

# NEWSLETTER

GLOBAL MAPPING

7

## *Challenges of Global Mapping Forum*

Dr. Hideki Kaji

Director

United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)

It is a great pleasure for the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) to co-organize the "Global Mapping Forum" which will be held at Gifu Prefectural Library on 12-14 November, 1997, in collaboration with the Geographical Survey Institute, Ministry of Construction, Japan.

Since its establishment in 1971, UNCRD has been making every effort to enhance the capabilities of governmental officials in developing countries who are involved in regional development, through organizing training courses for human resource development and conducting cooperative research activities for problem identification and policy recommendations.

Unfortunately, however, the scarcity of data is always one of the biggest obstacles in formulating an appropriate regional development plan in developing countries. Lack of accurate regional maps is a critical and essential problem among them. Sometimes regional maps are regarded as a strategic tool for the country's defense purposes and thus dealt as secret documents. Such an idea has totally become a nonsense in recent years when remote sensing technology can provide very accurate global surface picture with 10 by 10 metre

*Dr. Hideki Kaji*

resolution. Nevertheless, a proper map is often not available in developing countries, simply because they cannot afford to produce one due to high cost. In fact, huge amount of time and money is required to produce a base map when a foreign development aid programme carries out such a map-making project in developing countries.

In this respect, the idea of Global Mapping initiated by the Geographical Survey Institute, Ministry of Construction, Japan is very much appreciated as an excellent contribution to the world, particularly in developing countries. After the cease of the cold war, the world society has been accelerating to build so-called 'borderless'

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*for Global Mapping (ISCGM)*

*Geographical Survey Institute (GSI), Ministry of Construction of Japan*

*Kitasato, Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki-ken, 305 Japan*

*Phone: +81-298-64-6910*

*home page : <http://www1.gsi-mc.go.jp/iscgm-sec/index.html>*

*Fax : +81-298-64-1804      E-mail : [iscgmsec@graph.gsi-mc.go.jp](mailto:iscgmsec@graph.gsi-mc.go.jp)*

relationships, in terms of not only international economies and trade, but also environmental interventions. In the future, it is likely that problems in one country may not be solved by the efforts of the country itself, but by collaboration with its neighboring countries or rather by cooperation among the world society as a whole. Considering these future changes in the global society, the impacts of Global Mapping scheme would be easily acknowledged.

As an institution which specializes regional development of developing countries and a user which applies global mapping data to its programmes, UNCRD has a very keen interest in co-organizing this important meeting of "Global Mapping Forum," and looks forward to see what comes out of its deliberations as valuable contributions to the coming age.

### Global Mapping Forum '97 in GIFU

It remains less than 50 days before Global Mapping Forum '97 in Gifu, which will be held from 12 to 14 at Gifu Prefectural Library. Skeleton of the Program has now appeared as follows.

On the first day of the Forum papers from the side of Global Map users will be presented. From 3:30 on that day, special session is scheduled in which a senior official of the United Nations, Vice-Minister of Construction for Engineering Affairs, Vice-Governor of Gifu Prefecture and President of Central Environmental Council will make presentations on the theme "Geographic Information for Decision Making."

On the second day, participants from producers' side will make presentations, such as present status of National and Regional Spatial Data Infrastructure, links to Global Mapping Project, and

those directly related to the Development of the Global Map. These presentations and discussions that followed are expected to be important inputs to the third meeting of the ISCGM where specifications of the Global Map and strategic plan for its development are planned to be finalized.

As for registration, many persons from various countries have already expressed their intention of participating in the Forum, including Australia, Canada, China, Ghana, Finland, Iran, Malaysia, Niger, Russia, Uganda, U.S. and Japan.

Final circular and preliminary program of the Forum will be sent to the registered persons in the middle of October. See you in the Forum, in beautiful autumn color.

For more information, please contact the secretariat of the Forum, which is practically same as that of ISCGM.

### Global Mapping at the Earth Summit +5 and toward the +10

The nineteenth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, called Earth Summit +5 was successfully held in UN Headquarters, NY from 23-27, June, 1997. Delegates from 58 countries participated in the Earth Summit +5.

Nineteen documents were submitted to the Earth Summit +5 and the Executive Summary of the

Global Mapping Seminar, jointly submitted by Japan and the USA, was also circulated as one of these documents (as previously reported in Global Mapping News Letter No.6.)

Global Mapping related items were accepted to include in the final document of the Earth Summit +5, "Programme for the further implementation of Agenda 21" as follows.

### Section C. Implementation in areas requiring urgent action

#### 3. Means of implementation

##### Paragraph 112.

A supportive environment needs to be established to enhance national capacities and capabilities for information collection, processing and dissemination, especially in developing countries, to facilitate public access to information on global environmental issues through appropriate means including high-tech information and communication infrastructure related to the global environment, in the light of country-specific conditions, using, where available, such tools as geographic information systems and video transmission technology, including *global mapping*. In this regard, international cooperation is essential.

To make an important contribution to the implementation of the Agenda 21 by the National Mapping Organizations, it is important to develop Phase One of the Global Map by the year 2000

with the support of this "Programme."

You can download the whole documents of Executive Summary and Programme from the UN's gopher-site shown below.

<gopher://gopher.un.org:70/00/ga/docs/S-19/plenary/ES5.TXT>

<gopher://gopher.un.org/11/ga/docs/S-19/plenary>



*the opening meeting of the Earth Summit+5*

## Drafting of Global Map Technical Specifications is Ongoing

Global Map Technical Specifications (Draft) are now under final discussion among secretaries of ISCGM to be presented in the Global Mapping Forum which will be held in this November. We hope that they would be discussed actively via internet between the members of the technical working group of ISCGM when this edition of newsletter is published. At this stage, we, secretaries of ISCGM, are now drafting these specifications paying attention to the following points.

1. To make the specifications as simple as possible.
2. To use existing technical standards and make

the specifications consistent with them as much as possible.

3. To make the specifications consistent with existing standards as much as possible.
4. To take only common features into the specifications.

The Global Map consists of following six themes, which are divided into nine layers.

1. Elevation
2. Land use
3. Vegetation
- 4-1 Drainage system (Rivers)
- 4-2 Drainage system (Lakes)

- 5-1 Transportation (General roads)
- 5-2 Transportation (Highways)
- 5-3 Transportation (Railways)
- 6 Administrative area

Three layers from 1 to 3 in the above are described in raster form. The rest of layers are described in vector form. The contents of the specifications are as follows.

1. Common specifications for data described in

both vector form and raster form

2. Specifications for data described in vector form
3. Specifications for data described in raster form
4. Contents of data
5. Specification for metadata

We continue working to make this draft technical specifications better through the discussion in the working group and presentation in the Forum to finalize in the third meeting of ISCGM.

### A Report of the Training Course of Global Mapping

*A training course of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) "The group training course for Global Mapping (Environment)" was held in GSI from 26 May to 8 August, 1997 with 5 participants who came from Bangladesh, China, Malaysia, Philippines and Tanzania.*

*The purpose of this course was to give the participants an opportunity to have better understanding of Global Mapping Concept through lectures related to remote sensing technology and geographic information system, task study for the accuracy estimation between existing Digital Elevation Model and translated value from contour line on topographic maps, and so on.*

*The following article on this issue is contributed by Mr. Hasshim bin Baruddin, a participant from Malaysia of this course.*

The Global Mapping (Environment ) Course conducted by Geographical Survey institute (GSI), Japan is one of the most interesting course which I have attended. It was designed to provide information and knowledge about Global Mapping for environmental purposes. It also provides an environmental awareness about the current global issues to the course participants, such as global warming, depletion of ozone layer and emission of green house gasses, etc. Although ten weeks duration can be considered as short, it was very informative, useful and meaningful to all participants.

The course was well organised with a series of lectures, study visits to relevant organisations and field observations. Lecture topics have been carefully selected relating to mapping and environment disciplines. Lecturers were invited from several local universities, research institutes

and GSI itself. Some of the invited lecturers are experts in environmental studies. During study visits, participants were presented with first hand information and current status of environmental problems by the experts and researchers. Field observation to several places in Japan provides an environmental appreciation on how Japanese Government preserves their environment and natural resources.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate GSI for their effort and success in conducting the Global Mapping Course and hoping that the first Global Map can be visualised by the year 2000 for better environmental planning.

Hassim bin Baruddin  
Malaysian Participant  
Global Mapping (Environment) Course