

GSDI AND IGS GLOBAL NEWS

News from the GSDI Association and the International Geospatial Society

Vol. 2, No. 2, 2012 – March-April 2012

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Global Geospatial Conference 2012 (GGC 2012) Update

GGC 2012 combines the GSDI 13 World Conference, the 14th GEOIDE Annual Scientific Conference, the 7th 3D GeoInfo Conference and the Canadian Geomatics Conference 2012. The conference theme is "Spatially Enabling Government, Industry, and Citizens." The detailed programme, workshop descriptions and meetings schedule are all now available at the conference web site at <http://www.gsdi.org/gsd13/>. Four of the five workshops that are held in the morning session of Monday, 14 May, are led by GSDI Association Committees. See the web site for details. There will also be an "International Workshop on Geospatial Data Quality: Legal, Ethical and Technical Aspects" on Friday, 18 May, following the conference, at which several GSDI and IGS members will participate. Keynote speakers at the conference include:

Dr Gilberto Câmara, General Director of Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE), will address the topic of Global Visions in Sharing Geospatial Data and Tools and Progress in Their Achievement. Dr Camara is being honoured as well with a Global Citizen Award for his staunch support and highly influential global leadership in opening citizen access to governments' environmental and geospatial data across the planet.

Dr Prashant Shukle, Director General of the Mapping Information Branch of Natural Resources Canada, will highlight substantial innovations employed and advancements made in spatially enabling Canadian government services and providing access for businesses and citizens.

Dr Michael Goodchild, member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and Director of the University of California-Santa Barbara's Center for Spatial Studies, will provide a personal perspective on topics raised at the conference and topics drawn

from his forty years in supporting and observing advancements in the field.

Dr Abbas Rajabifard, Chair of the Department of Infrastructure Engineering at The University of Melbourne and President of the GSDI Association, will open the conference with an address on 'Visions for Spatially Enabling Government, Industry and Citizens'.

GSDI COMMITTEE NEWS

GSDI Standing Committees recommend programs of action to the GSDI Council and Board and carry out specific tasks as set out in the GSDI bylaws or as requested by the Council or the Board. Individuals interested in contributing to the work of committees should contact the committee chairs, via the GSDI Committees web site at <http://www.gsdi.org/standingcomm>. All current Committee members are encouraged to send their news to the Editor (ral@alum.mit.edu) for including in future issues of the Newsletter.

Outreach & Membership Committee

Committee Chair, Steven Ramage (OGC) has promoted Association membership at a number of events in the past two months. He was an invited speaker at Middle East Geospatial Forum (MEGF) 2012 in Doha, Qatar, giving a plenary presentation on SDIs and good practice across communities of interest. Several GSDI Association members were also present at the OGC TC/PC meeting in Austin, Texas, in March, engaged in business and technical discussions around standards and interoperability that underpin SDI activity in many communities of interest, e.g. in aviation, defence, emergency response, hydrology and weather.

Vice-Chair Roger Longhorn continued participation in several activities in Europe relating to development of the pan-European SDI (INSPIRE) and liaison with the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) in regard to global Marine SDI developments, including adoption of the



International Coastal Atlas Network (ICAN) as a new UNESCO IOC Project in 2012. Roger also participated, on behalf of GSDI Association, in the 3-day conference and workshop on 'GIS for the United Nations and International Institutions' at the WMO in Geneva, from 3-5 April 2012.

Both Steven and Roger are presenting papers at the GSDI-13 conference in May and will co-host a 90-minute workshop on "How to Get More Involved in the GSDI Association: Leveraging the Global Geospatial Community". The GSDI Association LinkedIn group continues to be active and we encourage all readers to join the group at www.Linkedin.com.

Societal Impacts Committee

As announced in the previous Newsletter 14 projects from around the developing world have been selected to receive a 2011-12 GSDI Small Grant awards. Cash awards were made to:

- **Albania** - Increasing the Understanding of SDI within the Albanian Geo-society by Promoting and Distributing SDI Cookbook 2009 in the Albanian Language
- **Colombia** - Linked Data and Spatial Data Infrastructures
- **Ecuador** - Training in the Field of Metadata for the Implementation at National Level of Ecuadorian Metadata Profile (EMP)
- **El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua** - Gulf of Fonseca Surveying and Nautical Charting Stand Up and Planning Meeting
- **Ethiopia** - Establishment of Geoportal (metadata and Clearinghouse Node) with Open source Solutions for Environment Resources Management and Conservation
- **Macedonia** - Non-Governmental Organizations for Spatial Data Infrastructure - NGO4SDI
- **Rwanda** - Use of GIS and SDI in promoting Coffee Quality in Maraba Sector South Province of Rwanda
- **South Africa** - Developing a Framework for South African SDI Education and Training
- **Tajikistan** - Introducing Cadastral Maps into National SDI of Tajikistan: Designing and Implementing a Pilot Project

Cash awards and offers of professional services from GISCorps (URISA GIS Volunteers) go to:

- **China** - Multilingual (Four Languages) Place Name Data Base for Regional SDI
- **Southern Africa** - Knowledge Management System and Geographic Information System Project
- **Uzbekistan** - Stakeholder Analysis of Institutions in Uzbekistan Involved State Cadastres in Order to Increase Awareness on Implementation of Spatial Data Infrastructure
- **Zimbabwe** - Strengthening the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) Effort in Zimbabwe Through the Establishment of Requisite Institution and Technological Structures
- **Zimbabwe** - Zimbabwe Standards-based Web Mapping and Data Access Services Online Platform/Portal

An offer of professional services from GISCorps goes to:

- **Russia** - An Interregional Seminar "Creation of Infrastructure of Spatial Data for the Southern Urals (Russia)"

Also, final reports from the following 2010-11 Small Grants recipients were received:

- **Philippines** - Workshop for the Harmonization of Spatial Data Infrastructure and Application to the Ancestral Domain Database Information System
- **Kyrgyz Republic** - SDI Awareness Training – Central Asia
- **Nigeria** - Integration of Web Map Services with the current Nigeria NGDI Portal
- **Ethiopia** - The 2nd General Congress of the GIS Society of Ethiopia Promoting the need for National Spatial Data Infrastructure of Ethiopia

To see the final reports and for more information on the Small Grants Program please visit <http://www.gsdi.org/sic1>. As always, we express the Association's grateful thanks for the support of the US Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) and the URISA GISCorps for making the grants programme possible.

Technical Committee

Mick Wilson (UNEP), vice-Chair of the Technical Committee, participated in the UNGIWG-12 meeting in Vienna in March (see short report later in the Newsletter). Committee vice-Chair Doug



Nebert (FGDC) spoke at the EuroGEOSS 2012 Conference in Madrid, Spain earlier this year. EuroGEOSS is a global project part-funded by the European Union in support of GEO/GEOSS. The full conference report will be available shortly at <http://www.eurogeoss2012.eu/>.

Legal & Socioeconomic Committee

L&SE member (and former Chair) Dr Gabor Remety-Fülöpp (HUNAGI & UNSDI HUCO) also participated in the UNGIWG-12 meeting in Vienna in March, including on the closing panel on "SDI Private-Public Partnership models". (See his presentation at http://www.hunagi.hu/G/pub/Globalis/HUNAGIOnPP_12thUNGIWG.pdf).

THE INTERNATIONAL GEOSPATIAL SOCIETY (IGS)

The International Geospatial Society (IGS) is the individual membership arm of the GSDI Association whose members have geospatial, SDI, GIS or related professional or specialist interests. The Society enhances communications globally among individuals that are actively involved in promoting, developing, or advancing spatial data infrastructure and related concepts. The IGS web site is at <http://www.igeoss.org>.

IGS Members at the GSDI 13 Conference

Several IGS members have had papers or extended abstracts selected for presentation at the GSDI-13 Conference in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada, on 14-17 May 2012, and will also participate in several of the workshops offered on the opening day of the conference. The International Geospatial Society Meeting will take place at the Hilton Hotel, Room Sainte-Foy/Portneuf, 1st floor, from 1500-1630h on Sunday, 13 May. All members are invited to attend.

IGS Member Profiles

This issue of the Newsletter begins our series of profiles of IGS members. To be included in future issues of the Newsletter, please submit your profile to the IGS officers (contact details on the IGS web site at www.igeoss.org/contacts).

IGS Member Profile – March 2012

For March, we publish the profile for Mr Asmat Ali (asmatali@yahoo.com), Assistant Director - Central Database Administrator in Survey of Pakistan (SoP). SoP is the National Surveying and Mapping Organization (NMO) of Pakistan, officially mandated to collect, maintain and publish geospatial data. Multi-scale digital topographic data of entire country is available from the department. SoP is a member of the Global Map international mapping project (www.iscgm.org) and the department actively participates in national and international conferences to share knowledge and expertise.

As Central Database Administrator, Mr Asmat Ali leads a team involved in spatial information management to ensure quick delivery of information, produced by Survey of Pakistan. His responsibilities include arranging onsite and offsite backup of Remote Sensing and GIS data, technical assistance and capacity building regarding spatial information management and its dissemination, supervision and development of metadata as well as web mapping applications, geo-processing of freely available high-resolution online data resources for economical and efficient updating of existing SoP base maps and data, as well as drafting policies regarding data management and NSDI implementation. He has also been developing GIS tools to automate the on-going spatial information production and management processes of SoP in addition to sharing the same with the international geospatial community. For example, see <http://arcscripts.esri.com/scripts.asp?eLang=&eProd=&perPage=10&eQuery=asmat>.

Mr Asmat Ali has shared over 15 concept papers and articles with local and international geospatial user communities on GIS, Remote Sensing, SDI, e-Governance, as well as Land Administration, which can be seen at: <http://sites.google.com/site/aliasmat/publications>

Personal Views - Why Join IGS?

I joined IGS as a founding (and funding) member in 2009 IGS to interact with decision makers, IT heads, project managers, integrators, educators as well as practitioners of diverse geospatial domain from all over the world. I find that the IGS as an excellent



forum to discover, share and exchange spatial knowledge base. The forum lets members publish their views and see metadata from others for harvesting collective benefits.

Our Service to Geospatial Information in Society

My team has successfully developed geographical names database for the whole of Pakistan. To enable quick supply of information, a scalable geoportal was designed, developed and implemented. In the context of Pakistan's NSDI, a metadata catalogue to publish metadata regarding geospatial resources possessed by various organizations is in prototype phase. Recently, my paper titled, "Is SDI development a waste of time and money for Pakistan?" was accepted for presentation at the GSDI 13 conference to be held in Quebec City, Canada, in May 2012. (See <http://www.gsdi.org/gsdiconf/gsdi13/>). I was also invited to make an oral presentation on Public Private Partnerships for SDI at the Geospatial World Forum 2012, to be held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in April 2012 (see http://www.geospatialworldforum.org/2012/ppp_abs.htm).

The expertise and capabilities possessed by Survey of Pakistan for SDI development have been well acknowledged by the GSDI Association's SDI Asia & the Pacific Newsletter. The newsletter has endorsed Survey of Pakistan as a focal organization for SDI development in Pakistan. (See http://portal.gsdi.org/files/?artifact_id=252).

Google has emerged as major competitor to Survey of Pakistan. Local governments of the country have started to use GIS for socioeconomic projects such as the process of carving fresh census blocks and Land Records Management System with assistance of Google. For further references, please see:

- <http://www.dawn.com/2011/12/30/census-block-count-in-full-swing.html>
- <http://www.dawn.com/2012/02/20/city-govt-to-develop-gis-for-uplift-planning-2.html>
- <http://www.dawn.com/2012/02/06/punjab-archaeology-sites-to-be-on-google-maps.html>

IGS Member Profile – April 2012

IGS Member, Waleed N. Soliman is Application Services Specialist in the Spatial Data Centre of the Abu Dhabi Systems and Information Centre. He is responsible for the oversight and facilitation of all issues related to the development, configuration, fine tuning, establishment and operations of all applications to be used in the AD-SDI environment. This includes but not limited to GIS applications such as GIS server, GIS desktop and image processing applications and GeoPortal toolkit software/ extension(s).

The Spatial Data Centre (SDC) is a unit within Abu Dhabi Systems and Information Centre (ADSIC) that has been set up within the e-Government Programme in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi to facilitate, coordinate, and support the foundation building stage of the AD-SDI. It comprises a team of GIS and SDI professionals, strategic planning specialists, outreach specialists, and GIS technicians that have been assembled to operate the SDC.

Personal Views - Why Join IGS?

I joined IGS in order to be in close communication with fellow members that are actively involved in promoting, developing, or advancing spatial data infrastructure and related concepts, as well as contributing to the effort whenever possible.

Current Activities

I am currently involved in formulation and realization of federated and spatially enabled executive dashboard that will hopefully serve as an enabler for decision makers to leverage the wealth of information and the strong framework of the Abu Dhabi SDI (AD-SDI) to make better decisions. The spatially enabled executive dashboard is to serve as a building block of a spatial decision support system for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Contact: Waleed.nagy@gmail.com



IGS Reminders

Subscriptions to GIM International

As a member benefit of IGS, you may receive a free subscription of GIM International. GIM International is carrying GSDI news, including IGS news, on a monthly column. If you want to stay up to date with this column and read up on other developments in Geomatics please follow this link and subscribe if you are not already receiving a hard copy of the magazine: <http://www.gim-international.com/GSDI>.

Participation in GIKNet

IGS members are also reminded that information is uploaded in GIKnet in the Society Web Forum:

- Topics of general interest (English) <http://www.giknet.org/forum/post.php?topic=41>,
- Topics of general interest (Spanish), <http://www.giknet.org/forum/post.php?topic=42>,
- Task 5. Promote the work of IGS members as a network sharing information, knowledge and publications among IGS members" <http://www.giknet.org/forum/post.php?topic=12>

Members are invited to actively participate in the Society Web Forum, as a means of sharing news,

LinkedIn IGS Sub-Group

And if you have not already signed up for the IGS sub-group on LinkedIn (see December Newsletter), please do so ASAP! If you are already a member of the GSDI group, then you can request to join from the *Subgroups* page by clicking "Groups" at the top of your home page. Then click the parent group's name (GSDI). Under the "More" dropdown menu, select *Subgroups*. The click "Join this subgroup." You can view the status of your membership from the Your Groups page at:

<http://www.linkedin.com/myGroups>.

Joining IGS

Remember that individuals in low and very low income nations can apply to join the International Geospatial Society (IGS) by providing specific

information of value to the global community in lieu of annual cash dues. The listing of low and very-low income nations may be found at <http://www.gsdi.org/RankingTable>. To join for free, simply add your professional profile to the growing interconnected network of geospatial specialists across the globe on the Geographic Information Knowledge Network (GIKNet) at <http://giknet.org> and then apply for membership in IGS at <http://www.igeoss.org/join>. To maintain your free membership, simply update your professional profile each year on or about December or January. You have the ability to view, edit, or delete your individual profile at any time.

IGS Members – submit your news, please, so that we can learn more about what our membership is doing! There are nearly 200 of you out there now, so please communicate with us. News can be sent by e-mail either to the IGS officers - President Mabel Álvarez or vice-President Lilia Patricia Aria, who can be contacted via the IGS web site - or directly to the editor, Roger Longhorn, at roger@alum.mit.edu.

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS' NEWS

OGC Business Value Committee Survey

The Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC®) Business Value Committee (BVC) ran an international survey on the "Business Value of Standards" in December 2011. The survey received responses from over 300 organisations from around the world, from a wide representative sample of both OGC members and non-members. The geographic distribution of responses, heavily weighted from Asia Pacific, Europe and North America, is also representative of the OGC member activities in these regions. Results of the survey were presented at the OGC Technical Committee meeting in Austin, Texas, in March. Access a slide presentation summarising the survey at this link (PDF):

https://portal.opengeospatial.org/files/?artifact_id=48440.

The OGC BVC is led by Steven Ramage, Chair of GSDI Association Outreach & Membership Committee. For more information on the OGC Business Value Committee, visit the web site at:

<http://www.opengeospatial.org/projects/groups/businessvalue>.



GIS at the United Nations and International Institutions Conference

This 3-day conference *cum* workshop was co-sponsored by GSDI Association member, Esri, and UNITAR UNOSAT, hosted by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) at their headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, from 3-5 April 2012. Several GSDI members were present, including Roger Longhorn, vice-Chair, Communications of the GSDI Outreach & Membership Committee, Carmelle Terborgh, Chair of the GSDI Societal Impacts Committee, and Athina Trakas (OGC®). The event focused on GIS and web services for humanitarian assistance and crisis response information requirements of several UN and international agencies and NGOs. More than 250 people participated from over 100 organisations. A full conference and workshop report can be found in **SDI Magazine** (www.sdimag.com – select ‘Events Coverage’).

GSDI ASSOCIATION MEMBER PROFILES

This issue of the Newsletter also begins our series of profiles of GSDI Association members, including both organisations and key individuals from those organisations. To be included in future issues of the Newsletter, please submit your profile to the editor, Roger Longhorn, at [ral \(at\) alum.mit.edu](mailto:ral@alum.mit.edu).

GSDI Member Profile for March 2012

Mr Jarmo Ratia, Director General and CEO of the National Land Survey of Finland, a member organisation of the GSDI Association, is also past President of the GSDI Association, and former member of the Board and Executive Committee of GSDI, and a member of the IGS. This profile takes the form of an interview for GSDI & IGS Newsletter by editor Roger Longhorn, conducted with Mr Ratia regarding the decision to free topographic datasets from licence fees at National Land Survey (NLS) of Finland, from 1 May 2012.

Jarmo Ratia: The demand for free governmental data had grown a lot. Geographic information was often referred to as the most valuable dataset for users to be made openly available. During the past couple of years there has been a rising trend that even public sector authorities started to use free

datasets available in internet instead of using the accurate high quality data from a governmental body. That development was leading to the situation where large volumes of data were collected using all kinds of background maps, especially by users who are not professionals in mapping. In the future, that approach would have increased costs in cases where we want to reuse and combine those datasets. During the year 2011 we came to the conclusion that it is economically better as a whole in Finnish Society to allow all users to use the same reference data rather than limit the usage by charging for it.

The decision was also very challenging for us, because NLS Finland will lose EUR 1.5 million income annually (10 % of all costs in our map production which is 90 % tax financed) and we have no guarantee at the moment this loss will be compensated to us.

All the topographic digital datasets produced by NLS are covered by the decision and a complete list of open NLS datasets is to be seen at <http://www.maanmittauslaitos.fi/en/node/9262>.

There are still a few datasets subject to licence fees, e.g. cadastral information including cadastral maps are defined in legislation to be personal data which are therefore under more strict regulation and not ready to be opened.

Also, the Finnish government made a decision last year to promote the usage of public sector information (PSI) and we see the opening of NLS topographic data as a kind of pilot for the government’s open data policy. Both the EU’s Public Sector Information re-use Directive and the INSPIRE Directive have had a great influence on the new attitude towards open data, but the final decision made was based on national reasons.

Those who use the file downloading service must provide us with a working e-mail address in a form where they can also answer to a few questions regarding the planned usage of the data. We want to maximize the usage of our data and therefore we license data with very wide usage rights. Because the data can be freely distributed onwards, there is no way to know how the data is actually used beyond the first download.



At the time we were considering the open data issues, the Research Institute of Finnish Economy published a study “Does Marginal Cost Pricing of Public Sector information Spur Firm Growth?” by Heli Koski. This indicated that SMEs in Europe are benefiting most from cheaper geographical information. Between 2000 and 2007, in countries where pricing was based on marginal cost or no cost, the growth of SMEs was 15% faster than in countries where charges were higher. (The study can be found from ETLA publications <http://www.etla.fi/eng/>).

In delivering the large volumes of data that are likely to be requested, NLS Finland are developing a new download service and renewing updating processes so that the most up-to-date data is always available for users. For web services we have decided to use technical limitations so that a single user cannot use all the resources we can offer, for example, limiting the number of requests from one IP. We have a project taking care of these issues so that data is available on-line at the beginning of May.

See the full interview on the **SDI Magazine** web site at www.sdimag.com – click on ‘Features – Interviews’ in the main menu.

GSDI Member Profile for April 2012

The following profile was submitted by Jordon Mears, Director of Development at Thermopylae Sciences and Technology (TST), a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) that focuses on excellence in all it does for its government and private sector customers. Thermopylae excels in software development, cyber security, geospatial engineering, cloud/grid computing in cleared environments, and mobile application development.

Thermopylae strives to bring emerging technologies to its customers in ways that enhance organizational performance and further customer missions. Thermopylae pairs industry experts in information technology with team members that are subject-matter experts on their customers' key problem sets. The result is cutting-edge solutions tailored directly to customers' needs.

Personal Views - Why Be a GSDI Member?

Being a prominent player in the spatial industry, Thermopylae strives to be a responsible community member through its actions and associations. This is one reason that Thermopylae is proud to be a contributing member to the GSDI Association through publications and presentations at geospatial industry events, including GSDI's global conferences.

Thermopylae News & Activities

Thermopylae has developed FT2JSON, an interface that accepts Google Fusion Tables API queries and translates the response into JSON (JavaScript Object Notation – a lightweight data-interchange format) rather than CSV. See the details at <https://ft2json.appspot.com/>.

Jordon Mears published “UDOP: A Collaborative System for Geospatial Data”, Chapter 14 in *Spatially Enabling Society*, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2010 (pp 191-204). (Accessible at http://memberservices.gsd.org/files/?artifact_id=902)

Finally, Thermopylae recently made a version of iSpatial available on the web by free trial and subscription so that users can get a taste for what iSpatial can do. Access the trial at <http://commercial.t-sciences.com/wordpress/ispatial/>

About Jordon Mears

Jordon Mears work within the spatial community began by building a near real time GPS tracking system for the US Department of State, which is currently used in high threat locations across the globe to support the operational environment. He went on to architect the start of iSpatial, Thermopylae's enterprise visualization toolkit. Jordon also led the development of the decision support tool 3D UDOP that was used to coordinate US Southern Command's (SOUTHCOM) response to the Haiti earthquake crisis and continues to be used on a daily basis by the command.

More recently Jordon has been working with Google and the US National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) to develop Open Geospatial



Consortium (OGC) standards compliant services on top of Google's enterprise spatial products. This includes Web Mapping Service (WMS) and Web Mapping Tile Service (WMTS) on Google Earth Enterprise and WMTS, Web Feature Service (WFS) and Catalog Service Web (CS-W) on Google Earth Builder.

For further information, readers can contact Jordon Mears at jmears@t-sciences.com and visit the web sites at www.t-sciences.com and www.finefrog.com.

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

In this issue of GSDI & IGS Newsletter, we publish an article by Executive Director, Prof Harlan Onsrud, which first appeared in GIM International magazine (Volume 26, Number 2) – *“Closing the Economic Gap for Participation by Geospatial Specialists in Global Organisations”*.

From a practical perspective, geospatial agencies and individual professionals in economically challenged nations are often unable, either administratively and/or politically, to regularly pay dues to join international professional organisations. This creates a communication gap and professional learning gap for all geospatial professionals globally. As a result, the GSDI Association and the International Geospatial Society have instituted policies allowing agencies and individuals from low-income and lower middle-income nations to join the organisations for free providing they meet a number of reporting conditions that provide value to the entire global community.

To qualify for free membership of the GSDI Association, a government agency from a qualifying nation needs to (a) enter a profile for the government agency in the Geographic Information Knowledge (GIK) Network, and (b) report on the level of the agency's spatial data infrastructure (SDI) implementation experience. Subsequent updates to these two online forms around the time of the end of each calendar year allow continuation of the government agency's full membership.

To qualify for free membership of the International Geospatial Society, a geospatial specialist from a

qualifying nation needs to enter a personal, professional profile in the Geographic Information Knowledge Network and update it each year to maintain their membership.

A short, 8-minute video explaining the purposes and goals of the Geographic Information Knowledge Network can be found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/spatialinnovations>

Qualifying low-income and lower middle-income nations are listed at:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/CLASS.XLS>

Steps for an agency to gain free membership of the GSDI Association are as follows:

1. An appropriate person from an agency should register as an individual in the Geographic Information Knowledge Network at <http://giknet.org/> (click 'Login' in the upper right-hand corner and 'Register for an Account' if you do not yet have one).
2. After establishing an account, login, then click on 'Enter Profile for Government Agency' under 'My Submissions'. A document version of the form is also available.
3. Once the agency profile has been created, click 'Report SDI Implementation Experience' and answer the questions. A document version of the questionnaire, useful for collecting the relevant information before completing the online form, is available at http://memberservices.gsdi.org/files/?artifact_id=979.
4. After completing the forms, fill out the GSDI Full Membership application for the agency at <http://www.gsdi.org/fullmemshp#D>. If the agency is located in a qualifying nation, the application form automatically expands to ask for the URLs of the 'Agency Profile' and the 'SDI Implementation Experience' as submitted in the GIK Network. Upon acceptance, the agency will be listed on the web as a full member of the GSDI Association. Official acceptance into the organisation is by vote of the GSDI Council at its



next meeting, during the GSDI 13 World Conference in Quebec, Canada, in May 2012.

Steps for an individual to gain free membership of the International Geospatial Society follow a similar pattern. In Step 2 above, simply click instead on 'Enter Profile for Individual' in order to join at <http://www.igeoss.org/join>.

We encourage other international geospatial organisations to offer similar opportunities for free membership of their organisations.

Professor Harlan Onsrud is executive director of the GSDI Association and a professor in the Department of Spatial Information Science and Engineering at the University of Maine in the USA. He may be contacted via e-mail on onsrud@gsdi.org.

THE GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION KNOWLEDGE NETWORK (GIKNET)

During November, the user interface to the GIKNetwork was updated, permitting easier delivery of documents to the system. The main categories under which documents can be referenced now include: GI Science: Education & Training; GI Science: Research; and SDI/GIS: Practice and Applications. The network is being strongly promoted on the Association's e-mail lists and the LinkedIn GSDI Group. All members of the GSDI Association and IGS are encouraged to sign up for GIKNetwork and to submit documents relevant to any aspect of SDI development and deployment, globally.

The aim of the Geographic Information Knowledge Network (GIKNet) is to enhance communication and freely share knowledge among professionals in the global geographic information community. The GIKNet Community Registry permits individuals, government agencies, NGOs, companies and other institutions to record and publish details about themselves and submit relevant documents to the Spatial Documents Depot, which provides a search facility for locating information and documents submitted by GIKNetwork members. A comprehensive list of GI/SDI related discussion lists can be accessed from a single reference page. Access the GIKNetwork at this link: <http://www.giknet.org/>.

PARTICIPATION IN GLOBAL SDI PROJECTS

UNSDI – UNGIWG 12 Meeting

The UN GI Working Group held its UNGIWG-12 meeting in Vienna, 28-30 March, hosted by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UN-OOSA). The meeting was attended by several GSDI Members, including Carmelle Terborgh, Chair of the GSDI Societal Impacts Committee, and Dr Gabor Retemy-Fülöpp (HUNAGI), former Chair of the L&SE Committee, among others. OGC® was represented by Athina Trakas, as OGC® joins the UNGIWG. The GSDI Association was also re-confirmed as a participant to the initiative, in an advisory capacity within the Special Interest and Task Groups for UNSDI. The final day of the 3-day meeting concluded with a panel discussion on "SDI Private-Public Partnership models" at which both the OGC® and the EU's INSPIRE initiative were represented. A full meeting report will be available from the UNGIWG web site shortly (see www.ungiwg.org). The agenda, background documents, Web casts of various presentations and more information about the meeting can be seen at:

<http://ungiwg.ctbto.org/meetings/12th-ungiwg-assembly-meeting-0>.

GEO/EuroGEOSS

The Group on Earth Observations (GEO) announced a Call for Participation (CFP) in the 5th phase of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) Architecture Implementation Pilot (AIP-5). The Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) provides leadership in AIP-5. The CFP document is available at: http://earthobservations.org/geoss_call_aip.shtml and responses were required by 11 April. The Point of Contact for the AIP initiative is George Percivall, gpercivall@opengeospatial.org to find out more. AIP-5 places a priority on these areas:

- Increase GEOSS capacity to support several societal benefit areas (SBAs): Disasters, Health, Energy, Water and Agriculture.
- Deploy user management and authentication to support GEOSS Data-CORE.
- Conduct research to be considered for the GEOSS Common Infrastructure (GCI).



Other Global Programs

Various GSDI Member organisations, members of the GSDI Association Committees, Council and Board are involved in the many other global initiatives or programmes on an on-going basis:

- Eye on Earth – visit www.eyearth.org
- Group on Earth Observations (GEO) building the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) – see www.earthobservations.org/ag_partorg.shtml
- UNESCO IOC – Marine/Coastal Spatial Data Infrastructure development – visit www.iode.org.

- UNSDI – UN-GGIM (UN Global Geospatial Information Management) – visit ggim.un.org.
- UNSDI – UNGIWG (UN GI Working Group) – visit www.ungiwg.org

GSDI DISCUSSION FORUMS UPDATES

To see the latest news from the different e-mail forums maintained by the GSDI Committees (4) and the regional SDI Newsletters (5), visit the web site at <http://www.gsd.org/discussionlists>, choose the forum of interest and select the 'Archives' option. All discussion lists are open to anyone who is interested in participating, and joining instructions are at the web site above.

For more information on any of these items, visit the **GSDI Association** web site at <http://www.gsd.org>.

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