



GSDI Council members at the GSDI 14 World Conference

AT EVERY LEVEL

THE GSDI IS HELPING WITH WORK ON SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURES, FROM ORGANISATIONAL IMPLEMENTATIONS THROUGH TO GLOBAL STANDARDS. ROGER LONGHORN REPORTS

Spatial data infrastructures (SDIs) are being implemented across the globe at different levels of complexity and completion, from start-up initiatives to well-established information infrastructures. The GSDI Association promotes research into SDI-related technologies, policies, standards and applications, and provides a global network for organisations and individuals actively engaged in developing and implementing national and regional SDIs.

The GSDI Strategy 2015-2020 focuses on ways to advance capacity building for all those involved in implementing their SDIs at any level, from organisational to national, regional and global, now also including thematic SDIs, such as for the marine community.

The GSDI Association has promoted SDI research and knowledge sharing about good practice through the GSDI world conference series, which began in 1996 and continues this year with the GSDI 15 World Conference in Taipei, Taiwan (29 November to 2 December). These conferences have digitally produced several open access publications and conference proceedings, and provide global networking opportunities for researchers, experts and practitioners. Other resources include free webinars, videos and SDI 'cookbooks'.

GSDI members include government agencies from Europe, North and South America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia-Pacific that are at the forefront of implementing SDIs in their regions. Our members regularly conduct SDI- and geo-related training nationally and regionally through workshops, seminars and webinars, as well as promote SDI good practice at conferences and large meetings.

The EU is formalising SDI implementation components through the INSPIRE Directive of 2007 – work that is not expected to be completed until at least 2020-2021 for all 35 data themes covered by the directive and its several implementing EC Regulations. Important European regional members include EuroGeographics and EUROGI. Several GSDI members are engaged in INSPIRE implementations nationally and serve on INSPIRE-related working groups and committees, including the maintenance and implementation group.

In Africa, the UN Economic Commission for Africa promotes SDI development across the continent. The Regional Centre for Mapping Resources for Development in Nairobi conducts regular training activities on the continent. A key member in South America, the Latin American Development Bank, leads on the GeoSUR initiative for implementing harmonised SDIs across the region and hosts training courses, webinars and online videos relating to SDI implementation.

GSDI is one of the 14 international partners for the UN Global Geospatial Information Management initiative and our members contribute valuable resources to its knowledge base. The global work of GSDI founding member the Open Geospatial Consortium is critical to the implementation of SDIs and without this work, such developments would not have been possible.

GSDI provides part-funding for projects that today include the Geo Legal Interoperability Map of the World (GLIM), Marine SDI Best Practice (MSDI), and the Small Grants Program.

GLIM researches policies and legislation being adopted or considered by law agencies that are relevant to SDI implementation or affect the global development of SDIs. Major issues examined in the project include licensing, privacy, liability, open data, transparency, accountability, governance, policy alignment, performance assessment and legal issues related to cloud computing. The Global Geoportal Map now covers 107 geoportals, globally.

MSDI started in November 2015 and will run through 2017, focusing on:

- Frameworks for and use of marine and coastal geographic data, services and infrastructures.
- Governance structures enabling effective management and use of marine and coastal geospatial data.
- Comparative benchmark assessments of marine and coastal geospatial data.
- Developing a repository of marine and coastal SDI good practices.
- Building capacity regarding issues related to coastal and marine geospatial data and SDI issues.

The Small Grants Program has been active since 2003, during which time it has made grants, in cooperation with the URISA GISCorps, to more than 110 projects mainly in developing nations. Funding has been provided by GSDI members the Federal Geographic Data Committee and Natural Resources Canada through the Geoconnections programme.

Practical training has been provided free of charge to GSDI members selected to attend the International Center for Land Policy Studies and Training seminars on GIS and land management in Taipei, Taiwan, beginning in 2012, since which time 15 members have received training as guests of the government of Taiwan.

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