GSDI REGIONAL NEWSLETTER

for the Global Geospatial Community

covering

Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia & the Pacific, Europe, Latin America & the Caribbean, North America, and the Middle East & North Africa

June 2014 – Vol. 1, No. 2

The ***GSDI Regional Newsletter*** is a free, electronic newsletter for people interested in all aspects of implementing national and regional Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) around the globe. The newsletter continues the tradition of the GSDI Association's former separate regional newsletters that covered Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America, from 2002 onwards. The purpose of the newsletter is to raise awareness of SDI issues and provide useful information to strengthen SDI implementation efforts and support synchronization of regional activities. The archive of all past copies of the previous regional newsletters can be accessed from the GSDI website by following the link to Newsletter Archive at gsdi.org.

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Announce your news or information!

Feel free to submit any news related to spatial data infrastructure implementation that you would like to highlight, including new tools, policies, application stories, studies or reports from your area, profession, organization, country or region. Send your contributions to the News Editor, Kate Lance, at newseditor@gsdi.org and we will try to include these in our next newsletter. Share this newsletter with anyone who may find the information useful and suggest they subscribe themselves.

Support and Contributions to this Issue

Thanks to the GSDI Association for supporting the News Editor and GSDI listserv moderator Kate Lance; GSDI Communications & Operations Manager, Roger Longhorn; and Karen Levoleger (Kadaster, Netherlands) for their contributions in creating, producing and disseminating the GSDI Regional Newsletter.

Message from the Editor

What's in a name? Does the term 'spatial data infrastructure (SDI)' do justice in conveying the geographic information policy and management practices that have been evolving worldwide over the past two to three decades? As new technologies and approaches are explored and tested, new terms have emerged – often with the same basic, underlying access and use principles as originally conceived for SDI, but with a different orientation or emphasis (e.g., focusing on earth observation, climate information services, scientific research data, open government data, etc.). For me, from the get-go, SDI has represented *intra and inter-organizational coordination* to achieve benefits that come from collectively sharing location (georeferenced) data and contextually applying it within different societal applications.

SDI developers play a significant *boundary spanning* role and must create synergies across multiple groups, teams, and organizations. Boundary spanning has become all the more challenging for SDI developers in recent years due to the veritable explosion of organizations -- from neighborhood associations, community groups, regional networks, government councils, transnational regimes, to international systems. The emergence of new organizations is understandable given the ever more complex and interdependent environment; plus the proliferation of new organizations has been hastened by social networking and stimulated by international aid/funding opportunities in developing countries.

The organizational proliferation presents a contradiction that merits some reflection. On the one hand, the variety of new convening mechanims fosters valuable dialogue across groups and sectors, which is key to furthering SDI. But the density of organizations also complicates communication, making it difficult for SDI developers to be aware and take advantage of opportunities for action across the organizational boundaries. So in a world of organizational complexity, SDI developers have to keep their eggs in many different baskets… all in a days work. Contributing in a consistent and constructive way across the array of relevant groups can be mind-boggling.

Kate Lance, News Editor

Sub-Saharan Africa Region SDI News

Mapping Day Uganda

Mapping Day Uganda is a fast growing project which organises mapping events, implements local trainings, generates map awareness, actively pledges open data sets and builds a network of enthusiastic mappers in Uganda. All activities are set up around the global OpenStreetMap (OSM, http://www.openstreetmap.org) project. OSM is a map and database whereby the stored geographic data is owned by the whole world allowing everyone to view, create and use this information such as street maps for free. See also: Rock the Data blog, http://dataspa.wordpress.com/

Source: http://mappingday.com/

Uganda: Using mobile phones to collect data in the education sector

Much has been made of the potential use of mobile phones to help collect, verify and disseminate information quickly, widely and cheaply in support of activities in the education sector. *What do we know about how such use looks in practice, and what are we learning from emerging efforts in this area?* At an event last month at the World Bank, Sukhdeep Brar and Gaurav Relhan shared some lessons from a few recent and on-going education activities in Uganda, providing some potentially quite useful insights for those seeking answers this question.
The full video for this event (http://worldbankva.adobeconnect.com/p29x8shyv39/), as well as the PowerPoint file (http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/WB_Uganda-mobiledata-260314.pdf), are available online.

Source: http://blogs.worldbank.org/edutech/using-mobile-phones-collect-data-education-sector-uganda

Kenya: Research findings released on Kenya Open Data Initiative

A new study by Jesuit Hakiimani Centre and iHub Research Centre — launched April 30, 2014 — found that only 14 per cent of Kenyans used the Kenya Open Data Initiative portal (KODI, https://opendata.go.ke/) to seek government information. The study found that Kenyan citizens do seek and use government information in different domains of their lives and that more and better government information is fundamental to enhancing effective public participation in the marginalized areas covered in this study. However, the findings also suggest that:

• There is a mismatch between the data citizens want to have and the data the Kenya portal and other intermediaries (such as chiefs, churches and schools) have provided.

• Most people go to local information intermediaries instead of going directly to the government data portals and that there are few connections between these intermediaries and the wider open data sources.

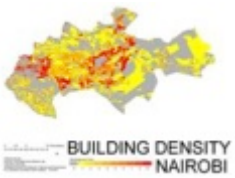
• Currently the rural communities are much less likely to seek out government information.

• The kinds of data needed to support service delivery in Kenya may be different from those needed in other places in the world.

These findings emphasize the need to pay considerable attention to the local context when designing and implementing open data initiatives, as these factors are crucial to the success and sustainability of such initiatives. To access: Open Government Data for Effective Public Participation: Findings of a case study research investigating the Kenya's Open Data Initiative in urban slums and rural settlements (April 2014)
http://www.jesuithakimani.net/index.php?option=com_jdownloads&Itemid=62&view=summary&cid=19&catid=3

Source: http://www.jesuithakimani.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=213:building-open-data-infrastructure-and-strategies-for-effective-citizen-engagement&catid=3&Itemid=63

Toward Open Source Kenya: Creating and Sharing a GIS Database of Nairobi



Authors: Sarah Williams, Elizabeth Marcello & Jacqueline M. Klopp
Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Volume 104, Issue 1, 2014, pages 114-130

Abstract: To make good decisions about the future direction of cities we need data to contextualize and make recommendations that are based on past results and potential models for the future. Yet access to information including

geographic information systems (GIS) is challenging, particularly as data are often seen as a commodity or source of power by those who control it, a dynamic more severe in contexts like Kenya. By generating GIS data for our own transportation model and then sharing them with those interested in doing research on Nairobi, we experienced firsthand some of the power dynamics associated with accessing and generating information in the developing country context. The project had several important lessons: (1) Simply developing data does not make them open; how "open access" is provided to the data is just as important as making them freely available. (2) Developing data can show commitment to a particular place or project that can help generate support for stronger partnerships and project goals. (3) Openly sharing data about place might help push those with access to information to share information as well. Overall this research project illustrated that sharing data can help support a more open access ecosystem locally by establishing a culture of data sharing but only if those interested in using it have the technical ability to both access and use data sets provided.

Keywords: community and GIS, data sharing, developing countries, empowerment, GIS, Kenya, Nairobi, power dynamics, PPGIS, spatial data

Source: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00045608.2013.846157#.U1aDIU1OVjo

See also: Nairobi GIS Maps, http://nairobigismaps.wikischolars.columbia.edu/

Somalia: Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM) Update

Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM) has published Issue 5 of the quarterly newsletter "SWALIM Update" covering the period of February 2014 - April 2014. The newsletter provides updates on SWALIM water and land information management activities such as: SWALIM Establishes Flash Flood Alert Systems, SWALIM Completes Cultivable Areas Analysis for Somalia, An interview with SWALIM's partners: The National Environment Research and Disaster preparedness (NERAD) and the Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management Agency (HADMA), the disaster management agencies for Somaliland and Puntland, Somali Water Sources Live Map Complete!, A feature Article: 12 Years of Sustained Weather Monitoring in Somalia among others.

To access (pdf, 2MB): SWALIM Update, Issue 5 - http://www.faoswalim.org/sites/default/files/SWALIM_Update_Issue_5.pdf

Source: http://www.faoswalim.org/node/181

Djibouti: Système d'information géographique de Djibouti ville: Débats d'experts

Un atelier sur le système d'information géographique de Djibouti ville s'est ouvert en Janvier 2014 dans la salle de réunion du Secrétariat d'Etat au Logement. Présidée par le secrétaire général du Ministère de l'Equipement et des Transports, Said Nouh, la séance de travail a regroupé d'une grande table ronde plusieurs hauts fonctionnaires de différents ministères sectoriels et des spécialistes de l'agence japonaise de la coopération international (JICA). Les deux parties ont discuté du caractère utilitaire du système d'information géographique. De ce fait, la maîtrise des fonctionnalités du SIG s'impose aux pouvoirs publics qui seront en mesure par ce biais de mieux cerner et résoudre les problèmes inhérents aux processus d'aménagement territorial et de gestion urbaine.

Un projet mis en œuvre depuis mars 2012 avec le soutien de JICA consiste en la réalisation des ortho photos (prises aériennes) à l'échelle de 1/2500 avec une résolution au sol de 20 cm sur 300 km carré, d'une carte topographique numérique à l'échelle de 1/2500, de la collecte des données SIG sur 110km carré et un transfert de technologie pour le service de topographie de la Direction de l'Equipement (STDE).

English summary: Djibouti City GIS, panel discussions

In January 2014, the meeting room of the State Secretariat for Housing was the venue for a a workshop on the geographic information system for Djibouti City. Senior officials from different line ministries and experts from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) discussed conditions for developing a digital topographic data for the capital.

Source: http://www.lanationdj.com/systeme-dinformation-geographique-de-djibouti-ville-debats-dexperts/

Mozambique: Enhancing Spatial Data for Flood Risk Management Project

This project, supported by the World Bank, will consist of two small recipient-executed grants implemented in parallel by ARA-Sul and ARA-Zambeze, respectively, with each grant constituting one of the project's two components as follows:

- Component A. Limpopo high-resolution mapping surveys & model development.
- Component B. Zambezi high-resolution mapping surveys & model development.

Component A & B will consist of pre-survey assessment; acquisition and delivery of Light Detection and Ranging survey (LiDAR) through specialist firm of prioritised areas of the Limpopo & Zambezi River basins; post-survey processing; intermediate application of survey data; direct application; and dissemination and data management. Both components will be supported by training activities, as well as strengthening the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) necessary to process, analyse, share and disseminate the LiDAR survey data and associated developed information products.
See Project Data Sheet:
http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/04/25/000442464_20140425114714/Rendered/PDF/876520ISDS0App00Box385202B00PUBLIC0.pdf

Source: http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2014/04/19434766/mozambique-enhancing-spatial-data-flood-risk-management-project

Botswana: Assessment of Open Data Readiness

The Botswana Innovation Hub, in conjunction with the e-Government Unit in the Office of the President, has agreed to conduct a diagnostic study to assess the capability of Botswana, inside and outside the government, to implement an Open Data program. The assessment will include an Action Plan, which will provide recommendations on utilizing Open Data to stimulate business innovation and new business creation, especially in the ICT and small business sectors. The study is to be conducted in partnership with the World Bank and the Partnership for Open Data.

Source: http://www.itnewsafrica.com/2014/05/botswana-assesses-open-data-readiness/

Holding a National Summit to Improve Health Outcomes through Health and Mapping Sector Collaboration in the Development of National Geospatial Data Infrastructure: The Nigerian Strategy

Authors: Ganiyu Agbadje, Aderemi Azeez, Kolawole Azeez Oyediran, James Stewart
Journal of Health Informatics in Developing Countries, Vol 8, No 1 (2014)

Abstract: The use of geographic approaches in improving health outcomes, including the fight against Human immunodeficiency virus infection / acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), is increasing; however, health ministries, AIDS coordinating agencies, and other social service ministries often lack the capacity to use geospatial data and tools such as geographic information systems (GIS). Health organizations would benefit from building collaborative relationships with national mapping agencies (NMAs), national geospatial data infrastructure (NGDI) coordinating bodies and in-country stakeholders with GIS capacity to enhance decision making for health sector programmes and to create an action plan to help address identified challenges.

One approach for strengthening the NGDI within the nation's health sector was the two-day Nigeria Health and Mapping Summit of 2011. The summit provided opportunities for stakeholders in the NGDI and health sectors to discuss strategies for sharing geospatial data and building capacity to support national health endeavours.

This paper provides a description of the summit and offers lessons learned on key aspects of the event, including the post-summit communiqué presented to both executive and legislative arms of the government with the intent of improving the NGDI. This paper also discusses progress on health and mapping sector collaboration and coordination since the summit.

Keywords: national geospatial data infrastructure; NGDI; NSDI; Geospatial; GIS health; mapping; stakeholders; collaboration; Nigeria.

Source: http://www.jhidc.org/index.php/jhidc/article/view/117 & http://www.cpc.unc.edu/measure/publications/ja-14-175

Boundary Mapping and Geodatabase Strategy for National Security Information System in Nigeria

Authors: Lazarus M. Ojigi and Etim E. Eyo
Journal of Information Engineering and Applications, Vol.4, No.2, 2014

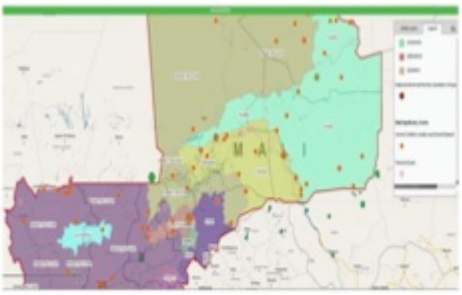
Abstract: Boundary mapping is the delineation of the territorial limits of a state, country as a sovereign state and its political division and administrative framework under a constitution. The likely consequences of boundary uncertainty, errors and omissions and distortion include: disputes, conflicts and anarchy which are serious brewers of security breakdown if not effectively managed. In recent years, the Office of the Surveyor General of the Federation (OSGoF)

and National Boundary Commission (NBC) have been involved in the redefinition and management tasks of International and National boundaries of Nigeria. Some States of the Federation have attempted the demarcations of their local government area boundaries in order to provide the geospatial limits on the ground, but often led to skirmishes over disputed boundaries; whose adjudications are sometimes subjective. This problem exists because there is no definite geodatabase strategy for all boundaries' related information, thereby rendering the physical extent of the country and states an amorphous status to be maneuvered by political leaders. This underscores the importance of boundary infrastructure as a key national security regulatory tool. This paper attempts an examination of boundary mapping and the requisite geodatabase strategy for creating and managing National Security Information System (NSIS) for Nigeria. Key geodatabase fields and records elements were identified and a sample geodatabase structure for managing boundary related security issues in Nigeria was developed using ArcGIS/ArcInfo platform. A total of 111 International boundary pillars distributed among the 20 states in Nigeria that have international borders were proposed. The study recommends the used of sub-meter resolution satellite imagery integrated with the existing NigNet CORS for creating an updatedboundary, administrative and security base maps and information systems for Nigeria.

Keywords: Geodesy, Boundary Mapping, Geodatabase Strategy, National Security Information System

Source: http://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JIEA/article/download/11040/11342

Enhancing Collaboration through Shared Understanding toward a Better Understanding



Authors: Russell Ravenhorst, Ryan Satterthwaite, Mark Kaperak and Sungwook Kim
Small Wars Journal, May 12, 2014

Abstract: US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and US Agency for International Development (USAID) came together in 2013 in order to develop a capability that would increase inter- and intra-governmental information sharing and collaboration. The aim was to inform decision makers at a higher rate of speed and inform the common operating picture, creating unity of effort, and engender Whole of Government approaches. Through a review of a USSOCOM and USAID human terrain mapping initiative, a case study of recent events in Mali where this initiative would have had positive effects, and an assessment of shortfalls of human terrain analysis, this article expounds upon the requirement for reaching a deeper, shared understanding to achieve unity of effort.

Source: http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/enhancing-collaboration-through-shared-understanding-toward-a-better-understanding

Meteorological institutions and farmers use climate information produced via CCAFS tools

The national meteorological services of ten African countries have collected historic data and monitored climate and weather information using participatory tools and approaches developed by the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS, http://ccafs.cgiar.org). These tools have helped deliver climate information at a small enough scale for smallholder farmers to use in agricultural planning. Among the project outcomes, CCAFS has highlighted its success in replicating its approach across more than ten countries and its success in scaling up its climate information to reach tens of thousands of smallholder farmers across Africa. The national meteorological services of Ethiopia, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Senegal and Tanzania and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) are among the countries and agencies using the CCAFS approach to collecting climate and weather information. The US Agency for International Development (USAID), WMO, the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) and the University of Reading collaborated with CCAFS on the research and capacity building aspects of the project.

See: CCFAS Outcome Case - Use of climate and weather information by various agencies, meteorological institutions, and farmers, http://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/35598/03_CCAFS_Outcome_Use%2520of%2520climate%2520information%2520by%2520various%2520agencies.pdf?sequence=1

Source: http://ccafs.cgiar.org/publications/use-climate-and-weather-information-various-agencies-meteorological-institutions-and

Launch of Multi-Country Support Programme to Strengthen Climate Information Systems in Africa

Representatives from UNDP's GEF Unit met in Ethiopia on April 13-14 with high level representatives from Benin, Liberia, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia to launch the Multi-country Support Programme to Strengthen Climate Information for Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change in Africa (CIRDA). The Honorable Ministers of Environment from Uganda, Sao Tome and Principe as well as the

Executive Chairperson of the Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone were present to celebrate the Programme's onset.

As a highlight to the workshop, an Expo with 13 meteorological companies and service providers was held to introduce government representatives to the cutting edge technologies available in the collection, processing and dissemination of climate information. See agenda (presentations can be accessed online): http://www.undp-alm.org/sites/default/files/downloads/final_agenda_ci_wkshp.pdf

Source: http://www.undp-alm.org/projects/cirda/meetings-and-workshops

Training Workshop on Geospatial Technologies and Data Sharing for Disaster Risk Reduction

The Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)/SERVIR-Africa and World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) held a week-long regional training on geospatial technologies and data sharing for Disaster Risk Reduction in Nairobi, Kenya, beginning 5 May 2014. The event show-cased capabilities of the World Bank-supported Data for the Horn portal (http://horn.rcmrd.org/) integrated within the SERVIR-Africa portal (https://servirglobal.net/EastAfrica/MapsData.aspx), which allows users to share data quickly and easily and create interactive maps.

Source: https://servirglobal.net/Global/Articles/tabid/86/Article/1310/servir-africa-supports-training-workshop-on-geospatial-technologies-and-data-sh.aspx

New satellite data receiving station at SERVIR-Africa "sees" 75 percent of African continent

SERVIR-Africa and the Regional Centre for Mapping Resources for Development (RCMRD), SERVIR's partner organization in Kenya, now have direct access to real-time data from Earth observation satellites. Google.org funded a direct readout antenna for NASA's Moderate-resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) to help provide better situational awareness for disasters such as floods and wildfires and for other environmental issues. RCMRD/SERVIR-Africa installed the MODIS receiving station on their premises in Nairobi, Kenya, and are helping to develop regional capability to operate the new tool and use the data it provides. The antenna receives data not only from MODIS but also from the Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (NPP) mission, MetOp, Fengyun3, and NOAA18 and 19.

Source: https://www.servirglobal.net/Global/Articles/tabid/86/Article/1307/new-satellite-data-receiving-station-at-servir-africa-sees-75-percent-of-africa.aspx

AidData and African Development Bank launch MapAfrica

The African Development Bank (AfDB), in partnership with AidData, launched MapAfrica at its annual meetings in Kigali. The interactive online platform enables citizens, government officials and donors to view the geographic location of AfDB's investments in development projects throughout Africa. AfDB has long been a leader in aid transparency and partnered early on with AidData to geocode AfDB's portfolio of projects – applying precise location information to development activities. Now AfDB and AidData are taking an important next step, building upon these geocoding efforts by matching investments with results data and beneficiary stories, allowing citizens and other users to more easily see not only what AfDB is doing and where, but also the impact of those activities.

The MapAfrica platform offers new and innovative ways for users to view development projects and improve the targeting, coordination and evaluation of aid. With MapAfrica, citizens can drill down to a country, district or city level. Citizens, NGOs and policymakers can access hyper-local information about projects that are relevant to them and view results information. MapAfrica contains more than 6,000 geocoded project locations and users can filter those project locations by country, sector and year. Users will also be able to select one project and view all implementation locations, providing an accurate sense of the scope and breadth of the project. Data layers in the MapAfrica platform, such as GDP per capita and subnational poverty rates, can be layered to allow users to view indicators of interest alongside project implementation locations. The platform was developed using Esri's ArcGIS platform, specifically ArcGIS API for Javascript and ArcGIS for Server technology. Esri, a GIS company, is a longtime partner of AidData.

Source: http://www.aiddata.org/mapafrica

Gates Foundation seeks proposals for African agricultural research projects

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is seeking proposals for agricultural research with the potential to increase the sustainable productivity of smallholder farmers in developing countries. Through its Program for Emerging Agricultural Research Leaders, the foundation will award grants of up to $500,000 for projects led by M.Sc. and Ph.D. scientists at national agricultural research institutions and universities in sub-Saharan Africa, working in collaboration with other

researchers internationally (either within Africa or beyond). The program is restricted to proposals relevant to staple crops grown in Africa. To be eligible, applicants must be an African scientist residing in a sub-Saharan country or planning to relocate to sub-Saharan Africa to implement the proposed project (e.g. returning from diaspora); be able to identify a local host institution (a national agricultural research institute or university); have at least an M.Sc. degree; and be able to devote at least 70 percent of their time to leadership of the proposed project. Full proposals will be due in **November 2014**, and technical writing support workshops will be offered to finalists invited to submit full proposals. Final awards are expected to be made in mid-2015 onwards.

Source: http://www.gatesfoundation.org/How-We-Work/General-Information/Grant-Opportunities/Program-for-Emerging-Agricultural-Research-Leaders-2014#RFPSummary

Asia & the Pacific Region SDI News

China: Rapid development leads to local versions of Map World services

Following the popularity of China's Map World online mapping service from the State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping, local versions have sprouted, particularly in areas of the country that are rapidly developing. The online map service has become so popular that local governments have taken on management for themselves for more rapid updates, which are then shared. Five cities in Fujian have created their own version of Map World: Nanping, Sanming, Longyan, Quanzhou, and Putian.

The latest city to add its own version is in neighboring Xiamen, which has used the online map to guide tourists and visitors as well as to map and manage crime. This Xiamen version will interface with the Fujian version, and ultimately to the national version.
MapWorld: http://en.tianditu.com/map/index.html
MapWorld Fujian: http://www.fjmap.net

Source: http://www.whatsonxiamen.com/news35751.html

Korea: KCSC SIRI opens a workshop for Spatial Information Industry

Spatial Information Research Institute (SIRI) of LX KCSC opened a 'Workshop on Global Tech. Sharing for Spatial Information Industry, 2014' on April 30, 2014. The workshop was organized by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MoLIT) and managed by KCSC SIRI, Spatial Information Industry Promotion Institute, Korea Association of Surveying & Mapping to share the private sector's technologies with each other for overseas expansion. The workshop consisted of three sessions and a Government/Agency presentation.

- Session 1: Geospatial DB implementation (5 companies and discussion)
- Session 2: Application and Service using Geospatial Info. (7 companies and discussion)
- Session 3: Discussion – Shared growth in overseas market
- Government/Agency presentation: MoLIT, KOICA and KOTRA

The participants presented their own technologies that fit for foreign business, and shared experiences from various countries. They emphasized cooperation with other industries (e.g., construction, agriculture, etc.) and the establishment of a consortium among companies for overseas business. MoLIT and public agencies (KOICA and KOTRA) also provided their services and support for private companies. SIRI's President Choi, discussion leader of Session 3, promised cooperation between public and private sector to broaden understanding and various kinds of support.

Source: http://lxsiri.re.kr/eng/biz/bbs/selectBoardArticle.do?bbsId=BBSMSTR_000000000181&nttId=5369

Thailand: Subcommittee to develop guidelines for the country's geospatial infrastructure

The National Geoinformatics Committee and the Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA), as Secretary of the National Geoinformatics Committee, held a subcommittee meeting to establish the country's geospatial data infrastructure, National No. 3/2557 on March 28. 2557. The meeting was attended by about 23 participants from government agencies, public organizations, and universities. The objective is to gather information related to geospatial information system for the master plan of the country which will serve as a framework for the implementation of the information platform of the country and to comply with the government's policy on the management of geospatial information of the country.

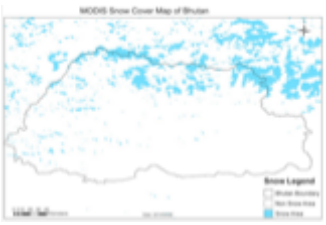
Source: http://thaisdi.gistda.or.th/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=169:280357&catid=36:latest-news

Thailand: Training practices of story-driven geospatial infrastructure of the country

On April 8-9, 2014, the Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA) organized training workshops in support of geospatial infrastructure of the country. The training was attended by about 69 participants from agricultural extension offices at provincial and district levels and the Office of Public Works and Planning. The objective of the training is to develop the knowledge and ability of these offices to use GIS effectively, in accordance with the implementation of the agricultural extension system (MRCF).

Source: http://thaisdi.gistda.or.th/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=170:780457&catid=36:latest-news

Bhutan: NASA MODIS Environmental Data from SERVIR-Himalaya to help with hydropower management



A MODIS (Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer) receiver and acquisition system installed at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)/SERVIR-Himalaya is feeding key environmental data to ICIMOD's regional member countries. The Department of Hydro-Met Services in Bhutan, for example, is receiving automated snow cover maps, is among the first beneficiaries.

Climate change has drastically affected the snow precipitation pattern in the Hindu Kush-Himalayas, and glaciers are shrinking. Officials in Bhutan need timely, accurate snow cover mapping to manage the country's hydropower sector in terms of planning appropriate infrastructure. They requested access to the MODIS data so they would have up-to-date date snow cover mapping.

The MODIS station, procured with Norwegian funding and installed during early 2013 at the ICIMOD campus in Kathmandu, Nepal receives real-time data captured in snapshots when NASA's (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) Terra and Aqua satellites pass over the region. There is a MODIS sensor onboard each of these satellites. Datasets received from these sensors are automatically customized for each end user's needs. For instance, in the case of snow cover maps for Bhutan, the automated process will select snow covered area and remove the rest, then transfer the data to Bhutan's file transfer protocol (FTP) in the format of their choice.

Source: https://www.servirglobal.net/Global/Articles/tabid/86/Article/1304/nasa-modis-environmental-data-from-servir-himalaya-to-help-bhutan-manage-hydrop.aspx

Towards an Expanded and Integrated Open Government Data Agenda for India

Author(s): Sumandro Chattapadhyay
This is the pre-publication version of the paper presented at the 7th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (ICEGOV), October 22–25, 2013, Seoul, Republic of Korea. It has been published as part of the conference proceedings by ACM Digital Library.

Abstract: The paper analyses the recently approved and implemented government data policy (National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy) in India, and identifies the possibility and need of expanding and integrating it within the larger national e-governance and information policy ecosystem. The study draws from an ongoing research project on the Indian government data policy and the roles played by data intermediary organisations. The paper argues that an expanded and integrated open government data agenda will address crucial shortcomings of the national e-governance initiatives in India, and strengthen democratic interactions between the state and citizens through electronic and other means.

Keywords: India, National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy, National e-Governance Plan, Open Data, Open Government, Open Government Data, Right to Information.

Source: https://github.com/ajantriks/writings/blob/master/sumandro_expanded_and_integrated_ogd_agenda_for_India.md

Australia: NSW IT minister releases Location Intelligence Strategy

New South Wales (NSW) Finance and Services Minister Dom Perrottet has launched his first technology strategy just one week into the job, unveiling the state's whole-of-government plan to optimise the use of location intelligence. The strategy is aimed at coordinating standards and sites for the release of government-owned electronic maps, as well as communicating to NSW government bodies why and how they should enhance existing data sets with geographic details. "Agencies right across government already collect a wide range of spatial information from residents, businesses and industry, and this new strategy means that there is now a coordinated and consistent approach to how this data is used," Perrottet said in a statement.

One of the first actions under the plan will see the Land and Property Information office put together a business case for the establishment of a web verification service designed to record and map all customer addresses captured by the state government. Land and Property Information, in unison with a newly established Location Intelligence Industry Advisory Committee, will also pick out a selection of research projects that could use government-held location data and support them with access and potentially grants.

Perrottet talked up current efforts by NSW agencies to make the most of geospatial data, such as the combination of Land and Property Information mapping with emergency services data to guide firefighting efforts in the Blue Mountains. "As more datasets become available, we can expect to see improved targeting and delivery of government services," he said.

The NSW Location Intelligence Strategy (April 2014) can be accessed at: https://www.finance.nsw.gov.au/ict/sites/default/files/NSW%20Location%20Intelliegence%20Strategy.pdf.

Source: http://www.itnews.com.au/News/384135,nsw-it-minister-releases-location-intelligence-strategy.aspx

See also: NSW govt to use location intelligence to make decisions, http://www.zdnet.com/nsw-govt-to-use-location-intelligence-to-make-decisions-7000028923/

New Zealand: Strategy sets direction for geodetic system

Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) has released its Positioning Strategy, setting the direction for how the geodetic system will be developed over the next 10 years. LINZ provides New Zealand's positioning or geodetic infrastructure through its network of survey marks, continuously operating Global Navigation Satellite System stations, and through systems such as the national geodetic datum. All are vital tools for ensuring the accurate measurement and location of New Zealand's physical features. Chief Geodesist Graeme Blick says the strategy makes sure the Geodetic Office works to support changing developments in satellite-based positioning technology and new ways of using location information. "At the same time it recognises the core need for a geodetic system to support the cadastre. "The strategy also includes goals for New Zealand to make a greater contribution to international geodetic frames, to provide strong leadership in the development of the geodetic system, and to support geodetic development in the South West Pacific." The Positioning Strategy is available on the LINZ website: http://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/geodetic/standards-publications/nz_positioning_strategy.pdf.

A SMART groundwater portal: An OGC web services orchestration framework for hydrology to improve data access and visualisation in New Zealand

Author(s): Hermann Klug, Alexander Kmoch
Computers & Geosciences, In Press, Accepted Manuscript, Available online 9 May 2014 [not an open access journal]

Abstract: Transboundary and cross-catchment access to hydrological data is the key to designing successful environmental policies and activities. Electronic maps based on distributed databases are fundamental for planning and decision making in all regions and for all spatial and temporal scales. Freshwater is an essential asset in New Zealand (and globally) and the availability as well as accessibility of hydrological information held by or held for public authorities and businesses are becoming a crucial management factor. Access to and visual representation of environmental information for the public is essential for attracting greater awareness of water quality and quantity matters. Detailed interdisciplinary knowledge about the environment is required to ensure that the environmental policy-making community of New Zealand considers regional and local differences of hydrological statuses, while assessing the overall national situation. However, cross-regional and inter-agency sharing of environmental spatial data is complex and challenging. In this article, we firstly provide an overview of the state of the art standard compliant techniques and methodologies for the practical implementation of simple, measurable, achievable, repeatable, and time-based (SMART) hydrological data management principles. Secondly, we contrast international state of the art data management developments with the present status for groundwater information in New Zealand. Finally, for the topics (i) data access and harmonisation, (ii) sensor web enablement and (iii) metadata, we summarise our findings, provide recommendations on future developments and highlight the specific advantages resulting from a seamless view, discovery, access, and analysis of interoperable hydrological information and metadata for decision making.

Keywords: WebGIS; Interoperability; Harmonisation; Metadata; CSW; SDI

Source: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0098300414001022

PacGeo: Open Access Geospatial Data Repository for the Pacific Region

PacGeo started life as the Pacific Island Marine Spatial Information System, but since inception, it has broadened its scope to be an all encompassing geospatial platform to catalogue, administer and expose geophysical, geodetic and specialist marine spatial data. The system was developed as a regional service in conjunction with Geoscience Australia (GA), SOPAC Division, the UNEP Shelf Programme, the University of Sydney and the Commonwealth Secretariat for provisioning easy access to jurisdictional information as well as other geophysical data in the Pacific.

PacGeo is an all-encompassing geospatial platform to catalogue, administer and expose geophysical, geodetic and specialist marine spatial data for the Pacific community. PacGeo provides easy access to jurisdictional information and tools for marine spatial planning in the Pacific. The system has been developed as a sustainable regional service through collaboration between the University of Sydney, Applied GeoScience and Technology Division of Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SOPAC/SPC), Geoscience Australia (GA), and UNEP GRID-Arendal Centre. PacGeo was projected to launch with finalised datasets by April, 2014.

Source: http://www.pacgeo.org/

Spatial Data Quality Control for the Coral Triangle Atlas

Authors: Annick Cros, Ruben Venegas-Lib, Shwu Jiau Teoh, Nate Peterson, Wen Wen & Nurulhuda Ahmad Fatan
Coastal Management, Special Issue: Establishing a Region-wide System of Marine Protected Areas in the Coral Triangle, Volume 42, Issue 2, 2014, pages 128-142 [not an open access journal]

Abstract: The Coral Triangle is a global priority for conservation and since the creation of the Coral Triangle Initiative in 2007 it has been a major focus for a multi-lateral conservation partnership uniting the region's six governments. The Coral Triangle (CT) Atlas was developed to provide scientists and managers with the best available data on marine resources in the Coral Triangle. Endorsed as an official supporting tool to the Coral Triangle Initiative, the CT Atlas strives to provide the most accurate information possible to track the success of the conservation efforts of the Initiative. Focusing on marine protected areas and key marine habitats, the CT Atlas tested a process to assess the quality, reliability, and accuracy of different data layers. This article describes the mechanism used to evaluate these layers and to provide accurate data. Results of the preliminary quality control process showed errors in reputable datasets, outdated and missing data, metadata gaps, and a lack of user instructions to interpret layers. It highlighted the need to challenge existing datasets and demonstrated that regional efforts could improve the data available to evaluate the effectiveness of conservation measures. The Coral Triangle Atlas is continuously being updated to be as accurate as possible for reliable analysis.

Keywords: Coral Triangle, CT Atlas, marine protected areas, spatial data quality, WDPA

Source: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08920753.2014.877760#.U3OfAPmzHIc

See also: Coral Triangle Atlas, http://ctatlas.reefbase.org/

Europe Region SDI News

Norway: National GeoPortal project underway

The Norwegian Mapping Authority, together with Norway digitally-parties began work to establish a new national GeoPortal. The first version of the new Geoportal was launched on May 9th. Expansions and improvements will now be made based on the content and functionality requirements that were defined in the pilot project. The aim is that the portal should be finalized by 31 December 2016.

The project's objective is to analyze, design and implement new national GeoPortal and associated technologies. The portal will be developed into an important component and will provide access to relevant information about our national infrastructure for spatial information.

The work is based on user needs from Norway digitally parties, system suppliers and other user groups. The project will result in a more open and visible infrastructure for spatial information in Norway. Users will have a quick overview of and access to data and services, and how the information can be integrated and made available in separate systems.

See map data in norgeskart.no: http://norgeskart.no/geoportal

Search the national map directory: http://www.geonorge.no/geonetwork/srv/nor/main.home

Source: http://www.kartverket.no/Geonorge/Prosjekt-nasjonal-geoportal/

Iceland: converting data to INSPIRE standard

The first tests on transferring data to INSPIRE form are on the way at the National Land Survey of Iceland (NLSI). This is part of the European project, eENVplus (http://www.eenvplus.eu/), which the NLSI is a part of. The goal by making all data INSPIRE applicable is that all of the data will follow the INSPIRE standards fully. In the beginning, NLSI is working on county boundaries and is using the EuroBoundary Map (EBM) dataset from NLSI. The tables that are used for this project have been prepared, but with them one can shed data from the EBM standard and structure to INSPIRE form. The software that is used for this project is an open source software called HUMBOLT Alignment Editor (HALE). By testing this transferring this data to INSPIRE form, NLSI is getting an important experience for the whole INSPIRE process. while at the same time getting more and better understanding of the INSPIRE directive demands.

Source: http://www.lmi.is/en/inspire-data/

France: upcoming workshops of National Institute of Geographic and Forest Information (IGN)
France: Les Ateliers de l'IGN

Fort de son expérience, l'Institut National de l'Information Géographique et Forestière (IGN) souhaite poursuivre la réflexion sur le rôle et la place des données géolocalisées qui ne devraient que s'amplifier dans les années à venir. Dans le cadre de ses missions et son champ de compétences, il crée les Ateliers de l'IGN, cycle de rendez-vous à l'occasion desquels seront abordées des problématiques liées aux données géographiques. Ces ateliers sont conçus comme un lieu de rencontres et d'échanges entre des acteurs publics et des membres de la société civile.

L'objectif est de confronter les expériences, de croiser les compétences, de faire émerger des pistes de nouveaux services à apporter au public, de créer des synergies. Un cahier d'acteurs sera édité en fin de cycle. C'est aussi une manière de contribuer à une vision partagée de ce que pourrait être la géolocalisation au service de la société et des politiques publiques.

Trois séries de rencontres des Ateliers de l'IGN 2014 (sur invitation)

- Jeudi 15 mai 2014: Quels sont les besoins des institutions et des usagers?
- Mercredi 18 juin 2014: Quelle synergie des acteurs publics?
- Jeudi 10 juillet 2014: Quel modèle économique mettre en place?

Pour en savoir plus: télécharger le document « Les Ateliers de l'IGN »

http://www.ign.fr/institut/sites/all/files/ateliers_ign.pdf; envoyez vos contributions à l'adresse: lesateliers@ign.fr.

Source: http://www.ign.fr/institut/ateliers-lign

Ireland: Assessment of the Economic Value of the Geospatial Information Industry (February 2014)

This report was submitted to Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) by Indecon International Economic Consultants. The report represents an independent assessment of the economic value of geospatial information ('GI') in Ireland. The background to this study is that an understanding of the direct and indirect impacts of the sector is important for decision makers in both the public and private sectors. Against this background the OSi on behalf of the geospatial industry in Ireland commissioned Indecon to independently establish the economic value of geospatial information to the Irish Economy.

A key element of the research project was to quantify the economic impacts and contribution of suppliers of geospatial information in Ireland in terms of output, expenditures, employment and contribution to value added.

The sector directly employs over 1,600 people and supports employment of over 3,000. The direct value added of the sector is estimated to be over €69.3m and, when multiplier impacts are included, this is estimated to be over €120m.

Source:
http://www.osi.ie/OSI/media/OSI/pdf_bank_1/Ireland%20GIS%20Report/Ordnance-Survey-Ireland-Final-Report-12-Feb-2014.pdf

UK INSPIRE: Rising to the challenge

In the June 2014 edition of GeoConnexion, Jason King from Defra's INSPIRE Project Team pens an overview of how Britain is addressing the EU initiative and flags some of the challenges public sector bodies will need to consider.

Source: http://www.geoconnexion.com/publications/geo-uk/issue/may-june-2014-uk-issue/article/uk-inspire-rising-to-the-challenge

Poland: Integration of spatial information resources on the example of utility companies in Częstochowa region

Authors: Cezary Stępniak and Tomasz Turek
Online Journal of Applied Knowledge Management, Volume 2, Issue 2, 2014

Abstract: The paper concerns the problems of information system integration based on spatial information resources. The considerations deal with the environment of utility companies. The enterprises conducting business activity are simultaneously dependent on each other. Dependencies result from the location of infrastructure (water, sewage, power, gas and other networks). As an example, the development of new housing estates is dependent on cooperation across companies. The authors prepared the study's model of integration levels based on spatial information resources. They distinguished different aspects of information systems integration, including organization, technology, software, data dictionary and data integration. The model encompasses levels concerning one enterprise and leads to the e-community which contains different organizations from the region. The resulting proposed integration merges information resources from different kinds of information systems. The investigation performed by the Authors shows the level of spatial information integration in chosen utility companies in Czestochowa region. Currently the majority of investigated enterprises is at the basic level with elements of medium level (i.e. 2 - 3 levels in 5 degree scale). The research and spatial information market trends show that the model can be realized in the future.

Keywords: Spatial information resources, information systems integration, GIS, e-community.

Source: http://www.iiakm.org/ojakm/articles/2014/volume2_2/OJAKM_Volume2_2pp97-108.pdf

Serbia: NSDI Council session held

Serbia's NSDI Council held its eighth session on 23 April 2014. At the eighth session of the NSDI Council, members of the NSDI Council discussed the document "Detailed review and analysis of the results of the questionnaire on the status of the geosector" and approval of the document for publication. In order to assess the current situation and the need for NSDI development, an analysis of the geosector was carried out. Through a questionnaire, responses were collected from organizations at all levels of public administration, public enterprises, educational and research institutions, private sector and other groups that produce or use geodata. Based on a comprehensive statistical processing and review of the responses to the questionnaire, working team carried out an analysis and made recommendations for further development.

Due to the legal obligation of reporting to the Government of the Republic of Serbia on the activities on the establishment of the NSDI, NSDI Council prepared and adopted an annual report for 2013. The report contains information on completed activities and projects that are important for the establishment of the NSDI. In addition, members of the NSDI Council were informed by the representatives of the RGA on the most important current activities, as well as ongoing and planned projects related to the NSDI such as:

- Status of the development of the Draft Law on NSDI
- Participation of the representatives of the RGA in the Negotiating Group 27 on environment and sectoral working groups for programming of international assistance IPA II
- TAIEX Expert Mission for support the development of the Draft Law on NSDI
- PROFID project for the development of technical specifications for the national Geoportal
- Proposal for the IMPULS Project: Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the region of Western Balkan, financed by the Swedish agency SIDA
- Proposal for the World Bank project: Real estate management project in Serbia
- Status of the development of the Web portal from the IGIS project.

The Council plans to discuss the Draft Law on NSDI at its next session.

Source: http://www.geosrbija.rs/template1.aspx?pageID=251

Serbia: Workshop on INSPIRE implementation in the Danube Region

The first workshop under the Danube Reference Data and Service Infrastructure (DRDSI) project was held in Zagreb on 29-30 April 2014. The enlargement and integration workshop on INSPIRE implementation in the Danube Region was organised by European Commission Join Research Centre and hosted by Faculty of Geodesy, University of Zagreb. Representatives of countries from the Danube Region took part on the workshop.

The objective of the DRDSI project is support of the Danube strategy realisation through contribution to INSPIRE directive implementation in the Region. European Commission adopted the Danube Strategy in 2010. The Danube Region covers countries that belong to the Danube River basin: Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. The Strategy relies on an integrated approach to better policy development and the alignment of funding and resources through concrete projects and actions. Having in mind that the Danube countries face interrelated cross-border issues, the Strategy aims to propose common solutions to challenges in the Region.

A goal of the workshop was introduction with key objectives of the DRDSI project, context and annual work plan. Cross-border data infrastructures projects are introduced by representatives from public and educational sector. Stay of play of the national spatial data infrastructures establishment and INSPIRE implementation was presented by national representatives in order to make overview of current status in the Region. Discussion was focused on methodology and potential sources for an inventory of available data via metadata harvesting in line with INSPIRE for data sets from EU projects as well on the national level within domain of the project.

First results of State of Play will be presented on high level meeting in June in Vienna. It is planned to organise the second workshop in October in Serbia aiming to present results of inventory of available data sets in the interoperable metadata repository.

Source: http://www.geosrbija.rs/template1.aspx?pageID=252

Kosovo: Meeting held with experts over National Spatial Data Infrastructure strategy

On May 7, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Kosovo held a meeting of experts to draft the NSDI strategy. The meeting was held to discuss the ways of financing the activities of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure. Last month, a similar meeting was held to discuss the mission and vision of the initiative. The meeting was chaired by Prof. Dr. Joep Crompvoets, international expert in the field of NSDI.

Source: http://www.kca-ks.org/-/strategjia-per-ik-1?redirect=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.kca-ks.org%2Ffillimi%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_3Cj7ojxecp8z%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-3%26p_p_col_pos%3D1%26p_p_col_count%3D3

Croatia: 11th session of NSDI Council held

On April 11, 2014, in the premises of the State Geodetic Administration (SGA), the 11th session of the Council of National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) was held. At the session, which was chaired by Minister A. Mrak Taritaš, a report on the establishment of the NSDI in 2013 was adopted, which is in accordance with the NSDI (NN 56/13) is to be submitted to the Government. Last year marked by the adoption of the NSDI, during which Croatia entered into a period of implementation of the INSPIRE Directive and the adoption of the work plan for 2014.

Highlights from the report include the activities planned for the establishment of NSDI Geoportal with functionality that will ultimately enable searching, browsing, downloading, and transformating spatial data sources through the NSDI Geoportal, as well as through the EU INSPIRE Geoportal. The new specification for NSDI metadata v.2.1 was adopted, compliant with updated INSPIRE implementing rules for metadata from 29/10/2013. A number of organizational issues within the body of the NSDI were resolved. The national contact point emphasized is that Croatia, as a country member of the European Union, assumed an obligation to follow the INSPIRE implementation timetable, and accordingly, NSDI agencies should already have established a minimum service for viewing spatial data within its jurisdiction, and download services and transformation thereof. Concerning these highlights, the national NSDI contact point for the first time and regularly is submitting an annual report to the European Commission.

Source: http://www.dgu.hr/detaljni-prikaz-vijesti.html?id=104&pre=news

Greece: National Action Plan for Open Government and Open Public Data Hackathon

In May 2014, the "Presentation of the National Action Plan for Open Government" was held in Greece, an event carried out by the Ministry of Administrative Reform and e-Government in the National Hellenic Research Foundation. Making data open by default with zero transaction costs for reuse is a key priority for the Hellenic Government in order to establish an ecosystem of open, interoperable services for sharing and re-using public information. Three categories of data provide the main areas of focus for the following two years, these being - 1) the open provision of geodata, 2) data related to culture and 3) the offshore enterprises. The national action plan for the Open Governance (2014-2016, http://www.opengov.gr/ogp/?p=255) was set under public deliberation on May 6th, 2014.

Source: http://www.epsiplatform.eu/content/national-action-plan-open-government-and-open-public-data-hackathon-greece-1

A guide to INSPIRE compliance in Local Government (newly revised version May 2014)

The purpose of the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) Regulations (2009) is to enable the sharing of environmental data among public sector organisations and to provide better public access to the same data.

This short guide, prepared by the Local Government Association, is to assist local authorities to comply with INSPIRE regulations by outlining what the regulations mean, providing information about the technical specifications and listing the steps authorities need to take to become compliant. The guide provide a brief overview of the technical requirements in local government.

For detailed technical guidance, please refer to http://data.gov.uk/location/guidance_and_tools.

Source: http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/11515/A+GUIDE+TO+INSPIRE+COMPLIANCE+IN+LG+FINAL+-+revised+version+May+2014.pdf

European Commission asks for your input on licensing practices for Open Data

You can now take part in a survey based on the current licensing practices of European public administrations when publishing open data. The questionnaire, launched by the Interoperability Solutions for Public Administrations (ISA, http://ec.europa.eu/isa/) programme of the European Commission, aims to collect information on licensing practices for open data used by the Member States of the European Union. The purpose of the survey is to better understand licensing needs and provide useful insights on how to improve legal interoperability for the sharing and re-use of open data among Member States. You can take the survey by clicking here:
http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=licensing

Source: http://www.epsiplatform.eu/content/european-commission-asks-your-input-licensing-practices-open-data

European Location Framework: Oskari demonstration

This is a demonstration of an embedded web map from the European Location Framework. Currently this web map is provided by the Paikkatietoikkuna, the Finnish National geo-portal, powered by the open source Oskari SDI platform, www.oskari.org. When completed the European Location Framework will provide the definitive source of authoritative reference information from Europe's national mapping and cadastre authorities.

Source: http://www.elfproject.eu/content/oskari-demonstration

See also: Single source of authoritative geoinformation for Europe comes a step closer as project marks first anniversary, http://www.elfproject.eu/content/news-release-single-source-authoritative-geoinformation-europe-comes-step-closer-project

EuroGeographics 2013 Annual Report

EuroGeographics's 2013 Annual Report has been completed. In addition to the EuroGeographics President's report, you can find a lot of information about EuroGeographics common work, including achievements of the organization's members, national mapping, cadastre & land registry authorities in their responsible work in a number of use cases.

Source: http://www.elfproject.eu/sites/default/files/EGAR%202013.pdf

Release of operational version of climate4impact.eu: the climate data portal for the European impacts community

The operational version of the climate4impact.eu climate data portal, tailored for the European climate change impacts community, has been released. The portal has been developed by the European Commission project "Infrastructure Support for the European Network for Earth System Modelling" (https://verc.enes.org/ISENES2). The main portal objectives are to provide easier access to data, and supporting documentation, from the major archives of global and regional climate model results which underpin climate change assessments by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and research into climate impacts. Features include an improved intuitive search, fast visualization and download services (as defined by the EU INSPIRE directives). The portal also includes demonstrations of online downscaling facilities, on-demand data processing and climate indices calculations. The portal will be updated regularly in the upcoming months to extend its functionalities and enhance especially the documentation and support, the downscaling and on-demand data processing/indices services.

Source: https://verc.enes.org/community/announcements/news/release-of-the-operational-version-of-climate4impact.eu-the-climate-data-portal-for-the-european-impacts-community

Latin America & the Caribbean Region SDI News

Brazil: NSDI Academy Day 2014, 27-28 May 2014, Brasília DF

The main goal of Brazil's NSDI Academy Day 2014 is to expand knowledge about the production and use of geographic information in Brazil, advanced in the National Geoinformation Policy. Moreover, the event aims to:

- Discuss the process of building National Geoinformation (PNGeo)
- Discuss the consolidation of the NSDI as an instrument of the National Geoinformation (PNGeo)
- Present the work and research lines developed by the Academy.

The target audience for the meeting are the producers and users of geospatial information, including governmental institutions, research institutes, non-governmental organizations, scientific associations, as well as technicians and researchers interested in the production, dissemination and use of information to identify the reality of country and the exercise of citizenship. See also: Brazil's Spatial Data Infrastructure (Inde) portal, http://www.inde.gov.br/

Source: http://www.planejamento.gov.br/jornadainde/

Colombia: Primer Foro Infraestructura Colombiana de Datos Espaciales realizado
Colombia: First Forum on Colombian Spatial Data Infrastructure held

El objetivo del Primer Foro Infraestructura Colombiana de Datos Espaciales, realizado 29-30 de mayo de 2014, fue socializar experiencias IDE a nivel global, regional y local, conocer sus componentes y aplicaciones como herramienta de primer orden en la planificación y gestión integral de los proyectos en los territorios, en los diversos sectores de desarrollo, a fin de dinamizar la inversión pública y privada. El desarrollo del Foro incluyo la participación de Organizaciones Internacionales Gubernamentales (Naciones Unidas), y países como España, México, Chile, y Uruguay; así como experiencias nacionales y locales. Para ver la Agenda haga, puede descargarla: http://www.icde.org.co/alfresco2.1-5.1.1.1/d/d/workspace/SpacesStore/127e4b43-d004-11e3-8342-239b4eb0039a/Programacion_FOROICDE.pdf

Venezuela: 3rd Venezuelan Congress of Geographic Information Systems GIS (COVESIG), October 21-23, 2014, Merida, Venezuela

El resumen de la Ponencia y del poster debe ser enviado en formato PDF a la dirección electrónica covesig@gmail.com - aseciam@ula.ve.
Fechas límite: Recepción de los resúmenes (sesión oral y póster) del 01 de abril hasta el 30 de Septiembre de 2014

Source: http://covesig.blogspot.com/2014/01/inicio.html

Paraguay: Realizan mapeo del Paraguay que será base para múltiples proyectos ambientales

Una sesión de trabajo en conjunto denominada "Mapeo de beneficios múltiples de REDD+ en Paraguay" tuvo lugar en las oficinas de la Dirección General de Gestión Ambiental de la SEAM con la participación de los funcionarios del Laboratorio SIG (Sistema de Información Geográfica) de la SEAM-INFONA, y representantes de la carrera de Ingeniería Forestal de la UNA.

English summary: Paraguay mapping that will be the basis for many environmental projects.

In April 2014, a working session was held called "Mapping multiple benefits of REDD+ in Paraguay" at the offices of the General Directorate of Environmental Management, Ministry of Environment (SEAM) involving officials from the GIS Laboratory of the National Forestry Institute (SEAM-INFONA) and representatives of the Forestry Department of UNA. The mapping will serve multiple environmental initiatives of Paraguay. Organizations are working together to ensure that the data that are available in Paraguay are based on a process of national prioritization.

Source: http://www.seam.gov.py/component/content/article/1-latest-news/1885-2014-04-22-14-45-28.html

Note as well: Afianzan sistema de Información Geográfica (February 2014)
Con el objetivo de coordinar acciones relativas al uso de datos en Sistema de Información Geográfica (GIS) necesarios para el Proyecto Paraguay Biodiversidad, e implementar una base de datos unificada, coordinan tareas conjuntas empleados de la Fundación Parque Tecnológico (FPTI.PY), del Centro Internacional de Hidroinformática (CIH), de la División de Apoyo Operacional (ODRA.CE) y del mismo PyBio. El objetivo es realizar un levantamiento de la información y recursos disponibles en los distintos ámbitos, a fin de establecer procedimientos tendientes a centralizar en adelante toda la información disponible y a ser generada bajo responsabilidad de ODRA.CE – que dentro del organigrama de ITAIPU es la responsable de almacenar datos de información geográfica.

English summary: Entrenching GIS in Paraguay

Actions of multiple parties are being coordinated to support the use of data in the Geographic Information System (GIS) necessary for the Paraguay Biodiversity Project (PyBio). This includes the implementation of a unified database and the jointly tasking employees of the Technological Park Foundation (FPTI.PY), the Hydro International Centre (HIC), the Division of Operational Support (ODRA.CE), and the PyBio. The objective is to make a collection of information and resources available in the various fields, to establish procedures to centralize access to available information, and to be generated under the responsibility of ODRA.CE - within the organization of Itaipu that is responsible for storing geographic information data.

Source: http://die.itaipu.gov.py/index.php?secao=noticias_itaipu&q=pt/node/21220&conteudo=21220
Source: http://www.icde.org.co/web/guest/foro-icde

Panama: Open Geodata Festival & NSDI Annual Report (2013)

ESRI Panamá apoya a la IPDE en formación e instalación del uso de la plataforma ARCGIS. Open Geodata Festival, 29 y 30 de Abril 2014, iniciativa promocionada por la AIG y el IGNTG "Instituto Geográfico Nacional Tommy Guardia" para la creación del Mapa Base de Panamá.
Ya se encuentra disponible en formato PDF, Informe de Gestión 2013 - Infraestructura Panameña de Datos Espaciales (IPDE). http://www.ipde.gob.pa/wp-content/uploads/inf.pdf

Source: http://www.ipde.gob.pa/

Jamaica: Land Information Council of Jamaica (LICJ) News - March 2014 - Vol.1 Issue 1

The March issue of LICJ News features the utilization of GIS for Ananda Alert, GIS Pioneer Silburn Clarke President of Spatial Innovision Limited and Water Resources Authority's web application. Also, see some the regular features, Emerging Trends and University Corner - Discover and be informed! The Land Information Council of Jamaica (LICJ, http://www.licj.org.jm/licj/) was established by Government in 1991 and is comprised of nine sub-committees. The Council is responsible for organizing and ensuring the development and maintenance of a national networked geographical information system for Jamaica, through the collaborative efforts of land and land related agencies. Follow LICJ on Twitter: https://twitter.com/LICJ_NSDMD; Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/GIS.Jamaica

Source: http://issuu.com/licj/docs/licj_newsletter_-_march_vol._1_issu?utm_content=buffer0fabd&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

From Crowdsourced Mapping to Community Mapping: The Post-Earthquake Work of OpenStreetMap Haiti

Authors: Robert Soden and Leysia Palen
To appear in the 11th International Conference on the Design of Cooperative Systems (COOP 2014), Nice, France.

Abstract: The earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010 catalyzed a nascent set of efforts in then-emergent "volunteer technology communities." Among these was the response from OpenStreetMap, a volunteer-driven project that makes geospatial data free and openly available. Following the earthquake, remotely located volunteers rapidly mapped the affected areas to support the aid effort in a remarkable display of crowdsourced work. However, some within that effort believed that the impact and import of open and collaborative mapping techniques could provide much richer value to humanitarian aid work and the long-term development needs of the country. They launched an ambitious project that trialed methods for how to create sustainable and locally-owned community mapping ecosystems in at-risk regions of the world. This paper describes how an organization that emerged out of the response—the Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team—formalized their practices in relation to many different stakeholder needs with the aim for setting a model for how the potential of participatory, community mapping could be realized in Haiti and beyond.

Source: https://www.cs.colorado.edu/~palen/Papers/HaitiCOOP_Final.pdf

Regional Climate Centre for Caribbean launched

In March 2014, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH, http://www.cimh.edu.bb/), with funding from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), launched a Regional Climate Centre (RCC, http://63.175.159.27:4880/) for the Caribbean aimed at helping the Eastern Caribbean improve its ability to understand and predict current and future climate-related issues and build capacity for adaptation. The RCC will seek to improve regional climate and weather data collection to fill key information, monitoring and forecasting gaps. The USAID-WMO agreement also will create a Caribbean Environmental and Climate Computational Centre to provide CIMH, regional scientists and end users with resources to better understand and predict climate impacts. The agreement further calls for building capacity at both national and regional levels to access, analyze, and use climate data to inform decision making in climate-sensitive sectors.

Source: http://www.wmo.int/pages/mediacentre/news/USAIDInvestmenttoImproveRegionalResiliencetoClimate.html

North America Region SDI News

Canada: First Pan-Canadian SDI Summit to be held in September

GeoDiscover Alberta (GDA) is excited to announce that it will be hosting the first Pan-Canadian SDI Summit this September (2014). In partnership with federal counterparts from GeoConnections and Natural Resources Canada, GDA welcomes SDI colleagues from across Canada and beyond to this inaugural event. The goal is to foster discussions and develop solutions that will help shape the future direction of geospatial information sharing in our country. Summit participants will be able to learn from each other's experiences, share knowledge, continue to build a common understanding of SDIs and start work on select collaborative projects. See: https://geodiscover.alberta.ca/geoportal/catalog/main/home.page

Source: GeoBytes, Issue 5, May 2014, GeoDiscover Alberta Newsletter
https://geodiscover.alberta.ca/geoportal/catalog/docs/GDA-Newsletter_May2014.pdf

Canada: Government seeks input on Open Data, Open Information, and Open Dialogue

In April 2014, the Honourable Tony Clement, President of the Treasury Board, launched a three-part consultation regarding Canada's Action Plan on Open Government. The objective of the first phase, taking place online at data.gc.ca, is to determine how Canadians want to be engaged and informed on Open Government, and how citizens prefer to provide feedback to advance the Government's second Action Plan on Open Government.

The Government of Canada released its first Action Plan on Open Government in 2012 as part of a commitment to promote openness and transparency. Consultation results will help in the selection of key Open Government activities

that will make the Government more transparent and accessible to Canadians. Feedback from citizens, the private sector, civil society and other levels of government is invaluable in the evolution of Open Government. The Government welcomes ongoing comments and suggestions as it continues developing Canada's Action Plan on Open Government. The Open Government consultations will run from April 2014 until September 2014 in three phases.

Source: http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=842049

USA: Meeting the Elevation Needs of the Nation

The USGS National Geospatial Program is advancing the 3D Elevation Program, known as 3DEP (http://nationalmap.gov/3DEP/), in response to the growing need for high-quality three-dimensional representations of the Nation's natural and constructed features. 3DEP uses modern technology to systematically collect high-density light detection and ranging (lidar) elevation data over the U.S. and interferometric synthetic aperture radar (ifsar) data above Alaska where cloud cover and remote locations preclude the use of lidar for much of the State. Examples of how each state benefits from current high accuracy elevation data are explained in the 24 3DEP state fact sheets available on the 3DEP or The National Map websites. Remaining state-specific fact sheets will continue to be released in the near future. Since 1990, USGS has collected National Elevation Data and has the Federal lead responsibility for terrestrial elevation data. The 3DEP project is designed to fulfill that coordination responsibility and to assure the Nation receives the essential high quality coverage.

Source: http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3888

USA (Minnesota): Four metro counties make public GIS data truly public

Ramsey County in February 2014 became the first Twin Cities metro-area county to adopt a policy making all its public data from Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology now available without charge to the public. Ramsey County's lead was followed by Hennepin, Dakota and Carver counties. Similar measures are under consideration in Anoka and Scott counties. Across Minnesota, three other counties also make their GIS data available at no charge (Chisago, Becker and Clay). The decision in Ramsey County was made to improve public service and meet public demand. It also makes better use of staff time and resources, and opens the door to a big return on the public investment in GIS data. Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt also stressed the county's commitment to transparent government. With the change, the county's GIS database becomes the new foundation for subsequent maps, services and analyses in the public and private sector. The new approach also helps ensure accuracy, consistency and reliability for everyone using the information.

Source: http://www.metrocouncil.org/News-Events/Planning/Newsletters/Four-metro-counties-make-public-GIS-data-truly-pub.aspx

See also: ***USA (Minnesota): Hennepin County Launches GIS Open Data Portal***

On April 28th, Hennepin County unvailed it's new GIS Open Data Portal! This comes just 10 weeks after the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners voted to pass an Open GIS resolution, a vote put into motion thanks in large part the work and formal recommenation of MetroGIS. This new GIS Open Data Portal is a major step for open data in the Twin Cities, as well as Heppenin County's Open GIS initiative. However, this portal, does raise the question of what data formats can be considered open. As allowed by state law and the Hennepin County Open GIS resolution, the data provided on this GIS Open Data Portal are provided in the format in which the County already stores these data - ESRI Geodatabase. The programming libraries available that can work with Geodatabase are poorly licensed, which limits the ability of civic technologists to use these datasets that are otherwise free of cost and license. As dictated by state law, an effort to have the Country provide these datasets in other formats would come at a cost that some requesting party would have to pay. Even if a party willing to pay for the conversion where to do so, it is also unclear if the requester could then ask that the converted data be added to the Open GIS Data Portal. The Open Twin Cities community is discussing options for converting these Geodatabase files into more open formats.

Update (May 2nd, 2014): Through the efforts of Alan Palazzolo, Brad Neuhauser, and David Bitner, the data provided on Hennepin County's GIS Open Data Portal have been converted into GeoJSON and Shapefiles. What's more, David has offered to host these converted files for download through his company, dbSpatial. One can download the converted files at http://data.dbspatial.com/hennepin/.

Source: http://opentwincities.org/2014/05/01/hennepin-county-launches-gis-open-data-portal/

Sustainable long term scientific data publication: Lessons learned from a prototype Observatory Information System for the Illinois River Basin

Author(s): Benjamin L. Ruddell, Ilya Zaslavsky, David Valentine, Bora Beran, Michael Piasecki, Qingwei Fu, Praveen Kumar
Environmental Modelling & Software, Volume 54, April 2014, Pages 73–87 [not an open access journal]
Highlights
- Minimized metadata requirements enhance long-term sustainability of an OIS.
- The federated OIS model sustains observatory data after the source is disestablished.
- The ISO geospatial metadata standard has proven durable for long-term OIS use.

Abstract: In 2005 a prototype Observatory Information System (OIS) was developed for the Illinois River Basin Observatory (IRBO), connected to a federated scientific data network, populated with a representative collection of legacy datasets, and linked to external data streams. The perspective of seven years' time and the disestablishment of the system provide an opportunity to study the system life cycle. We detail best practices for multi-level OIS design for long-term performance, based on a publication-mandatory metadata implementation standard using ISO-19115. These principles balance general users' requirements against the requirements of specific scientific applications, and maximize the system's capacity to deal with legacy and heterogeneous data sources, enhancing long-term sustainability and flexibility for diverse multi-level user groups. These findings are relevant to ongoing developments of networked Scientific Information Systems that are
increasingly critical to support and sustain the long-term benefits of modeling and observatory science.

Keywords: Cyberinfrastructure; Observatory Information System; Metadata; Curation; Redistribution; Federated; Hydrology; Hydroinformatics; River basin; Geoscience; Long-term; Sustainable; Standards; ISO-19115; FGDC; XML

Source: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1364815213003186

Workshop Announcement - GeoData 2014: Strengthening the connections, building the inter-agency network, June 17-19, 2014, NCAR Center Green Campus, Boulder, CO, USA

EarthCube (http://earthcube.org/) is a collaboration between the Division of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure (ACI) and the Geosciences Directorate (GEO) of the US National Science Foundation (NSF).

GeoData, in the scope of EarthCube, refers to datasets collected and curated by the broad 'Geo' community supported by: DoE, EPA, NASA, NOAA, NSF, USDA, USGS, etc. These datasets cover subject areas including agriculture, atmospheric, solid Earth, energy and climate, environment, geospace, ocean and polar sciences. EarthCube seeks a community-driven, interoperable, geoscience-wide geoinformatics infrastructure in concert with other agencies. The GeoData workshop series aims to complement EarthCube by extending the scope of the discourse beyond the NSF-funded geoscience research community. The GeoData 2011 workshop (http://tw.rpi.edu/web/Workshop/Community/GeoData2011) provided a forum for the rich exchange of ideas, experiences and challenges focusing on three subject areas: data lifecycle, citation and integration. Many key findings and recommendations have been extracted from the detailed breakout discussions and syntheses during and after the workshop and many have been acted upon. Topical categories included: metadata, standards, standards-based tools, culture, collaboration and workforce development. GeoData 2014 (Website: http://tw.rpi.edu/web/Workshop/Community/GeoData2014) takes the next steps. It begins with a review of progress in those three subject areas in recent years, and continues the focus on data lifecycle issues within inter-agency and community conversations, connecting and interacting with on-going EarthCube community activities. GeoData 2014 focuses on two subject areas: (1) Social, political and financial issues of connecting geodata within and among governmental agencies and (2) Technical issues of connecting geodata in and among governmental agencies. Each subject will be covered by an introductory panel discussion and four working breakouts. Invited participants are sought from all 'Geo' disciplines, and beyond: information, computer and library science, agency, academia and commercial organizations, and student to senior faculty/administrators.

Please indicate your interest via Registration:
http://tw.rpi.edu/web/Workshop/Community/GeoData2014/Registration

NSF support will be provided for selected/eligible participants. The organizers seek balanced participation from the community; space is limited and registration does not guarantee a seat in the workshop.

Source: http://workspace.earthcube.org/system/files/GeoData2014Announcement.pdf

Esri seeks Senior Consultant/Project Manager Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI)

Spark. Drive. Innovation. This is another meaning of SDI at Esri, representing the qualities the ideal candidate will bring to this position. You'll use your knowledge of spatial data infrastructure standards to provide consulting and project management services in the SDI market. This is a challenging opportunity to help our customers participate in a societal GIS, allowing stakeholders to utilize shared distributed GIS services based on a framework of common standards and policies. Candidates must have knowledge of ongoing SDI standards and activities and a minimum of eight years of significant experience developing SDIs such as the United States NSDI, the European INSPIRE programs, or other regional/global networks such as GEOSS and GEOSUR. Location: Redlands, CA USA. Deadline: **June 22, 2014**. Job ID: 2014-3389

Source: https://internal-esri.icims.com/jobs/3389/senior-consultant-project-manager-%E2%80%93-spatial-data-infrastructure-%28sdi%29/login?jtsrc

Two positions open at CIESIN, Columbia University

CIESIN, at Columbia University, is seeking to fill two Officer of Research positions, one in its Science Applications Division and the second in its Geospatial Applications Division:

1) Senior Staff Associate, Science Applications Division

The individual will play a lead role in the development of data systems and services for global and African digital soil mapping projects and will coordinate CIESIN's scientific and technical activities related to geoinformatics and cyberinfrastructure for soil science, agricultural development, and related areas. He/she will manage projects involving the design, implementation, quality control, and maintenance of data systems for large-scale, geo-referenced soil and environmental data collection, integration, analysis and online dissemination; develop technical tools in support of soil cyberinfrastructure project needs; participate in scientific analysis of soil data and its interrelationship with crop yields, land degradation, soil management practices, and other environmental and socioeconomic factors; and interact with other staff members to provide expert guidance and project management.

Source: https://academicjobs.columbia.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=59340

2) Staff Associate, Geospatial Applications Division

The individual will play a lead role in the creation, maintenance and integration of large spatial and non-spatial data sets, automate data processing and analysis tasks, assist in building and managing online interactive mapping systems, and conduct advanced spatial and statistical analysis on collections of environmental, social, and demographic datasets. He/she will bring inventive approaches to the use of remote sensing products and analysis techniques to advance global climate change research and sustainable development projects and programs. A key role is to design geospatial databases, data management processes, and distribution systems in consultation with CIESIN colleagues, other Earth Institute centers and projects, and external partners.

Source: https://academicjobs.columbia.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=59349

Only online applications will be accepted.

Middle East & North Africa Region SDI News

Saudi Arabia: Geoportal workshop held in April

A Geoportal workshop was held in April 2014 at the headquarters of the General Authority for Space to study the needs of the users. A number of government and private sector participants identified their needs so that the Geoportal can improve how it provide spatial (terrain and marine) national reference data and provides services to their partners.

See: General Commission for Survey (GCS) GeoPortal, which consists of the following components:

1. Discovery Services
2. View Services
3. Download Services
4. Transformation Services
5. Invoke Spatial Application Services (GeoProcessing)
6. Web-GIS Services

http://geoportal.gcs.gov.sa/GCS/WebPages/Map/FundyViewer.aspx

Source: http://www.nsdi.gov.sa/ArticleDetails.aspx?articleId=26

UAE: Abu Dhabi Spatial Data Infrastructure concludes first stakeholders meeting for 2014

Abu Dhabi Systems and Information Centre (ADSIC), the government entity in charge of Abu Dhabi's ICT agenda, announced the revamp of its Abu Dhabi Spatial Data Infrastructure (AD-SDI) programme brand identity during its first AD-SDI Stakeholders Meeting for 2014 at Fairmont Bab-Al-Bahr, Abu Dhabi. The AD-SDI programme is a shared infrastructure of the Abu Dhabi government, initiated within the ADSIC e-Government programme in 2007 to facilitate the sharing of geospatial data among government agencies and other stakeholders. The programme's new identity and logo constitute of data layers as visual elements that were inspired by colors from earth's geographical data and place visual emphasis on 'Abu Dhabi'. Over the years, AD-SDI Programme has developed tremendously by facilitating continuous process improvement and streamlining business operations, as well as improving government services via spatial information and service sharing. The programme also periodically assesses the utilization of its service portfolio to ensure any gaps are identified for improvement.

During the stakeholder meeting, projects implemented in collaboration with leading government entities were highlighted that include Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA), Abu Dhabi Water & Electricity Authority (ADWEA), New School Model (NSM), Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC), Statistics Center Abu Dhabi (SCAD), Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD) and Health Authority- Abu Dhabi (HAAD). The meeting also introduced stakeholders to newly recruited members from ADSIC and new entities collaborating in the programme, including Abu Dhabi Housing Authority and Mubadala Petroleum.

Source: https://www.zawya.com/story/Abu_Dhabi_Spatial_Data_Infrastructure_Concludes_First_Stakeholders_Meeting_for_2014-ZAWYA20140504095821/

Iraq: Pioneering online tool targets improved decision making

In a country where government ministries and other decision making bodies face significant capacity constraints, policy reform is unlikely to be an easy task. Yet this process can be facilitated if policymakers are given reliable data on which to complement evidence-based decision making. This is the thinking behind a new online tool that aggregates a full range of development-related data – a 'one-stop' source of reliable and comprehensive geo-spatial information that targets Iraq's policymakers and research community.

Iraq Spatial (http://www.arabspatial.org/iraq), launched in March 2014, provides over 200 indicators, including macroeconomic, sectoral, climate, biophysical, and socio-economic data at the national, subnational, and pixel level. The tool enables users to target policies where they are most needed, for instance pin-pointing which areas are more vulnerable to climate variations and climate change by mapping relevant indicators for precipitation, temperature, and biomass variability.

The tool is a collaborative effort involving the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), as part of the USAID-funded Harmonized Support for Agriculture Development (HSAD). It is also the first country portal affiliated with the more expansive Arab Spatial (http://www.arabspatial.org/), a region-wide repository of geo-spatial information initiated by IFPRI and supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the CGIAR Research Program on Policies, Institutions, and Markets (PIM). Iraq Spatial builds on this model to provide more specific national and sub-national level data to assist in the precise targeting of food security and development interventions.

As a free and open access knowledge platform, it allows end-users to query a full range of databases, build interactive multi-layer maps, and use customized analytical tools to compare, explore and download these results. It will also be updated and expanded on a regular basis and welcomes the submission of new information from partners and other stakeholders – thereby helping to continually improve the tool and further assist in the delivery of appropriate development interventions across Iraq.

Source: http://www.icarda.cgiar.org/blog-content/[node%3ABlog%20type]pioneering-online-tool-targets-improved-decision-making-iraq

Egypt: Open Access Days

The American University in Cairo (AUC) organized a two-day event between April 27 and 28, 2014, under the name Open Access Days (The organizers highlighted that their aim is to promote open access to researchers in Egypt and the Middle East, and to plant a seed for future initiatives. Thus the sessions varied between those raising awareness about the topic, panel discussions and other technical sessions introducing the audience to softwares like Open Journal System (OJS) and the university's Digital Archive and Research Repository (DAR Repository), which is open to host the university's theses, faculty publications, student projects, and departmental

records and publications. See: http://www.aucegypt.edu/llt/clt/Pages/Open-Access-Days.aspx
Source: http://access.okfn.org/2014/05/06/open-access-days-in-egypt/

Maroc: 2ème Colloque international des utilisateurs des SIG (Meknes_GIS-USERS)

Après le succès de la première édition de GIS-Users tenue à Fès , la 2ème édition qui aura lieu à Meknès les 20 et 21 Novembre 2014, sous le thème : « Les SIG, Outils d'aide à la prise de décision dans l'aménagement du territoire et l'environnement » constituera une occasion pour consolider les acquis et ouvrir de nouveaux horizons aux utilisateurs des SIG, qu'ils soient professionnels, jeunes chercheurs ou apprentis, pour partager différentes expériences, chacun dan son domaine d'intérêt. Une occasion aussi de renforcer les liens de coopération entre les chercheurs, organismes et institutions.
Date limite d'envoi des résumés étendus (3 à 4 pages): **30/06/ 2014**

English summary: The 2nd International Conference of GIS Users will be held in Meknes (Morocco) on 20 and 21 November 2014 at the Faculty of Sciences (My Ismail University), Meknes, Morocco. Abstract deadline: **June 30, 2014.**
Source: https://sites.google.com/a/fs-umi.ac.ma/meknes_gis-users/

Global SDI News

Partnership Agreement between JICA with JAXA signed

In April 2014, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a partnership agreement with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) with the objective is to promote collaboration between two institutions to contribute to solving various development challenges that developing countries are facing. The two institutions will also work on global issues using aerospace technology by further strengthening ties and exhibiting combined abilities to utilizing respective unique features and human resources.

JICA and JAXA have been establishing a cooperative relationship through the utilization of satellite data for protecting forests and preventing illegal deforestation in the Amazon, as well as topographic mapping with satellite data in South East Asia and Africa, and collaboration with the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers.

Based on the agreement, JICA and JAXA will be able not only to apply JAXA's aerospace technology and research results to socioeconomic developments in developing countries, but also to expand the collaborative areas further to activities of Japan Disaster Relief team and to the agricultural sector. JAXA will also be able to utilize experience with JICA for new space technology development. Thus, JICA and JAXA will further contribute to tackling global challenges with each institution's expertise. The following are the major contents of the agreement.

1. Application of JAXA's aerospace technology and related equipment to JICA's activities for solving development challenges in developing countries and global issues.
2. Cooperation in developing countries for holding seminars, symposiums or other relevant events aimed at promoting aerospace technology, for developing human resources, and for organizing lectures at international conferences.
3. Cooperation in facilitating wide use of space-related systems such as ground network systems in developing countries.
4. Exchanges of information and views for identifying possible collaboration.

Source: http://www.jica.go.jp/english/mobile/news/press/2014/140423_02.html

GBIF Secretariat consults on data licensing
Deadline: **14 June 2014**

The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Secretariat is seeking views on a proposed new approach to the licensing of biodiversity data published through the network. The aim is to further GBIF's mission to promote free and open access to biodiversity data, with as few restrictions on use as possible while establishing clear norms agreed by the community on issues such as attribution and citation of data, as well as respecting the publishers' wishes on the question of commercial use.

This request for feedback follows an earlier consultation last year on options for standard licensing arrangements for datasets published through GBIF, which are currently covered by a wide variety different terms and conditions specified by data publishers.

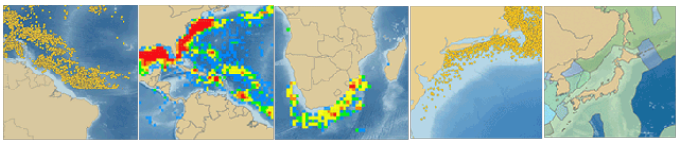
Views are sought from GBIF Participants, nodes, data publishers and data users. Details of the consultation and how to respond can be found online at http://www.gbif.org/newsroom/consultations#licensing.
Source: http://www.gbif.org/page/3080

Guidelines for Open Data Policies, Sunlight Foundation (Version 3, March 2014)

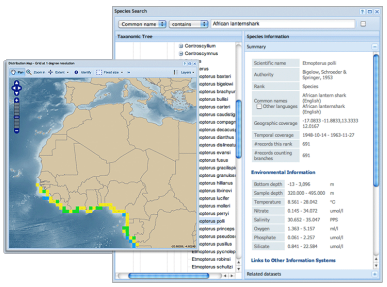
The Sunlight Foundation created this living set of open data guidelines to address: what data should be public, how to make data public, and how to implement policy. The provisions are not ranked in order of priority and do not address every question one should consider when preparing a policy, but are a guide to answer the question of what an open data policy can and should do in striving to create a government data ecosystem where open data is the default. Setting the default to open means that the government and parties acting on its behalf will make public information available proactively and they will put that information within reach of the public (online), without barriers for its reuse and consumption. Setting the default to open is about living up to the potential of our information, about looking at comprehensive information management and making determinations that fall in the public interest. Access Open Data Guidelines v.3 at:
http://assets.sunlightfoundation.com/policy/Open%20Data%20Policy%20Guidelines/OpenDataGuidelines_v3.pdf

Source: http://sunlightfoundation.com/opendataguidelines/

First Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS) Nodes technical training course held



Participants were made familiar with the OBIS data management practices, such as data-, meta- and taxonomic standards, quality control tools, and data transfer protocols. During the hands-on session, the participants formatted, quality controlled and uploaded 10 new datasets to the server. Sessions also were organized that included an introduction and discussion on our process to improve current OBIS practices, such as moving to ratified Darwin Core, data scheme enhancements, controlled vocabularies, and potential future data flows. There were 17 participants from 13 countries. The group was a mixture of data managers from existing, new and candidate OBIS nodes.Find all training material at the IODE's Ocean Teacher platform:
http://classroom.oceanteacher.org/course/view.php?id=178



Source: http://www.iobis.org/node/496

iMarine: sharing data to achieve sustainable global marine management

The sustainable management of this marine environment is a critical economic as well as environmental issue, and to be truly effective, international cooperation is required. For this reason, the EU-funded IMARINE project (http://www.i-marine.eu/Pages/Home.aspx), which was completed in April 2014, has developed data infrastructure specifically designed to encourage cross-border and cross-sectoral collaboration in this field. Specialists from 17 countries gathered in Rome in March 2014 to mark the imminent completion of the project, and to examine new funding opportunities under the EU's Horizon 2020 programme. Addressing global societal challenges is one of the three pillars of Horizon 2020, which is something that IMARINE has successfully addressed.

The IMARINE infrastructure works by providing an open access platform to relevant marine information and resources. This can be accessed quickly and effectively by numerous marine stakeholders such scientists, the fishing industry and environmental groups. Indeed, a key challenge that emerged from early IMARINE workshops was the need for greater global efforts - especially in fishing - to share information at the international level. Seamless access to data should lead to quicker, more informed decision making.

By interconnecting all these concerned sectors, the ultimate goal of IMARINE is to encourage what is known as an ecosystem approach to the marine environment. This approach aims to ensure that, despite variability, uncertainty and likely natural changes within the ecosystem, the capacity to produce food, revenue and employment is maintained for the benefit of both present and future generations. This will only be achieved through global collaboration among different parties, and the IMARINE data infrastructure is designed to facilitate this.

The IMARINE Board - made up of policy makers, industry experts and scientists - has also contributed to the promotion of an ecosystem approach through sharing examples of best practice, helping to define global standards and offering advice on sustainable policies. Board Members have also been instrumental in establishing several new collaborations, by building on the possibilities presented by IMARINE's operational data infrastructure.

The gateway is a key feature of this infrastructure. This provides users with online access to a number of Virtual Research Environments, which bring together experts, multidisciplinary data sources and analysis on a particular issue. Within these research environments, users can find everything they need to complete a particular task.

IMARINE promises to have a lasting impact on the way we address sustainable marine management in the future. This

will have direct and indirect benefits on the future of our planet, from climate change mitigation and marine biodiversity loss to disaster risk reduction.

Source: http://phys.org/news/2014-05-sustainable-global-marine.html#jCp

See also: iMarine Gateway https://i-marine.d4science.org/web/guest
iMarine Catalog http://www.i-marine.eu/Pages/ShowContent.aspx?id=825cc631-fb69-4125-a794-bc1ca43499df
"iMarine data platform for collaborations" workshop report http://uripreview.i-marine.eu/be0c89a7-6eca-4ae1-ac87-9a52d8800641.pdf

GLUES geoportal

This portal provides access to the GLUES Geodata Infrastructure. The infrastructure is the common data and service platform for the international research program 'Sustainable Land Management'. The provided data pool can be freely used within the program but also by other interested scientists or stakeholders (please have a look at the conditions of use of the data you are interested in). Researchers of the Sustainable Land Management projects can use the Geodata Infrastructure to disseminate and share their project results [see GLUES GDI Factsheet, http://geoportal.glues.geo.tu-dresden.de/geoportal/documents/Fact_Sheet_GLUES_GDI.pdf]. These are some of the themes the GLUES Geodata Infrastructure provides data for: Land use, climate change, economic change, water resources and use, biodiversity and ecosystem services

Source: http://geoportal.glues.geo.tu-dresden.de/geoportal/index.php

Geo-enrichment and semantic enhancement of metadata sets to augment discovery in geoportals

Author(s): Bernhard Vockner and Manfred Mittlböck
ISPRS Int. J. Geo-Inf. 2014, 3(1), 345-367

Abstract: Geoportals are established to function as main gateways to find, evaluate, and start "using" geographic information. Still, current geoportal implementations face problems in optimizing the discovery process due to semantic heterogeneity issues, which leads to low recall and low precision in performing text-based searches. Therefore, we propose an enhanced semantic discovery approach that supports multilingualism and information domain context. Thus, we present workflow that enriches existing structured metadata with synonyms, toponyms, and translated terms derived from user-defined keywords based on multilingual thesauri and ontologies. To make the results easier and understandable, we also provide automated translation capabilities for the resource metadata to support the user in conceiving the thematic content of the descriptive metadata, even if it has been documented using a language the user is not familiar with. In addition, to text-enable spatial filtering capabilities, we add additional location name keywords to metadata sets. These are based on the existing bounding box and shall tweak discovery scores when performing single text line queries. In order to improve the user's search experience, we tailor faceted search strategies presenting an enhanced query interface for geo-metadata discovery that are transparently leveraging the underlying thesauri and ontologies.

Keywords: synonym; translation; SKOS; thesaurus; ontology; Wiktionary; geoplatform; catalogue; SDI

Source: http://www.mdpi.com/2220-9964/3/1/345/htm

Why is data sharing in collaborative natural resource efforts so hard and what can we do to improve it?

Author(s): Carol J. Volk, Yasmin Lucero, Katie Barnas
Environmental Management, May 2014, Volume 53, Issue 5, pp 883-893 [not an open access journal]

Abstract: Increasingly, research and management in natural resource science rely on very large datasets compiled from multiple sources. While it is generally good to have more data, utilizing large, complex datasets has introduced challenges in data sharing, especially for collaborating researchers in disparate locations ("distributed research teams"). We surveyed natural resource scientists about common data-sharing problems. The major issues identified by our survey respondents (n = 118) when providing data were lack of clarity in the data request (including format of data requested). When receiving data, survey respondents reported various insufficiencies in documentation describing the data (e.g., no data collection description/no protocol, data aggregated, or summarized without explanation). Since metadata, or "information about the data," is a central obstacle in efficient data handling, we suggest documenting metadata through data dictionaries, protocols, read-me files, explicit null value documentation, and process metadata as essential to any large-scale research program. We advocate for all researchers, but especially those involved in distributed teams to alleviate these problems with the use of several readily available communication strategies

including the use of organizational charts to define roles, data flow diagrams to outline procedures and timelines, and data update cycles to guide data-handling expectations. In particular, we argue that distributed research teams magnify data-sharing challenges making data management training even more crucial for natural resource scientists. If natural resource scientists fail to overcome communication and metadata documentation issues, then negative data-sharing experiences will likely continue to undermine the success of many large-scale collaborative projects.

Keywords: Natural resource management, Metadata, Data sharing, Data flow diagrams, Distributed teams, Data transfer

Source: http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00267-014-0258-2

Geospatial data quality: the content maturity model

Author(s): John W. Strebeck, Emery T. Wilson, Thomas F. Creel, Walter L. Lister, Paul X. Callahan
ASPRS 2014 Annual Conference Proceedings, Louisville, Kentucky, USA, March 23-28, 2014

Abstract: NGA is building a Content Maturity Model (CMM) to rate geospatial-intelligence (GEOINT) products, services and data. The CMM concept enables consumers of content to understand its quality and suitability for their mission, and also to have a conduit by which to provide feedback to NGA. The consumer rating capability will improve the feedback mechanism between consumers and producers of content, enabling NGA to provide rapid quality improvements and, subsequently, consumer application corrections. This initiative supports the NGA Strategic Objective on Content by creating and proliferating GEOINT content which is imperative to consumer requirements. CMM data quality components will be searchable, discoverable and provide indicators for consumers which informs them whether or not they are in possession of the best data available. The CMM also supports the Agency's transformation from a product-focused model to a data-focused provisioning solution. In this new data-centric environment, consumers will be serving or linking to many sources of GEOINT and a mechanism to receive and provide quality feedback will be critical. Consumers require indicators of data quality. The CMM is the means to benchmark geospatial data quality for consumer analysis as well as the data's own evolution.

Keywords: data quality, data rating, metadata, quality metrics, NGA

Source: http://www.asprs.org/a/publications/proceedings/Louisville2014/Strebeck.pdf

A Review of Roads Data Development Methodologies

Author(s): Taro Ubukawa, Alex de Sherbinin, Harlan Onsrud, Andy Nelson, Karen Payne, Olivier Cottray, Mikel Maron
Data Science Journal, Advance Publication, Released 2014/05/15

Abstract: There is a clear need for a public domain data set of road networks with high special accuracy and global coverage for a range of applications. The Global Roads Open Access Data Set (gROADS), version 1, is a first step in that direction. gROADS relies on data from a wide range of sources and was developed using a range of methods. Traditionally, map development was highly centralized and controlled by government agencies due to the high cost or required expertise and technology. In the past decade, however, high resolution satellite imagery and global positioning system (GPS) technologies have come into wide use, and there has been significant innovation in web services, such that a number of new methods to develop geospatial information have emerged, including automated and semi-automated road extraction from satellite/aerial imagery and crowdsourcing. In this paper we review the data sources, methods, and pros and cons of a range of road data development methods: heads-up digitizing, automated/semi-automated extraction from remote sensing imagery, GPS technology, crowdsourcing, and compiling existing data sets. We also consider the implications for each method in the production of open data.

Source: https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/dsj/advpub/0/advpub_14-001/_article
Access PDF: https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/dsj/advpub/0/advpub_14-001/_pdf

Understanding the Gap between the United Nations World Food Programme Crisis Mapping Operations and Crowdsourcing Technology

Author(s): Sophie E. Richards and Bert Veenendaal
In: S. Winter and C. Rizos (Eds.): Research@Locate'14, Canberra, Australia, 07-09 April 2014

Abstract: There is increasing pressure from the crisis mapping community for United Nations agencies to adopt crowdsourcing technology as part of existing United Nations crisis mapping, emergency response operations. Whilst United Nations agencies such as the World Food Programme are in support of crowdsourcing initiatives, it is imperative that the technology be assessed before it can be adopted as part of the existing crisis mapping operations. It is frequently

argued in theoretical scientific papers that during a crisis situation, the limitations associated with crowdsourcing technology are outweighed by the benefits of its use. However, it can also be argued that in crisis mapping operations, crowdsourcing technology is not of sufficient maturity at present to provide adequate benefits. To understand the capability of crowdsourcing technology for crisis mapping, this was tested by evaluating a number of existing crowdsourced applications. Results of this research indicate that crowdsourcing technology is in its infancy and current applications do not meet the expectations required by the World Food Programmes' crisis mapping operations.

Source: http://ceur-ws.org/Vol-1142/paper5.pdf

Call for Papers: JeDEM Special Issue on Open Government Data and Open Policies

Submission deadline: **30 July 2014**

In efforts to increase openness, transparency and participation, governments around the world have drafted Open Government policies and established Open Data as an integral part of modern administration. Open data and public sector information has been held out as a powerful resource to support good governance, improve public services, engage citizens, and stimulate economic growth. The promises have been high, but the results have been modest so far and more and there are more and more critical sounds. Policies have not resulted in gaining the desired benefits and implementations have been criticized for its technology orientation and neglecting the user perspective. These policies and implementations are now under scrutiny, with important questions to be asked about: whether the results justify the efforts; about how different outcomes from open data can be secured; and who is benefiting from open data in different countries and contexts? JeDEM Journal for eDemocracy is inviting submissions for a special issue dedicated to these questions.

Source: http://www.opendataimpacts.net/2014/04/call-for-papers-jedem-special-issue-on-open-government-data-and-open-policies/

New Global Forest Watch (GFW) Small Grants Fund to help civil society groups combat deforestation

With the launch of Global Forest Watch (GFW), anyone with an internet connection can now access troves of timely, high-quality information about where, when, and why forests are changing worldwide. The free, online monitoring system provides the open data and transparency necessary to improve forest management and enhance the livelihoods of forest-dependent peoples. However, information alone cannot lead to real-world change—it takes the work of communities, organizations, and other stakeholders to turn this data in action. Now that we can see where trees are being lost, what can be done to slow or stop harmful forest destruction? How can we empower communities affected by poor forest management to use GFW to protect natural resources?

Enter the Global Forest Watch Small Grants Fund. The Fund aims to support civil society organizations around the world to use the GFW platform in innovative and impactful ways. The Fund offers local organizations from around the world the chance to improve forest management in their own communities. The Small Grants Fund seeks applications within the following categories to help meet our goal of improving forest management and enhancing local livelihoods:

- Projects that support forest-dependent communities, grassroots organizations, and other local stakeholders to access, comprehend, and apply information in the GFW platform in ways that positively impact people's lives;
- Projects that use information in the GFW platform to conduct research or carry out advocacy to improve forest governance and law enforcement (e.g., through changes in laws, institutions, and/or practices);
- Projects that provide new information to or validate existing information on GFW (e.g., creation of a new data layer, validating areas of tree cover loss); and
- Other innovative projects that use GFW to empower civil society to better manage forests and sustain or mobilize local communities.

The Small Grants Fund supports projects ranging from 10,000 USD to 40,000 USD, with a completion date of no later than December 31, 2014. The Small Grants Fund is intended for registered non-profit, civil society organizations with full-time, paid staff. The fund is not intended for large, international NGOs or any for-profit establishments or government agencies. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, from March 10, 2014 and ending on **June 30, 2014**. Organizations are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

Source: http://www.wri.org/blog/new-small-grants-fund-can-help-civil-society-groups-combat-deforestation

GSDI ONLINE CALENDAR

GSDI's calendar of upcoming international events at http://www.gsdi.org/upcnf is a unique summary of global and regional conferences, symposiums, workshops, and other related gatherings that pertain to spatial data infrastructure, such as spatial data handling, data visualization, open data policy, research cyber infrastructure, and RS/GIS applications. GSDI is always on the lookout to include appropriate events, so if you know about one which is not already included, feel free to submit it.

GSDI DISCUSSION FORUMS

To see the latest news from the e-mail Forums maintained by the GSDI Committees and the regional SDI news, visit the website 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. You do not have to be a member of the GSDI Association in order to join a Forum.

Our Vision … is of a world where everyone can readily discover, access and apply geographic information to improve their daily lives.

Our Purpose … is to encourage international cooperation that stimulates the implementation and development of national, regional and local spatial data infrastructures.

Our Mission … is to advance geo-information best practices, knowledge sharing and capacity building for the improved sharing and application of geographic information.

For more information, visit the GSDI Association website at http://www.gsdi.org

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"Advancing a Location Enabled World"