



Global Spatial Data Infrastructure

NEWSLETTER

<http://www.gsdi.org>

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President's Message



As the President of GSDI, it is my privilege to present to you the 2009 GSDI newsletter. This edition highlights the many initiatives and activities carried out over recent months including preparations for the GSDI 11 Conference, expanding the SDI Cookbook and the completion of the Geographic Information Knowledge

Network.

From a GSDI perspective, we are in the midst of exciting times. The world is experiencing rapid technological, economic, environmental and social changes. Spatial data infrastructures are being successfully developed around the world and there is an increasing need in our geospatial community to share knowledge and information regarding these successes.

The challenge and opportunity for all of us today is to build on past successes and collaborate effectively to create a global agenda for more effectively aiding SDI initiatives to better meet the pressing social, environmental and economic needs of local to global communities.

This is the major focus of the GSDI Association strategic plan 2009 – 2013.

By building symbolic geo-information bridges between societies, our Association advances cooperation among spatial communities internationally. This convergence process involves sharing of experiences and uncovering main successes in SDI societies throughout world. Advancing SDIs in this way contributes to the development of agendas that lead to solutions for major global societal problems such as urban sprawl, sustainable development, water management, urban and rural poverty problems, and environmental issues.

Sincerely,
 Bas Kok, President
 GSDI Association

GSDI 11 World Conference – Spatial Data Infrastructure Convergence: Building SDI Bridges to Address Global Challenges 16 – 20 June 2009, Rotterdam, NL

The GSDI Association invites you to attend the 11th GSDI World Conference in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. This dynamic city is famous for its modern architecture and rapidly developing skyline. It was Europe's cultural capital in 2001. Rotterdam is also one of the largest ports in the world, where more than 70,000 people find their employment.

This conference hosts a strong team of partners. INSPIRE will present the major outcomes of spatial data infrastructure implementation in the 27 European Union countries. The Dutch partners will present the outcomes of their innovative program, Space for Geo Information, as well as the GIDEON program. There is much to report about the acceleration of SDI opportunities and innovations! The main theme of GSDI 11 is spatial data infrastructure convergence. The large number of excellent papers to be presented and the high level of planned keynote speakers reflect perfectly the conference ambition: Conversion, bridge building and the creation of new dynamics for the future.

A special word of thanks goes out to the members of the Local Organizing Committee; the GSDI 11 partners, INSPIRE and JRC of the European Commission; EUROGI; the Dutch partners RGI, Geonovum, Kadaster and Delft University, as well as the sponsors who have made this important event possible.

The Local Organizing Committee looks forward to meeting you at this exciting and prosperous conference and wishes you a nice stay in the Netherlands. For additional details, please visit <http://gsdi.org/GSDI11/>

Major Initiative and Activities

Regional Newsletters

The regional newsletters continue as highly valued outlets for information about spatial data infrastructure developments and activities across the globe.

All three newsletters solicit contributions from key organizations advancing SDI projects and educational programs in their regions. Feedback from readers confirms that the newsletters have led to increased awareness of SDI initiatives and progress as well as awareness of research and funding opportunities.

– Africa

GSDI Regional Newsletter for Africa (SDI-Africa)
By Gordon Ojwang', SDI-Africa Newsletter Editor

Spatial Data Infrastructure - Africa (SDI-Africa) is a free, electronic newsletter for people interested in GIS, remote sensing, and data management in Africa. Published monthly since May 2002, it raises awareness and provides useful information to strengthen SDI efforts and support synchronization of regional activities. ECA/CODIST-Geo, RCMRD/SERVIR, RECTAS, AARSE, HEIS-AFRICAH, SDI-EA, and MadMappers are some of the other regional groups promoting SDI development in Africa. The newsletter is prepared for the GSDI Association by the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD) in Nairobi, Kenya.

In the April 2009 edition you can read about how the Nigerian Land Administration seeks assistance from Sweden on how geospatial technologies are being used to access the risk for villagers in a Tanzania community situated near a volcano.

The current SDI-Africa Newsletter Editor is Gordon Ojwang' on behalf of RCMRD: gojwang@rcmrd.org or sdiafrica@rcmrd.org. RCMRD is an Inter-Governmental organizational which promotes the development and use of Geo-Information and Information Technology in the sustainable development of Africa by assisting in human resources and institutional capacity building in surveying and mapping, remote sensing, geographic information systems, and natural resources assessment and management. RCMRD has been active in SDI in Africa through its contributions to the African Geodetic Reference Frame (AFREF) and SERVIR-Africa, a regional visualization and monitoring system initiative. RCMRD also implements projects on behalf of its member States and development partners.

The SDI-Africa Newsletter community is composed of over 4,000+ esteemed readers in Africa and globally. Feedback from our readers has substantially improved awareness of new initiative developments and opportunities for poverty alleviation, research and funding that have been crucial to many individuals and poor nations. SDI-Africa is currently published in English with occasional small adverts in French. Contributions are welcome in any of these two languages as a large part of Africa is mainly Anglophone in the Eastern and Southern parts and Francophone in the Central region and western parts. We seek the involvement of a broader audience in the region including the Islamic speaking nations, who are able to translate from the two languages in the North. Over the years, the Newsletter has witnessed the advancement of Spatial Data Infrastructure initiatives in the region with the establishment of a wider partnership, the creation of a knowledge base and capacity building, and a paradigm

shift in application of geospatial technology for sustainable development.

– Americas

GSDI Regional Newsletter for Latin America and Caribbean (SDI-LAC)

By Nancy Aguirre, Editor GSDI, SDI-LAC Newsletter

Spatial Data Infrastructure-Latin America and the Caribbean (SDI-LAC) is a regional, monthly, free, electronic newsletter published by the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association (GSDI). It focuses on topics related to GIScience, remote sensing, and data management pertinent to SDI in Latin America and the Caribbean. It aims to raise awareness, provide useful information to strengthen national SDI initiatives and support synchronization of regional efforts. The Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), a permanent member organization of GSDI, promotes SDI development in the region. The newsletter is prepared by PAIGH for GSDI. The current Editor is Nancy Aguirre, on behalf of PAIGH cnaguirre@ipgh.org.

In the April issue you can read about how geospatial technologies are used to help sustain the Amazon.

SDI-LAC is based on contributions from members of the geospatial community both of the LAC region, and worldwide. These are sent directly to the editor or by way of the "SDI South and Central America and the Caribbean Discussion List" <http://lists.gsdi.org/mailman/listinfo/sdi-latinamericacaribbean>. Additional news items are gathered periodically from key organizations advancing relevant projects, educational programs, or cooperation agreements for the advancement of SDI globally. Feedback from our readers has increased awareness on new initiatives, SDI progresses, and research or funding opportunities that are not readily accessible by other means. This has encouraged an increasing participation of interested parties to the Newsletter. SDI-LAC is currently published in three languages: English (since 2004), Spanish (since 2005), and Portuguese (since 2007). Contributions are welcome in any of these languages, which seek involvement of a broader audience in the region

Through these years the Newsletter has witnessed the advancement of SDI initiatives regionally, nationally and locally. The establishment of partnerships, creation of knowledge and capacity building has fostered wider potential benefits and understanding of Spatial Data Infrastructures in the global context. However, there is still much room for increasing cooperation and the sharing of ideas, best practices, and difficulties that have been resolved or need to be resolved. With the SDI-LAC regional Newsletter now supporting the exchange of ideas in three languages, your affiliation is more important than ever!

– Asia & Pacific

GSDI Regional Newsletter for Asia and the Pacific (SDI-Africa)

By Malcolm P, Editor GSDI, SDI-AP Newsletter

The Spatial Data Infrastructure-Asia and the Pacific (SDI-AP) is a monthly SDI, GIS and remote sensing publication with news, reviews, and articles related to spatial information plus much more. The newsletter is published by the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association (GSDI) and edited by Serryn Eagleson and Mal Park (Editor.SDIAP@gmail.com), members of the Centre for SDI and Land Administration, the Department of Geomatics at the University of Melbourne Australia with the assistance of Baek Wonkug from the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs, Republic of Korea. Baek Wonkug is currently working as a visitor at FGDC (Federal Geographic Data Committee) Headquarters in the U.S.

The newsletter is published in the form of a Digest with news summaries that include hyperlinks to the original news item. Thus subscribers can quickly "scan" the newsletter and follow through on those items of interest to them. Additionally, we have added to the newsletter a 'Spotlight' feature in which a complete article is published each month. The SDI-AP is currently published in two languages: English and Chinese. We are pleased to acknowledge the assistance of the staff of the Taiwan Ministry of Information in preparing the Chinese language version. Contributions are welcome in either of these languages to help us involve a broader audience in the region.

The newsletter is supported by the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia & the Pacific (PCGIAP), a permanent member organization of GSDI, with a view to promoting SDI development in the region. Currently representatives from each country are being sought to act as knowledge brokers for the newsletter.

In addition to news, the editors report on quirky facts and new applications for which spatial information is being used.

Small Grants Program

By Alan Stevens and Carmelle Terborgh

The GSDI Association, along with partners and participants, funds a regular small grants program to support activities that foster partnerships, develop capacity building, improve data compatibility and access, and increase political support for spatial data infrastructure and earth observation application development.

Priority is given to projects in developing nations and countries with economies in transition.

Over the years many project have been funded, covering a wide range of themes:

- Establishing web mapping services and applications;
- Stimulating spatial data infrastructure capacity building;
- Using SDIs as a tool to access environmental problems;
- Training of GIS practitioners;
- Workshops on relevant GIS themes including addresses, geospatial standards, interoperability, and metadata.
- Using maps as a tool for addressing societal issues including climate control, poverty, hunger, and disaster management

As a result of the 2008-2009 Call for Proposals, six small grants were made available for the following projects:

1. African workshops and hands-on training for coastal and marine Spatial Data Infrastructure for data quality assessment.
2. Spatial data inventory and metadata management at the GIS and Remote Sensing Centre of the National University of Rwanda (CGIS-NUR)
3. Caribbean Metadata Profile Workshop
4. SDI Demonstrator for Kyrgyz Republic
5. SDI Workshop & Training on Improved Use of Geospatial Data Infrastructure Portals for Collaborative Efforts in Urban Disaster Reduction in Indonesia.
6. Study on Policy and Institutional Requirements for the Development of a National Spatial Data Infrastructure in the Philippines

We wish to thank the US Federal Geographic Data Committee for their financial and human resource contributions to make this program a reality. Additional thanks go to URISA's GISCorps for their human resource contributions both in the selection process and in the field allowing us to approve additional proposals.

Summary descriptions of each funded project will become available at <http://gsdi.org/proj+progr.asp>

Geographic Information Knowledge Network

By Harlan Onsrud

<http://giknet.org>

Several years ago a group of mapping agency heads from across the globe asked the GSDI Association to provide an online facility that would enable agencies involved with spatial data infrastructure development to better communicate with each other. Each organization would be able to readily contribute to and maintain details about their agency contact information, spatial data infrastructure

implementations, and the products, services and other resources their organization provides. Further, agency personnel requested a capability by which mapping and related land agencies at all levels could better share with each other human resources, surplus equipment, reports, studies, and other resources.

The GSDI Association responded to this request by building the **Geographic Information Knowledge Network** (GIKNetwork).

Invitations to register were sent in May 2009 to National Mapping Agencies and related organisations around the world. Intended users are professionals, government agencies at all levels, non-government organizations (NGO's), private companies, practitioners, scholars and students across the globe who have sincere interests in creating a geographic information "knowledge network" and advancing the practice and science of the discipline. We are at the very initial stages of implementing this resource and are asking early participants to provide us with feedback.

Cookbook

Douglas Nebert, Technical Committee Co-Chair, US FGDC Staff

Since 2000, the GSDI Technical Working Group has published two versions of **Developing Spatial Data Infrastructures, the SDI Cookbook** which is a guide for understanding and deploying compatible spatial data infrastructures. It provides geographic information providers and users with necessary background information to evaluate and implement components of an SDI. Version 2.0 is available for free via a PDF document in the following languages:

- English
- Spanish
- Chinese
- Polish

(<http://www.gsdi.org/gsdicookbookindex.asp>)

The Cookbook has been recently converted to a wiki format to enable management and update by a team of editors from around the globe. This editable version is now online at <http://gsdidocs.org/GSDIWiki>. Editors are listed at the start of each chapter – potential contributors are invited to contact the editors with updates or comments that will increase the value of the living document.

The wiki version will be saved as PDF files on an annual basis to capture updates to standards and practices in a form that may be more easily referenced. A PDF version of the Cookbook, 2009 Edition will be developed and published prior to the GSDI-11 conference.

For more information on the SDI Cookbook, visit the new wiki site; if you have specific questions or requests, contact the TWG co-chairs, Doug Nebert

(ddnebert@usgs.gov) or
(gymetman@ciesin.columbia.edu).

Greg Yetman



Pictured: Ian Williamson, University of Melbourne and Chair PCGIAP Working Group 3 on Spatially Enabled Government; Bas Kok, President GSDI Association; Stig Enemark, President FIG; and Abbas Rajabifard, President elect GSDI Association. Photo taken as part of the PCGIAP Land Administration Forum for Asia and Pacific "Re-engineering the Cadastre to Support e-Government " held 24-26 May 2009, in Tehran, Iran.

Outreach and Capacity Building

PCGIAP, Permanent Committee on Geographic Information for Asia and Pacific

GSDI has joined with the PCGIAP to encourage capacity building initiatives focused on the spatial enablement of government in Asia and Pacific countries. As a follow-up to a session in September 2007 in Seoul South Korea, the PCGIAP and GSDI organized a workshop in May of 2009 in Iran. The primary message conveyed is that spatially enabled government leads to efficient policy guidance processes, improved decision making, reductions in administrative costs, better outcomes for government as a whole and enhanced industry development opportunities.

EUROGI – The European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information

By Joao Geirinhas, Secretary General EUROGI

EUROGI is currently celebrating its 15th anniversary (1994-2009). Since the very beginning EUROGI has been engaged in relevant GI related initiatives at the European level, such as: projects co-funded by the European Commission (e.g. ETEMII, GINIE and EPSIPlus), discussing the framework for Public Sector Information (PSI) policies, the integration of GI into e-Government strategies and the role of Public Private Partnerships in developing Spatial Data Infrastructures. Also, and most importantly, EUROGI played a role in creating an environment for the establishment of a European SDI,

which has now evolved into the INSPIRE Directive. EUROGI is a founding member of the GSDI Association. EUROGI promoted the GSDI 1 and GSDI 6 conferences and is deeply involved in the organisation of GSDI 11. EUROGI is currently involved in a series of projects co-funded by the European Commission's eContentplus Programme, either as supporter (GIS4EU and ESDIN), or as a partner.

- **ESDI-Netplus:** The European Network on Geographic Information Enrichment and Reuse (ECP-2006-GEO-320005). EUROGI leads the Work Package related to the identification and analysis of SDI best practices across Europe, mostly at sub-national level. As a result of EUROGI's activities the project has reached 32 European countries, involved 13 national or supranational workshops and was able to report on more than 200 SDI case studies. The Thematic Network which is being created will make a relevant contribution to the implementation of INSPIRE and is intended to continue beyond the current project funding phase (2007-2010).
- **EURADIN:** European Address Infrastructure (ECP-2007-GEO-317002): EUROGI leads the Work Package related to Networking and Dissemination, mainly through the active participation of its members who will be organising nationally related events. The project aims to promote European address system harmonization and the results will be used as a reference for all European Union Member States to assist them in fulfilling the INSPIRE requirements with regard to addresses. The EURADIN partnership gathers 30 partners from 16 different European countries, covering 59% of the Union's Member States.
- **Plan4All:** European Network of Best Practices for Interoperability of Spatial Planning Information (ECP-2008-GEO-318007): The project, which started recently (May 1st, 2009), focuses on the harmonisation of spatial planning data on the basis of existing best practices within the European Union's regions and municipalities, and also drawing on relevant research findings. EUROGI's members will be actively involved in networking and promoting the findings which will emerge during the course of the project.

In 2006 EUROGI established a Work Group which deals with International Affairs. Among other activities, the Group and African partners developed a project proposal for bridging SDI initiatives between Africa and Europe (AESI-Align). Although initially focusing on the GI component of international development aid (development cooperation), the Group is currently considering including a focus on GI related trade as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development.

From its early small beginnings 15 years ago EUROGI has evolved into an inclusive, adaptive and collaborative GI

network with strong links across Europe and beyond. EUROGI's vision that GI in all its aspects should become a fully integrated component of the European knowledge-based society may represent a somewhat ideal future situation, but through its many current and planned activities EUROGI is striving enthusiastically to make this vision a reality.

United Nations, UNGIWG and UNSDI

The GSDI Association recently became an official partner to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG) and the UNSDI initiative now underway. Discussions to date indicate that materials we are producing that are of substantial interest to this community include SDI Best Practices including standards for implementation globally, SDI case studies and learning materials. Thus, primary GSDI Association involvement to date has been focused on proposing "SDI Best Practices" and promoting the GSDI SDI Cookbook wiki as a vehicle by which all member associations can contribute to greater knowledge on a wide range of SDI implementation issues. Means for working together more efficiently in achieving common goals are currently being explored.

GEO GEOSS and CEOS WGISS

President Bas Kok presented a GSDI Statement during the Group on Earth Observation GEO-V Plenary session held in November 2008 in Bucharest that stressed the importance for collaboration among GEO and GSDI activities. One example is building our information system technologies to automatically lead users to each others complementary registries rather than duplicate efforts. Since 2005 the GSDI Association has also had a liaison with the Working Group on Information Systems and Services of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS WGISS) A GSDI delegate attends WGISS Annual Meetings to keep them informed about the achievements in the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association and highlighting the role GSDI plays in the GEOSS Committee on Architecture and Data as well as User Interfaces. Topics of mutual interest have included exchange of views related to standards and interoperability, provisioning of data services, development of data access policies, sharing best practices and exploring lessons learned from applications. SDIs provide an interface between Earth Observation's ground segment and the end user community (composed by agencies, academia, citizens and NGOs). It is anticipated that advanced tools in technology, services and innovative solutions (e.g. grid processing and sensor webs integrated with emerging SDIs at the local, national and regional levels) will enable direct societal benefits through closer cooperation between the Earth observation space and ground segments with the spatial data infrastructure community. Applications where short response time is critical are the most suitable cases to learn by doing, verifying capabilities and

analysing synergy or impacts. Such experiences are useful also for capacity building.

Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies (JBGIS)

By Ian Dowman, President

The JBGIS is a coalition of leading international geospatial societies which can speak on behalf of the geospatial profession at international level, especially to the United Nations and other global stakeholders. Its second goal is to coordinate activities within the geospatial society and organisations.

The members of the JBGIS are FIG, IAG, ICA, IHO, IMTA, ISCGM, ISPRS and GSDI. The JBGIS is a co-operation network and there are no obligations to the membership, nor does the JBGIS collect any membership fees. Ian Dowman, First Vice President of ISPRS, is the current chair.

The JBGIS normally meets once a year, and generally the meeting is linked to a conference or other meeting of one or two of the member associations. In 2009 the Board will meet at the GSDI Conference in Rotterdam.

The JBGIS can appoint ad hoc committees for certain projects and important topics. Normally these committees have clear goals and are normally appointed for a limited time period. The two current ad hoc committees are:

- JB GIS ad hoc Committee on Risk and Disaster Management: The objective of the Group is to create a decision and decision support forum based on the knowledge and experience of related experts of the JBGIS members and benefit from dialogue with other groups working on similar topics as well as supporting on-site working teams by recommendations and updated technologies. To be able to achieve this, the Ad hoc Committee will work at two levels: Gi4DM and Ad hoc Committee Meetings. The Committee is producing a book on best practices for risk and disaster management
- JB GIS ad hoc Committee on Capacity Building in Africa: The mission of the committee is to co-ordinate the capacity building activities in Africa of the members of the Joint Board and to advise the Joint Board on policy issues relating to education in Africa. The Committee has established a portal for geoinformation for National Mapping Agencies in Africa <http://nma.agirn.org/>. Discussions are now going on to replace this with a global portal which is being developed with GSDI.

Committee Activity Highlights

Technical Committee

Douglas Nebert, Co-Chair, FGDC

Technical Committee: Collaborating with other organizations such as OGC and GEO, this committee continues to consistently and quietly pursue consistency, interoperability, and common standards and methods across the broad spectrum of geospatial data and system users. The SDI Cookbook, which has become a standard in introducing SDI methods and approaches to wide audiences, was ported to a wiki in order to enable efficient updating by contributors and content management by editors spread across the globe. The wiki version will be saved as PDF files on an annual basis to capture updates in a form that may be more easily referenced. The editable version is online at <http://gsdidocs.org/GSDIWiki>. The Committee is currently encouraging the SDI community to register their systems, services, and standards with GEO GEOSS. The newly developed Geographic Information Knowledge Network does the same by automatically leading contributors to the GEOSS and OGC registers when appropriate to avoid duplication of effort.

Legal and Socioeconomic Working Group

Roger Longhorn and Kate Lance, LSWG Co-Chairs

This committee counts among its efforts the development of a new chapter for the SDI Cookbook on legal and policy issues. The legal and socioeconomic discussion list is among the most active on the GSDI web site.

Outreach and Membership Committee

Mark Reichardt, OGC

We are proud to announce that Mr. John Moeller has agreed to co-chair the newly established Outreach and Membership Committee.

This committee has been working on this newsletter and will prepare the GSDI 11 post-Conference Report, relevant press releases, and announcements for GSDI 12. Much time is invested in the transition of the current GSDI Association Website to an OGC-managed open source website and the implementation of a GSDI Association

Member Portal, which will provide new and useful functionality for GSDI members. The transition of the website and stand up of the Portal will be accomplished in June 2009. This effort is a result of a service contract that GSDI Association signed with OGC to operationally support the GSDI public website and member Portal.

Membership recruitment is another important function of the Committee. Over the coming weeks and months, the Committee will implement a detailed plan to encourage continued GSDI membership development.

GSDI 11 Program Committee

Al Stevens, Co-Chair, FGDC retired

This joint committee, supported with personnel from several cooperating organizations, has been highly active over the past several months in preparing for the GSDI 11 conference in Rotterdam. This group has managed every facet of the conference, including logistics, sponsors, keynote speakers, call for workshops, call for papers, abstract review process, facilities determination, website development, marketing and much more. They have tried to ensure that the program is of the highest level and that its quality meets today's expectations.

Postscript:

A hearty thanks to Karen Levoleger, Mark Reichardt and to the numerous volunteers for their help with the creation of this GSDI Newsletter

GSDI Officers

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Bas Kok

Past President

Jarmo Ratia

Executive Director

Harlan Onsrud (interim)

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Abbas Rajabifard

Treasurer

Abbas Rajabifard
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