

GLOBAL MAPPING NewsLetter 2

Greeting from the Chairperson

John E. Estes, Chairperson



There is no lack of issues for which spatially accurate global data are required. Biodiversity, demography, deforestation, desertification, freshwater poverty all are important. Important too are: ecosystem health, human health, air quality, and other issues which must be addressed if we are to move toward economic growth within the context of sustainable development. A major factor, cur-

rently hindering research and applications oriented studies attempting to provide an improved understanding of these issues is that adequate maps do not exist for many areas of the world. Depending upon scale, thematic content, and timeliness, this is equally true for both the developed and the developing world. Many people find this truly hard to believe. Too often we assume that the map we require exists, contains the information we need, that the information is accurate and is right up-to-date. Users of such data seldom remind themselves that information is dated when it is collected, that no data collection program produces totally accurate data, and that maps resulting from such information can have limited utility for certain types of studies. Some mapped information is more perishable than others, e.g. continental outlines as opposed to forest clear-cutting. The value of data is many times related to its currency. Mapping is an important, complex, expensive, and time-consuming task that few nations are performing today in an acceptable fashion and where little is being done at a Global scale (i.e. 1:1,000,000 or 1: 1 kilometer). The myth

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that the world is "well mapped" is perpetuated in a variety of subtle ways: from the road maps we use, to the atlases we possess. Just because people can use road maps to guide them from one place to another does not mean that those maps will accurately depict how many acres of agriculturally active land one will pass through. Nor will a road map or an atlas typically provide information on timber volumes, or how fast urban areas are gaining or losing population. The myth is further perpetuated by the material we see and read in news media and scientific literature concerning the state of various parts of the Earth System: declining forests, expanding deserts, or the loss of soil productivity and biological diversity. We may know how many acres of tropical forest existed in say Brazil in 1980 -- but we really need to know, for planning and resource management purposes, is what the acreage of tropical forest is today. How much reliance can we place on any published figures? What are the current facts? The facts are: we often really do not know. Do we as individuals need geospatial information for the land surface and coastal zone areas of the world? Most of us might waffle on our own specific need for this kind of data / information, or may only need such data for specific areas of interest to us. Do nations need this kind of information? Most of us might say

yes. Do we have this kind of information? Most of us might say yes. The right answer is, we do not currently have the types of map data we require at either national or world scales with an accuracy and the timeliness necessary to support optimum use in environmental planning, resource management or in the public policy decision making process. Yet, decisions still get made, based often on inadequate, imperfect data. Results of such decisions can be seen all around us. It is my hope that Global Map will help to bring National Mapping Organizations together to improve the status of global mapping coverage. And further, Global Map will help to educate the geospatial data user community from: the public policy decision maker to the resource manager and environmental planner; and from workers in industry to research scientists to the general public, on the importance of maps. Maps that are critical for assessing our alternatives as we work towards a truly sustainable future. The Geographical Survey Institute, The Ministry of Construction and the Government of Japan are to be commended for initiating and hosting the Global Mapping Secretariat.

John E. Estes, Director of Remote Sensing Research Unit, Dept. of Geography, Univ. of California

Global Mapping Homepage opens

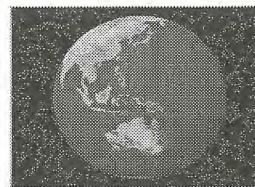
With our opening of the Homepage of the Global Mapping Secretariat on the Internet, you can access the most up-to-date information on Global Mapping. You will find the details of each index on the following pages. We would appreciate your comments on the Homepage very much.

Homepage address is;

<http://www1.gsi-mc.go.jp/iscgm-sec/>

GLOBAL MAPPING

Global-scale Geographical Digital DataSet
for
Environment



Shockwave movie (95KB)
(Need Shockwave plug-in)

- What is Global Mapping ?
- What is the ISCGM ?
- Digital GLOBE (interactive DEMO)

Information

We are searching for internet resources which open geographical or geological digital data. If you know or you have, please tell us homepage address and contents by e-mail.

This Home Page is maintained by Sec. of ISCGM (Secretariat of the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping) Please email: isrcgm@gsi-mc.go.jp
URL: <http://www1.gsi-mc.go.jp/iscgm-sec/index.html>
Last modified: 1 June 1996

Brief description of the Global Mapping homepage

The Global Mapping Homepage was set up on June 1, 1996 by the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM). The front page has an index to topics and a picture of the Earth. A click of the picture makes the earth image rotate.

The topics include "What is Global Mapping", "What is ISCGM" and links to other related Web sites.

The "What is Global Mapping ?" section briefly describes Global Mapping concept and its history together with recommendations and resolutions concerning Global Mapping

at international conferences.

The "What is the ISCGM ?" section includes the opening address of Dr. Estes, Chairperson of ISCGM at its first meeting in February, 1996 as well as information and activities of ISCGM and Global Mapping Newsletters.

Links to other related Web sites are still under construction. We hope to establish as many links as possible to related Web sites. If you have any information, please let us know. Your suggestions and comments would be a great resource for it.

Global Mapping Training Course Started

The Geographical Survey Institute of Japan (GSI) has been active in various kinds of international activities. For example, it provides technical assistance to developing countries through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Most developing countries do not have enough accurate environmental geographic information data sets (global maps) which describe their accurate environmental conditions.

Global Mapping Course Outline

Duration:

From 17th June, 1996 to 18th August, 1996 at GSI.

Participating countries:

Bangladesh, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Tunisia

Objectives:

By the end of the course, participants are expected to:

1. understand the importance of global mapping in promoting global environmental policy and other administrative policies.
2. enhance their knowledge of the latest surveying technologies, especially, space geodesy, digital photogrammetry, and computer mapping .
3. improve their ability to apply the above techniques in their own countries.
4. be able to fully coordinate global mapping project in the sense of international cooperation.

INFORMATION CORNER

MEETINGS

Forthcoming events and conferences;
"GLOBAL MAPPING" related international conferences and academic meetings

- **9 ~ 19 July 1996; Vienna, Austria**
Congress of ISPRS (sponsored by the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing)
- **February 1997; Bangkok, Thailand**
the United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (sponsored by the United Nations)
- **June 1997; New York, USA.**
the United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas (sponsored by the United Nations)
- **23 ~ 27 June 1997; Stockholm, Sweden**
18th International Cartographic Conference (ICC 97) of ICA
- **June 1997; New York, USA.**
the Special Session of the General Assembly on Agenda21 (sponsored by the United Nations)

TO MEMBERS AND READERS

This second issue of the Newsletter is intended to publicize the importance and needs of "Global Mapping" project and provide a place to exchange information and introduce the activities of their organizations.

In this issue, we introduce a "Global Mapping Course" for the training of competent people to develop the Global Map that the Geographical Survey Institute of Japan proposes.

The Secretariat would appreciate your information on Global Mapping related project, work and research, and international conferences and academic meetings that you are associated with in your region. We would be more than happy if, through this newsletter, we could provide a greater understanding among members and others for the development of Global Mapping.

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Proposal of a member change

Mr. William A. Robertson, member of ISCGM, is to retire the Director General, Department of Survey and Land Information, New Zealand on July 1st.

A replacement member, Mr. John A. Spittal was nominated by him and awaits approval

by the Committee.

Mr. Spittal is the Chief Topographic / Hydrographic Officer of Land Information, New Zealand, a new national land information agency which succeeds the Department of Survey and Land Information on July 1996.