

NEWSLETTER GLOBAL MAPPING 9

THE CONNECTED EARTH

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Pollution knows no national boundaries. El Nino and other physical phenomena affect many countries, some directly, some indirectly; as a result, families lose their homes and individuals lose their employment. Government policies and practice in some countries encourage mass emigration and affect other, adjacent countries. Commerce, especially the movements of capital, is global and affects what individual governments can do. Firms like Microsoft become *de facto* monopolies. For these and many other reasons, we are living in an age of the connected earth, an age when what each of us does may have an effect on many other people.

Yet our tools for predicting the effects of our actions or the out-turn of natural phenomena are primitive. Most important of all, there is a huge problem with the state of our knowledge about the earth and its component systems. The most basic information we have is typically out-of-date, in a form unsuitable for ready use, locked up in someone else's warehouse, classified inappropriately, unreliable or inconsistent over the area of interest. Nowhere is this more true than in the area of mapping for only about half the world has been mapped at 1:50,000 scale - useless for planning cities, where the



bulk of the world's population will live in years to come. At the global scale, the few consistent maps which cover the whole earth are very unsatisfactory in many respects. Even where mapping does exist, it is often 30 years old and sometimes dates from a colonial period.

There *is* real value in seeking to produce consistent, up-to-date and reliable core information - especially but not only mapping - for the earth a whole. This has been recognised by many organisations from the UN to not-for-profit lobby groups. To do it however is much more difficult than talking about it. Who will pay for something which is more than national? How can we co-ordinate efforts so the end result is more than the sum of the parts? How much detail is needed for most applications? How

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good does the result have to be (and thus how expensive will it be)? How should it be made available? Should anyone own it? How will it be kept up-to-date (for results from 'one off' projects are rarely of long term value)?

The Global Map project, the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) programme and other schemes now being discussed are brave adventures. They move us away from the known world of national projects into a more difficult world where effective collaboration is

required between peoples of different cultures, experiences, interests and wealth. It is impossible to be certain what can and will be achieved - but that is no reason to stop. We are only going to be able to anticipate natural or man-made problems, regulate industries and develop many poor countries if we take a global perspective. For this, we need consistent, reliable and good-quality geographical information so I wish all those involved in the Global Map and GSDI every possible success!

Global Mapping Forum '98 to be held at EROS Data Center



The Global Mapping Forum '98 - Information for the 21st Century- (tentative name) will be held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, USA, hosted by the US Geological Survey, EROS Data Center, for four days from June 15th this year. This is the second forum following the Global Mapping Forum '97 in Gifu which was ended with a success in November 1997.

Global Mapping forum was recommended in the statement of Interregional Seminar on Global Mapping for the Implementation of

Multinational Environmental Agreements held in Santa Barbara, USA in November 1996 to bring data users and providers together to exchange views and information.

In this Forum, issues which are important in the Global Mapping development and application, such as sustainable development, environmental monitoring, assessment and management, and data needs for regional and global modeling will be discussed. We will address the experts of data users and providers to take part in and give presentations on these issues.

The Fourth Meeting of International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM) will be held on the last day.

For more information concerning the venue, the program and the registration, please check the ISCGM homepage (URL <http://www1.gsi-mc.go.jp/iscgm-sec/>) or contact ISCGM Secretariat.

The 4th Meeting of the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure For Asia and the Pacific was held in Tehran

The 4th Meeting of the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific was held at Tehran, Iran, from 28 February to 4 March, participated by 72 delegates from 15 countries in the Asia and the Pacific region and 5 advisors from European organizations including EUROGI, CERCO and MEGRIN.

This Permanent Committee, established in 1995 pursuant to the resolution of the 13th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific held in 1994, aims to maximize the economic, social and environmental benefits of geographic information by consulting and sharing experiences on matters



related to development of regional geographic information infrastructure.

Through the Meeting, future programs, structure of the Committee's activities and relationship to other related initiatives, e.g. Global Mapping, EUROGI, CERCO/MEGRIN, GSDI and ISO/211, of the Permanent Committee were focused. In this context, Mr. Nonomura, Director General of GSI Japan, reported the recent activities of ISCGM.

Finally, the Meeting adopted seven resolutions including;

- Resolution 1: the Meeting recommends the following structure be implemented with key projects and tasks as listed;

- 1) Executive/Secretariat
- finalize, approve and publish the APSDI (Asia and the Pacific Spatial Data Infra-

structure) framework document

- 2) Working Group 1: Regional Geodetic Network

- implement a regional precise geodetic network, etc.

- 3) Working Group 2: Regional Fundamental Data

- define and integrate regional fundamental datasets, etc.

- 4) Taskforce: Development Needs

- identify member's NSDI development needs, etc;

- Resolution 3: the Meeting recommends that member countries consider adopting the following principles;

- 1) Availability: member countries shall produce and maintain their component of the regional fundamental data, in conjunction with development of their national spatial data infrastructures;

- 2) Access: regional fundamental data produced by member countries shall be made available to other member countries in a manner that facilitates their use in regional economic, social and environmental applications;

Next Meeting of the Permanent Committee will be held on 19 - 23 April 1999 in Beijing.

GSI Presented Global Mapping at COP3-UNFCCC

International cooperation with all nations and international organizations was needed to combat against global warming, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted in 1992. The 3rd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP3-UNFCCC) was held at Kyoto International Conference Hall, Japan, 1 - 10 December 1997.

The Geographical Survey Institute of Japan (GSI) practiced the publicity activities of the Global Mapping concept at the COP3-UNFCCC and related events. At the Japanese Government's booth in the Conference Hall, GSI ex-

hibited panels and demonstrated the prototype data of the Global Map on PC, showing an example on the use of Global Map with reference to global warming. Many participants of the Conference took much interest in the simulation of sea level rise by global warming and map of forest distribution on the Eurasian Continent.

Global Environment Fair '97, one of the COP3-UNFCCC related events intended for the general citizens, was held in Kobe, 27 - 30 November 1997. GSI also displayed some panels and demonstrated the Global Mapping concept and some kind of simulations on PC. A lot of people stopped and watched the panels of

Global Mapping, in particular, many students and teachers of junior high schools were inter-

ested in PC simulations.

GSI Japan Starts Data Development of the Global Map in Asian Region

National budget of Japan for the fiscal year 1998, which is now under deliberation in the National Diet, contains budget for producing Global Map data in parts of Asia for the first time.

The Geographical Survey Institute has made efforts eagerly to promote the Global Mapping through organizing international meetings such as Global Mapping Forum, taking charge of secretariat of the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping, developing technologies related to Global Map development and data provision, making sample data for the discussion of the specifications and for showing usefulness of Global Map data, and so on. According to the draft action program of Global Mapping adopted at the Third Meeting of ISCGM, it is anticipated that such countries as those participating in the ISCGM will make

Global Map data not only of their own countries but also of other countries using source data provided by each country. In financial aspect, the action program seeks several kinds of resources, such as government budget, aid from donor agencies, and cooperation with private sectors and academia. In order to complete the first version Global Map data by the target year of 2000, data development activities should be started as soon as possible. With these recognition, GSI requested budget for data development of Asian region.

GSI will start data development in Asia after approval of this budget by the Japanese Diet. It is expected that this will prompt data development of other areas. GSI looks forward to many countries' active participation in and contribution to the Global Mapping project.

Movement of Cartographic Program in the UN

Due to the structural reform in the UN, cartographic program has been transferred to Division of Statistics headed by Director, Mr. Hermann Habermann.

Ms. Labonne, Director, Department for Economic and Social Affairs is now in the position to assist Mr. Desai, Un-

der-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs. Her contribution to the promotion of the Global Mapping is highly appreciated.

The development of the Global Mapping is expected in strengthened relationship between the UN and ISCGM.

Global Map and Related Meetings

Followings are Global Map and related meetings.

1998

- **8-11 June, Ottawa, Canada**
10th International Geomatics Conference on Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDI'98)
<http://www.ccrs.nrcan.gc.ca/sdi98/>
- **15-18 June, Sioux Falls, SD, USA**
Global Mapping Forum & 4th ISCGM
- **24-25 September, Beijing, China**
7th Plenary Meeting of ISO/TC211

Meetings with "?" mark have not been fixed yet.

- **16-18 November, Canberra, Australia**
3rd GSDI hosted by PCGIAP
ISCGM?

1999

- **Summer, Cambridge, UK**
4th GSDI & ISCGM?
- **September/October, Washington D.C., USA**
Mapping in the New Millennium? hosted by National Geographic Society