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# GLOBAL MAPPING NEWSLETTER 3

## What is expected of Global Mapping

Dato' Abdul Majid bin Mohamed
Vice-Chairperson of ISCGM

As we enter the next millennium, there is a general high expectation, especially from the developing countries, that the beginning of the new century would also see a general improvement in their economic well being, health care and the dawning of a better future. This high expectation is not without its basis as several countries, especially those of the Pacific Rim, have recorded exceptionally high growth rates over the past decade. As countries make this crucial transition, the role of a properly managed planning and development infrastructure becomes all the more important. As opposed to countries of the developed world which have made this transition through an Industrial Revolution spanning several years as a significant period in their history, developing countries now has to do so in the shortest possible timeframe, or else be relegated to the economic backwaters of the relatively faster developing economies of their neighboring countries.

Information Technology is one of the more important tools to be used in a judicious manner to achieve this quantum leap. And a crucial building block for any IT to be used for development purposes, such as a national spatial planning infrastructure, is map information, be it cadastral, topographical or thematic.

These geographic data sets of known and verified quality would form critical components of any nation's efforts at realizing economic growth in a sustainable manner. Lately there are significant developments taking place in the Asia Pacific region pertaining to the development of some of these geographic data sets. At the inaugural United Nations Meeting On the Formation of Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific held in Kuala Lumpur in July 1995, an Executive Board was formed and tasked with overseeing the development of a regional geographic information infrastructure for the region. The next meeting of the Executive Board and Permanent Committee would be held in Sydney in early October 1996. The

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*Geographical Survey Institute (GSI), Ministry of Construction of Japan*
*Kitasato, Tsukuba-shi, Ibaraki-ken, 305 Japan*
*Phone : +81-298-64-6910 Fax : +81-298-64-1804*
*E-mail : iscgmsec@graph.gsi-mc.go.jp*

meeting of the Group of Experts on Cadastral Surveying, organized by the UN at Bogor in March 1996, also emphasized the importance of current cadastral data sets and the critical role of cadastral systems in underpinning an efficient land market crucial to a rapidly expanding economy. The initiative taken by the Geographical Survey Institute of Japan in establishing an International Steering Committee for Global Mapping at its First Meeting held on February 14, 1996 at Tsukuba City is therefore not only timely but is also of utmost importance in striving to meet its stated objectives of a better understanding of global environmental problems, mitigating natural disasters and realizing economic growth within the context of sustainable development. The GSI and the Government of Japan is to be commended for this initiative which is indeed timely and relevant to the needs of the regional and global community.

*(Director General,*
*Dept. of Survey and Mapping Malaysia )*

## A Request for Survey on Global Dataset

The ISCGM Secretariat is now carrying out a survey on extensive data sets or data set development projects with reference to the Global Map development. The objective of this survey is to develop an inventory of those data sets or projects which satisfy the conditions below.

1) Geographic Extent
- The extent of data set is global, continental or regional(multinational). Open policies are not concerned.
- The extent of data set is national. And it is in public domain, or open to the public and freely re-distributable.

2) Resolution or Spatial Accuracy
- In case of raster data, the resolution is 1 km or better, or 30 arc-second or finer. In case of vector data, the scale of source maps is 1:1,000,000 or larger, or data set's accuracy is equal to or better than that of 1:1,000,000 scale maps.

3) Data Item
- Elevation, Land Cover, Land Use, Transportation, Administrative Boundary,
- Drainage, Coastline, Soil, Demography.

The Secretariat would appreciate your information on data sets with above conditions, such as their Data set/Project Name, Data item, Outline (Organization, Extent and Plan), Rationale and Contact information (Person in charge, Address, Phone Number, Fax Number and E-mail Address), even a part of them by fax or e-mail. Based on your information, the ISCGM Secretariat will investigate them in detail. We would also appreciate your information about useful catalogues.

Following projects are excluded as we have surveyed/or are surveying them.
- EROS Data Center's 30 arc-second DEM Project and 1 km Global Land Cover Characteristic Database Project (Eros Data Center, USGS)
- CORINE (EC)
- AFRICOVER (FAO)
- DCW,WVS, DTED (US-DMA)
- GLOBE (NGDC, NOAA)
- US Geographic Data sets by US Federal Government (Basically all of them are in Public Domain)
- SOTER, Global Demography Project and Earthmap

E-mail Address: survey@graph.gsi-mc.go.jp
(for this survey only)

# Interregional Seminar on Global Mapping for the Implementation of Multinational Environmental Agreements in Santa Barbara, Caalifornia, USA, Nov. 13 ~ 16

Global Mapping, global geographic data set development concept, was initiated by the Ministry of Construction and the Geographical Survey Institute of Japan in 1992 to understand global environmental problems, mitigate natural disasters and realize economic growth within the context of sustainable development. Since then, it has been disseminated into respective countries and organizations in the world, and now a meeting organized by the United Nations is scheduled to be held in November this year.

As discussed during the First Meeting of the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM) held in Tsukuba, Japan last February, it is important for the Committee to endeavor further to get international recognition for the Global Mapping efforts as one of the positive activities toward addressing global concerns. One of the adopted resolution items of the First ISCGM Meeting also says, "given that the United Nations will hold a Special Session of the General Assembly in 1997 on the Follow-up to Agenda 21, the relationship between the Agenda 21 follow-up efforts and the activities of national mapping and related organizations in global data development should be well defined at the national level and reported to the Special Session".

In this context, Ms. Beatrice Labonne, Director of Division for Environment Management and Social Development (DEMSD) of Department for Development Support and Management Service (DDSMS) of the United Nations, also Advisor of ISCGM, recently proposed "Interregional Seminar on Global Mapping for the Implementation of Multinational Environmental Agreements" to be held at Santa Barbara, California, USA, on November 13 ~ 16 1996. Dr. John E. Estes, Professor of Geography Department of University of California, Santa Barbara, also the Chairperson of ISCGM, and the ISCGM Secretariat agreed to collaborate in holding the Seminar and have been preparing for it.

The objectives of the Seminar are: i) to promote the Global Mapping concept to both data producers in the mapping agencies and users in the developing countries as a means to better understanding and monitoring the environment; ii) to promote the Global Map as a tool for the implementation of Multinational Environmental Agreements; and iii) to improve communication and technical cooperation between the data producers and users to integrate the users's needs in the project. A survey result on inventory of existing global mapping efforts will be presented, and the need of better global mapping as well as the roles of national mapping and international organizations discussed during the Seminar. The outcome of these discussions will be integrated into "Santa Barbara Statement" and a draft report which could be included in the report of Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) for the Special Session of the General Assembly on Agenda 21.

Invitation letters of the Seminar will be sent from the United Nations to organizations such as United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, both developing and developed countries, experts on environmental and mapping sciences, and private enterprises as well as Members, Advisors and the Secretariat of ISCGM.

The Second Meeting of ISCGM is also scheduled in the afternoon of November 16, the last day of the Seminar. Following up the Seminar, this ISCGM Meeting will discuss and probably adopt the report of the

Seminar which will include documents on the best inventory of existing global mapping efforts, the need for better global mapping, and the roles of national mapping and international organizations for global mapping efforts. Discussions on a strategic plan for global mapping could also be one of the agenda items of the Meeting.

The ISCGM Secretariat is hoping that the Interregional Seminar and the Second Meeting of ISCGM will be an important milestone for the development of the Global Map.

## Proposal of a member change

Mr. W. J. Absaloms resigned from the Director of Surveys, Survey of Kenya, Ministry of Lands and Settlement, Kenya on June 30th and Mr. A. K. Njuki was inaugurated as Ag. Director of Surveys and nominated to Member of ISCGM.

Mr. Yoshio Warita, the member of ISCGM, retired from the Director General, Geographical Survey Institute (GSI), Ministry of Construction, Japan on July 2nd and Mr. Kunio Nonomura was appointed as the Director Genenral of the GSI. A replacement member, Mr. Kunio Nonomura was nominated by Mr. Warita and awaits approval by the Committee. He concurrently holds the post of the Secretary General of ISCGM.

## Personnel Training for Global Map Development

A training program of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) "The Group Training Course in Global Mapping (Environment)" was held in GSI from 17 June to 18 August 1996 with participants from seven countries. The program was designed to give the participants an opportunity to have better understanding of Global Mapping Concept through lectures, practices and discussions concerning geographic information system (GIS) applications and a technical project. They also learned about satellite remote sensing, GIS and other cutting-edge technologies of survey and mapping such as space geodetic technology and digital photogrammetry. As a technical project of the training program, accuracy verification of a global digital elevation model (DEM) data set developed by the US Geological Survey using the Digital Chart of the World (DCW) data was conducted by comparing it with elevation data digitized from the topographic maps which the participants brought from their respective countries.

The contents of the training program were well accepted in general by the participants, though they requested to have more time on practices. The difficulty of keeping up with the latest technologies of survey and mapping in developing countries, due to lack of information, also made them request to increase the number of lectures on the cutting-edge technologies.