

Major Opportunities in SDI Communities

Bas KOK, Netherlands

SUMMARY

GSDI Mission and Activities

The **Global Spatial Data Infrastructure**, GSDI, promotes international co-operation and collaboration in support of local, national and international spatial data infrastructure developments that allow nations to better address pressing societal, economic and environmental issues.

It focuses on communication, education, scientific research and partnership efforts to achieve these aims. In other words the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association is a global forum to support the exchange of ideas and to encourage joint activities at the global level.

Our mission is to serve as a point of contact, to foster spatial data infrastructures, and to stimulate the use of geographic information.

We defined the following goals to fulfill this mission. We promote and develop awareness and exchange on spatial data infrastructure issues including standard based access, capacity building, and development research. We collaborate with others to fulfill our vision. We encourage policies and legislation that promote the access to and use of geographic data and services on a global basis. We engage a broad range of stakeholders in many activities.

Government plays a vital role in the promotion of our global mission through strategic public networks. Academia is vital in this process as well in the execution of policy research, and reviewing international legislation on data policy. Industry assists in building registries and reaching out to clients to engage their participation in GSDI activities.

The GSDI Association is a non- profit organization relying primarily on active membership participation through democratic processes.

We acknowledge full, associate and individual memberships, such as government organizations and agencies (from national to local levels), companies (of all sizes), academic institutions, non-profit organizations and individuals.

Our membership dues are based upon a nation's ability to pay. All full members form the Council which is the ultimate authority for the organization. They elect the Board. The Board of Directors consists of the President, President-elect and the Past President, as well as sector representatives from Government, Industry, Academia and Non-Profit. In addition, representatives from each continent of the globe are on the Board including Africa, Asia/Pacific, Europe, North America and South America.

GSDI provides a news list on news@godi.org with 1600 subscribers and monthly Regional Newsletters for Africa, Latin America and Asia/Pacific in electronic form. We also provide E mail Discussion Forums.

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INTRODUCTION

GSDI Achievements and Results

The SDI cookbook is available on our website and is broadly used. For the future we are trying to improve the cookbook. It is a living document. Previous editions have been translated in to Spanish and Chinese.

The Knowledge Portal on Geographic Information Network was introduced at the GSDI 10 conference in February of this year. Its goal is to enhance communication and share knowledge among professionals of the global GI community.

The GSDI Association Sponsored Projects Committee works on a Small Grants program. This program stimulates GSDI involvement at the regional level and it stimulates the initiation or the expanding of spatial data infrastructure activities. Grants are provided to various organizations in the world. The program is funded by the Federal Geographic Data Committee with contributions from URISA's GIS Corps, ESRI, Global Map, and Intergraph. The fifth call for proposals will be launched later this year.

Important partners in the communication and commitment building process are currently:

1. the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Committee for Development: GEO,
2. Pan American Institute for Geography and History and Permanent Committee for GIS information for the Americas,
3. Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific,
4. Euro-Geographics
5. and European Umbrella Organization for Geographic Information (EUROGI)
6. and the UN Geographic Information Working Group

They all played a vital role in organizing the ten GSDI conferences between 1996 till February this year.

The other global and regional organisations to

Other international bodies we cooperate with to achieve our goals is the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), International Cartographic Association, Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) and the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM). The GSDI Association is a member of the Joint Board for Geospatial Information Societies (JBGIS), which is the coalition of international geospatial societies.

Capacity building in the regions is becoming increasingly important all over the world. The GSDI organization facilitates capacity building in providing a network, expertise and experience. Cooperation between GSDI and the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure in the Asia Pacific is an excellent example of successful cooperation in the capacity building process. An example is the development of a vision for the creation of spatially enabling government, which is a way for governments to use spatial data infrastructures in their activities and improve services to citizens.

Ten Years of SDI Successes Throughout the World.

During the nineties SDI's were being introduced by the US government.

The European GI community was lobbying the European Commission to take a leading role in the development of a European Spatial Data Infrastructure.

Subsequently GSDI conferences, as important drivers for successful SDI implementation, were held and roundtables were organized to discuss the institutional framework of SDI's, and necessary next steps.

At the end of the nineties spatial data infrastructures became a hot topic with the responsible policy makers and politicians. They became aware of sought consensus on SDI legal framework and institutional issues. The GSDI association initiated the introduction of SDI concepts in all parts of the world.

At the turn of the century, SDI's were clearly becoming a useful concept for policy making and effective government worldwide.

Today, we are at a stage of development worldwide when we can showcase individual success stories in just about every region.

The Spatial Data Infrastructure in Europe is a result of a long process of making the right advances at the right moment using the right mechanisms. The success to SDI implementation requires vision, legislation and commitment.

During the nineties; the European Commission made use of the strength and of the European professional networks. The vision became a part of European policy documents. Lobbying to the politicians was successful. These conditions were successfully realized by the whole European spatial community and led to the creation of a European Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Environment; also known as INSPIRE.

In the meantime the INSPIRE Directive had been approved by the Council and Parliament. Nowadays the INSPIRE regulation is being implemented in the 27 EU member states. The GSDI 11 conference will be organized in cooperation with INSPIRE and the Dutch Government between June 15th and June 19th 2009 in Rotterdam,

One of the main issues of this conference is to show the present state of implementation in each of the 27 EU member states.

The USA has been successful in building and implementing a national spatial data infrastructure. Former Vice President Al Gore played an active role in raising awareness at all levels of government, together with the former US Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt, as Chairman of the FGDC.

The Federal Geographic Data Committee is acting as strong advocates in the expansion of the SDI model throughout the world. They made a lot of progress in the US as promoter for data enclosure and towards the development of portals and clearing houses around the globe. Another success to be mentioned is their initiative to develop coordination tools for making more effective use of earth observation systems.

Other important successes can be shown by the Asia Pacific Community and GSDI related to the spatially enabling government issues. The Australian Government has recently introduced this concept as part of their e-government program. Cooperation agreements with Google Earth and MicroSoft are being established. Google Map now provides to citizens in the State of Victoria, cadastral parcel locations. During the GSDI 12 conference in the Asia Pacific Region many other successful results and examples will be presented.

The departments and public organizations in India and other countries are increasingly making use of space observation data as a part of their SDIs. An impressive observation is that India's industry and knowledge capacities are growing very fast and they are developing new media.

In Canada the government took the initiative to develop a strategy for cooperation between government and different types of user groups such as health and security. Geo Connection Canada is the institute that creates these partnerships often in cooperation with the private sector, universities and knowledge centers.

Also remarkable are the initiatives and successes in the development of the UNSDI and the progress they are making. In addition, the world- wide activities of GEO GEOSS, the global Earth observation system of systems are impressive. More than 30 ministers throughout the world attended their last world summit in Cape Town.

The private sector successes are also changing the scene. Public sector organizations are increasingly making use of these successes. They make agreements with private companies such as Google, ESRI, Intergraph, Digital Earth and OGC for improving access to public sector information.

SDI Convergence

The time is now ripe to bring together all these successes from the different regions throughout the world. The GSDI association will play a facilitating role in this convergence

process. Regional SDI developments are helping to create dynamics that will establish operational and conceptual bridges among spatial data infrastructures around the world and for the creation of a global agenda.



We are now at a stage of development where we can bring together all these successes as a starting point for a new phase. The challenge and opportunity for us all is to make use of all these successes to create a global agenda for which global challenges and SDI initiatives in the regions will find each other.

Therefore the time is ripe for the GSDI Association to make use of its role as bridge builder between the **SDI** global community and the broader global society.

In other words: The GSDI Association will look to other communities to help solve pressing global societal issues such as urban sprawl, sustainable development, water management, urban and rural poverty problems, environmental issues

The GSDI Association will facilitate this process in the coming years.

This SDI convergence process is the central theme of the GSDI 11 conference to be held in Rotterdam between June 15th and June 19th 2009. This conference will start the process to create dynamics that will establish operational and conceptual bridges between SDI's throughout the world, and between GSDI and other emerging global world organizations.

CONTACTS

President
Mr. Bas Kok,
GSDI
NETHERLANDS

TS 5A - Land Administration - European Experiences
Mr. Bas Kok
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Integrating Generations
FIG Working Week 2008
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