

NEWSLETTER

GLOBAL MAPPING

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Global Map Development Favored in Asia & the Pacific Region

The fourteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific was held from February 3rd to 7th, 1997 at ESCAP Bldg., Bangkok, Thailand, with 159 participants from 30 nations and 3 international academic societies.

The Conference has been held every three years to promote each nation's mapping activities, exchange technical information and discuss international cooperation and economic and social development through preparing maps. In this Conference, participants addressed the common needs, problems and experiences in the fields of surveying and mapping, hydrography, remote sensing, GIS, etc.

At the opening, statement of Mr. Jin Yongjian, Under-Secretary General of the UN, was delivered, in which a reference was made to the Interregional Seminar on Global Mapping for the Implementation of Multinational Environmental Agreements, held in Santa Barbara in November 1996, and Santa Barbara Statement on Global Mapping for Implementation of Agenda 21.

At the end of the Conference, 20 resolutions were adopted focusing on technology transfer, harmonization and standardization of data sets, role and involvement of non-governmental organizations and other issues all related to facilitate the implementation of Agenda 21. The resolution on "Development of the Global Map," including the creation of Global Mapping Forum, the establishment of contact points and cooperation with the spatial data infrastructure of this region, is included in these 20 resolutions.



Inside the conference hall

at ESCAP Building, Bangkok

The conference

Resolution of The 14th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific on Development of the Global Map

Noting development of the Global Map realizes the concept of the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI),

Also noting the involvement of international groups of experts, such as the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM), is indispensable in developing the Global Map,

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Bearing in mind the integration of national and regional spatial data infrastructures to a global level facilitates the creation of the Global Map,

Recognizing the Global Map, a global group of geographic datasets of known and verified quality with consistent specifications, publicly available, and distributed at nominal cost, is vital for understanding global environmental problems, mitigating natural disasters, and realizing social improvement and economic growth within the context of sustainable development,

Also recognizing the development of the Global Map provides a significant contribution of surveying and mapping towards the implementation of Agenda 21,

Urges governments in the region to consider participating in the development of the Global Map with the assistance of the ISCGM, and the close cooperation of the

United Nations,

Recommends the creation of Global Mapping Forum of data providers and users to facilitate the development of the Global Map and a virtual forum of users via the Internet of other means of communication and interaction,

Also recommends establishing and maintaining points of contact within National Mapping Organizations (NMO) as the initial step in facilitating the creation of such forum,

Further recommends the strengthen of collaborative and cooperative efforts between Global Mapping and the those of various regional spatial data infrastructure, especially the Asia and the Pacific Spatial Data Infrastructure (APSDI) of the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific.

(Bangkok, February 3 - 7, 1997)

Resolution of the Second Meeting of ISCGM

The second Meeting of the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM) was held on November 16, 1996 just after Santa Barbara Seminar. The resolution of this meeting, which we could not put in last newsletter, was agreed as follows:

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The Second Meeting of the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (here-in-after referred to as "the Committee") convened following discussions at the Interregional Seminar on Global Mapping for the Implementation of Multinational Environmental Agreements. The Seminar was held during the period November 13-16, 1996 in Santa Barbara, California, USA. In addition to a series of

presentations, a major activity of the Seminar was the drafting and adoption of the Santa Barbara Statement (SBS). A principal topic before the Committee was a discussion of specific measures that national, regional and international organizations should take to implement SBS. The Committee met on the afternoon of November 16, 1996, immediately after the conclusion of the Seminar. Based on discussions by the participants at the meeting, the Committee resolves that:

- a) As participants at the Interregional Seminar on Global Mapping for the Implementation of Multinational Environmental Agreements, the Committee members present endorse

and adopt the SBS.

- b) The Committee Secretariat should develop a plan of action directed at the implementation of relevant recommendations contained in the SBS. As part of the development of this action plan participants recommended that several working groups be established. A variety of topics were discussed which the working groups would address and it was recommended that two working groups be established:

- (1) Working group on the development of strategic plan (Chair: Mr. Francois Faucher, Geomatics Canada). Topics to be addressed include:

- Specifications of Global Mapping;
- Prioritization of the Committee activities;
- Completion of Survey of Global Mapping Activities;
- Development of ways to promote Global Mapping;
- Designation of points of contact in National Mapping Organizations who are knowledgeable in the area of Global Mapping;
- Harmonization of procedures and activities associated with Global Mapping; and,
- Development of criteria for the Committee adoption/endorsement of future projects (e.g. AFRICOVER)

- (2) Working group on report to UN special session (Chair: Dr. K. Eric Anderson, USGS/NMD). Topics to be addressed include:

- Development and submission of the report embodying SBS to the UN;
- Design of a forum; and,
- Definition of a Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI), framework and links to global mapping.

Result of the discussions of, and actions taken by, the working groups should be

reported to the next Committee meeting.

Participants at the meeting felt that some of the activities of the working groups should be carried out within the context of the development of a strategic plan for the Committee. This strategic planning effort would be coordinated by the Secretariat. Strategic plan development was also a topic of discussion at the first meeting of the Committee. Committee members continued to feel that the development of such a plan is very important and needs to be addressed in an expeditious fashion. If at all possible a draft plan should be available before the next Committee meeting.

- c) National Mapping Organizations (NMOs) should take positive actions to get recognition for the concepts, principles and specific activities enunciated and called for in the SBS in their respective countries. This should be accomplished so that the relationship between the Agenda 21 follow-up efforts and the activities of National Mapping and related organizations associated with and involved in global data development can be well defined at the national level.
- d) The Committee endorses the concept of the AFRICOVER Pilot Study as presented by the representative of IGN.



Members of ISCGM after hard discussion

The Committee looks at this project as a mechanism for testing the GSDI concept. The Committee encourages development of a more detailed proposal and will follow progress on this proposed activity with great interest in the future. The Committee encourages the drafters of this proposal to work closely with other Committee members and African NMOs in the development of this effort. The Committee authorizes the Secretariat to draft a letter of endorsement for this concept.

- e) Recognizing the necessity of further working on items contained in the resolution of the First Meeting of the Committee, especially items b) through e) and g), the Secretariat, and national mapping and related organizations are encouraged to continue activities directed at implementing these items.

(Santa Barbara, November 16, 1996)

Global Mapping Forum will be Held in Late Autumn

GSI plans to hold Global Mapping Forum late in autumn in Japan bringing data users and providers together to integrate users' needs into the project and to seek various applications using Global Map.

This Forum is intended to materialize the recommendation adopted in Santa Barbara

Seminar and 14th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific.

On this forthcoming forum, detailed information will be available through the Internet and also in the next Newsletter.

Mini-Forum on Global Mapping was Held in Tsukuba (flash)

Land use/land cover datasets are an important part of the Global Map for understanding and monitoring global environmental problems, mitigating natural disasters and realizing economic growth within the context of sustainable development. And investigating the current status of global/regional data sets projects and discussing the feasibility of integrating these data sets into the Global Map are also indispensable to promote Global Mapping.

In this context Mini-Forum on Global Map organized by GSI was held at Tsukuba on 17-18 March.

The main objectives of this Forum are: i) to understand present status of land use dataset development projects; ii) to compare data making methods and data specification to harmonize existing data set with the

Global Map; and iii) to discuss specifications of land use/land cover data sets for the Global Map.

On the first day, about 70 participants attended the forum. Dr. Honda presented draft specifications of land use/land cover for the Global Map. Scientists from FAO for AFRICOVER project, from USGS for DISCOVER project, from EEA for CORINE project and from Chiba University for LCWG, AARS project presented and discussed the current status of these projects.

On the second day, discussion was held with the Secretariat. On the comparison and harmonization of classifications categories between different projects, and validity of draft specification of the Global Map land use/cover data set.