI & IGS Newsletter, we publish a joint article by two of GSDI's South American representatives – **Eric van Praag**, Chair of the GSDI Technical Committee, and **Santiago Borerro**, former President of GSDI and a Board member. The article appeared as the GSDI column in the November issue of *GIM International* magazine.

Foundation for a Regional SDI in Latin America

Ensuring geographic information is readily available is the mission of the GeoSUR Program, a regional initiative to integrate and disseminate spatial data in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). GeoSUR is a full GSDI Association member and its objectives are well aligned with the GSDI mission and vision. GeoSUR co-ordinates the development of a network of geoservices that offer access to a great wealth of geospatial data. Its platform comprises the following components: 1) a regional geoportal, 2) a regional map service, 3) a decentralized network of map services, and 4) a regional topographic processing service.

With support from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Center, GeoSUR has developed the first regional portal providing access to geographic data and services for the LAC region. Launched in 2008, it provides a point of entry to the map services and metadata catalogues operated by GeoSUR's partner agencies. Currently there are more than 40 map viewers, 130 WMS services and over 11.000 metadata records linked to this portal. Most map services in the network contain geographic data at the national level. To provide regional data, GeoSUR has developed a regional map service, which is currently hosted by EROS and available from the GeoSUR portal.

GeoSUR also offers a Topographic Processing Service (TPS), the first of its kind in the developing world. It provides access to Digital Elevation Model (DEM) derivative products that can be generated on-the-fly for any location in the LAC region. The available TPS models include elevation profile, slope classification, dynamic watershed delineation, hill shade, elevation classification, aspect and raindrop trace, among others. Before launching the TPS, EROS filled the voids in the SRTM 30-metre DEM for Latin America and the Caribbean with ASTER GDEM and GTOPO30 data and created a set of seamless derived datasets that included hill shade, shaded relief, slope and aspect available for download.

GeoSUR is coordinated by the Andean Development Bank (CAF) and the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), with technical assistance from EROS and the geographic institutes of Spain and Colombia. More than 60 national and regional agencies are members of GeoSUR, and participation is open to any spatial data producers from the LAC region.

GeoSUR has recently expanded its reach to new thematic areas. In Brazil and Peru, it supports a comprehensive hydropower assessment that leverages the SRTM 30-metre dataset. In Brazil, it is supporting the implementation of a disaster early warning system, while in the Andean region it is helping establish a platform for environmental information.

By developing the programme and its innovative services beyond local, institutional and national borders, GeoSUR is laying a firm foundation for a regional SDI in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is clearly one of the key aims of the GSDI Association in the Americas.

About the authors: *Eric van Praag is coordinator of the GeoSUR Program at CAF and GSDI Technical Committee chair.* **Santiago Borrero**, *is PAIGH Secretary General, past GSDI President and GSDI Board member.*

THE GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION KNOWLEDGE NETWORK (GIKNET)

The aim of the Geographic Information Knowledge Network (GIKNet) is to enhance communication and freely share knowledge among professionals in the global geographic information community. The GIKNet Community Registry permits individuals, government agencies, NGOs, companies and other institutions to record and publish details about themselves and submit relevant documents to the Spatial Documents Depot, which provides a search facility for locating information and documents submitted by GIKNetwork members. A comprehensive list of GI/SDI related discussion lists can be accessed from a single reference page. Access the GIKNetwork at this link: http://www.giknet.org/.

The main categories under which documents can be referenced in the GIKNetwork include: GI Science: Education & Training; GI Science: Research; and SDI/GIS: Practice and Applications. The network is promoted on the Association's e-mail lists and the LinkedIn GSDI Group. All members of the GSDI Association and IGS are encouraged to sign up for GIKNetwork and to submit documents relevant to any aspect of SDI development and deployment, globally.

PARTICIPATION IN GLOBAL SDI PROJECTS

GEO – Group on Earth Observations

Intervention to the Group on Earth Observations I Plenary Meeting, Agenda point "AfriGEOSS Initiative" Foz Do Iguacu, Brazil, 22 November 2012

The Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Organization learned with great interest the excellent initiative on AfriGEOSS. In this context I would like to report to the Plenary that the GSDI Association, EIS-Africa, the International Geospatial Society, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) will organize the combined AfricaGIS 2013 Conference and the GSDI 14 World Conference, which will take place at the UNECA Conference Center in Addis Abbaba, Ethiopia, between November 4-8, 2013. This event offers a unique opportunity to bring the geospatial and the AfriGEOSS communities together. GSDI Association is pleased to look for a contact to AfriGEOSS.

Short Statement to the GEO IX Plenary Meeting

The Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association congratulates to the Group on Earth Observations GEO for the efforts and achievements under the leadership of the Secretariat and Executive Committee and pleased to learn the expressed commitments to continue the program after 2015.

GSDI is committed to GEO being convinced that efforts to increase the societal benefits of Earth Observation will need advanced data sharing policies and a common technical architecture including interoperable spatial data infrastructures and capacity building.

GSDI potential contributions to facilitate the implementation of the GEO actions include the following:

1. GSDI has established the Geographic Information Knowledge Network (GIKnet) to gather and share knowledge accumulated at its members. The network is open also for the EO community.
2. GSDI established the International Geospatial Society (IGS) to motivate interested individuals to join on global level, providing access to information disseminated by GSDI.
3. GSDI provides a forum at its World Conferences to highlight the newest achievements in:

    - spatial data infrastructure-related technical challenges and solutions,
    - exchange of SDI experience, lessons-learned, and best-practices from local to global implementation of SDIs with special emphasis on developing countries.

    The next GSDI Conference will be in Addis Ababa in November 2013. Together with IGS, EIS-Africa and UNECA the jointly organised Africa GIS Conference and the 14th GSDI World Conference will provide an excellent opportunity to bring the geospatial and Earth Observation experts involved in GEO's AfriGEOSS initiative together.

4. National SDI efforts are encouraged to register their spatial data and services with GEOSS for discovery by the EO and geospatial communities.

5. In the data policy context GSDI's Legal & Socioeconomic Committee experts are playing role to survey licensing models across the globe and taking part significant European Commission supported projects such as LAPSI and LAPSI 2.0 (Legal Aspects of Public Sector Information and re-use) lead by Politechnico Torino and the K.U. Leuven respectively. In the shared and open data context active participation have been made at the 4th Digital Earth Summit in Wellington and at the 23rd ICSU CODATA Plenary in Taipei.

6. GSDI experts are participating in the work of Earth Observation activities. This includes support of GEO Infrastructure Tasks, in the Data Sharing Working Group, GEOSS Common Infrastructure and providing two-way reporting between GSDI and CEOS Working

Group on Information System and Services, WGISS, (in this year at the GSDI Board Meeting in Quebec and at WGISS 34th Plenary held in Hyderabad organised by ISRO). Another promising regional initiative is the planned Europe Challenge of NASA's World Wind open source development environment in societal benefit areas mobilizing universities across Europe.

CODATA

Hosted by the Academica Sinica Campus in Taipei, the *23rd CODATA Conference* of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) was opened by Prof Yuan-Tsai Lee, President of ICSU and Academician Guo Huadong, President of CODATA (CEODE, Beijing China). CODATA was established in 1966 by the ICSU. The conference had 6 keynotes 5 high-level plenary and 44 paralell sessions and 23 posters.

GSDI Societal Impact Committee vice-Chair Jeremy Shen (Min. of Interior, Chinese Taipei) and several GSDI Legal & Socioeconomic (L&SE) Committee members took active part in the international event. Prof Anne Fitzgerald (QUT Law School, Brisbane, Australia) delivered a lecture on the use of social media to collect and disseminate emergency information, highlighting the case study of the Queensland Police Service in the theme disaster management and social media.

In a parallel session organised by the International Society of Digital Earth (ISDE) under the theme "Digital Earth in Data Intensive Era", Gabor Remetey (HUNAGI, Budapest, Hungary) made a presentation entitled "Shared and open data – European efforts and practice from an NGO perspective". With co-authors Katleen Janssen (KU Leuven, Belgium, co-Chair of GSDI L&SE) and Catherina Bamps (EUROGI Secretary General), the talk gave an overview from European data policies (INSPIRE, PSI, ODP) to projects such as LAPSI and LAPSI 2.0, with emphasis on relevant activities of GSDI as well. This ISDE Session had further speakers from University of Osnabrück, USGCRP, NASA HQ, NASA ARC, NSF-George Mason University on the subjects beyond the next generation Digital Earth, open data, Big Data, NEX, and cloud computing. The Annual ICSU CODATA Award was given to Prof Mike Goodchild.

Reminder - Second High Level UN-GGIM Forum in Doha

The Secretariat of the United Nations initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), in collaboration with the Ministry of Municipality and Urban Planning and the Statistics Authority of Qatar, will be staging the **Second High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM)** in Doha,

Qatar from **4-6 February 2013** at the Qatar National Convention Centre.

The forum will bring together government representatives from United Nations Member States as well as interested stakeholders from non-governmental organisations, academia and the private sector to address and discuss critical and cutting-edge issues on global geospatial information management. The forum also seeks to promote greater usage of growing sources of geospatial information and best practices.

Activities begin 3 February 2013 with an 'Exchange Forum with the Geospatial Industry'. The High Level Forum starts on 4 February 2012 with an Opening Ceremony and Ministerial Segment, followed by five technical sessions over the next three days. Bringing all stakeholders together, the Forum will address current critical matters such as:

- the importance of and drivers for building a sustainable national geospatial information system;
- future trends in geospatial information, including growing the information base and promoting its greater use;
- developing an effective global geodetic reference framework and leveraging location-based services;
- geospatial information and sustainable development (Rio+20); and
- challenges in developing core global reference datasets.

Each of the sessions will consist of a keynote presentation, panel presentations and discussion with the audience.

Similar to the First High Level Forum, an Exchange Forum with the Geospatial Industry will be held on 3 February 2013, one day prior to the Second High Level Forum.

GSDI INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

GSDI Member organisations, members of the GSDI Association Committees, Council and Board, and IGS members are involved in the many other regional and global initiatives on an on-going basis:

➢ Digital Earth (International Society for Digital Earth) – visit www.digitalearth-isde.org
➢ Eye on Earth – visit www.eyeonearth.org
➢ Group on Earth Observations (GEO) building the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) – see www.earthobservations.org/ag_partorg.shtml
➢ EuroGEOSS – GEOSS Project funded by the European Union – see www.eurogeoss.eu/default.aspx

➢ UNESCO IOC – Marine/Coastal Spatial Data Infrastructure development – visit www.iode.org.
➢ UNSDI – UN-GGIM (UN Global Geospatial Information Management) – visit ggim.un.org.
➢ UNSDI – UNGIWG (UN GI Working Group) – visit www.ungiwg.org
➢ UNESCO IOC – Marine/Coastal Spatial Data Infrastructure development – visit www.iode.org.
➢ UNSDI – UN-GGIM (UN Global Geospatial Information Management) – visit ggim.un.org.
➢ UNSDI – UNGIWG (UN GI Working Group) – visit www.ungiwg.org

GSDI DISCUSSION FORUMS UPDATES

To see the latest news from the different e-mail forums maintained by the GSDI Committees (4) and the regional SDI Newsletters (5), visit the web site at http://www.gsdi.org/discussionlists, choose the forum of interest and select the 'Archives' option. All discussion lists are open to anyone who is interested in participating, and joining instructions are at the web site above.

For more information on any of these items, visit the **GSDI Association** web site at http://www.gsdi.org.

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