

**in070065**

**GSDI 9  
INCITS L1 Outreach**

**November 3-10, 2006**

**Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Conference  
GSDI 9  
Santiago, Chile**

**Trip Report  
John Moeller**

**Introduction**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Conference was held in Santiago Chile from November 6-10. In conjunction with this meeting a number of other global and globally regional organizations also held meetings to take advantage of the gathering of key geospatial policy and technical leaders from around the world.

The INCITS L1 Committee's work furthers the development of Spatial Data Infrastructures in the United States and elsewhere. As a recognized national standards development organization the standards, which it adopts, help enable US SDI activities to be compatible with the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) and other global geospatial initiatives. In particular its work furthers the development of the US National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) and the National System for Geospatial-Intelligence (NSG). INCITS L1 also has a set of work activities in collaboration with the Geomatics Committee of the Standards Council of Canada to develop common implementation profiles for North America. This work directly supports the US NSDI and the Canadian Geospatial Data Infrastructure.

The North American effort is moving towards successful completion of a Metadata Profile and has potential for expansion and coordination with Latin America for a Metadata Profile for the Americas. Potentially this could lead to an initiative to develop geospatial standards/profiles for the Americas.

INCITS L1 is interested in providing leadership in facilitating the necessary coordination to determine the feasibility of a "Standards for the Americas" initiative and the priorities for such an effort. L1 members are involved in mission activities, which go beyond the US borders and they recognize the potential benefit of providing greater participation and leadership in GSDI and Regional SDI development and implementation in the Americas.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this Outreach Activity is to increase the presence and participation of the US INCITS L1 Committee by expanding its work in the Americas. The L1 has not participated in Outreach and standards work outside of the Canada/US relationship and its role as the US TAG for ISO TC211. The potential for collaborative work to develop and promote implementation profiles for SDI implementation in the Americas is of significant interest to the L1 and is supported by INCITS.

## **Meetings and Activities**

### **GSDI**

The GSDI 9 meeting was the centerpiece of the activities in Santiago, Chile. The GSDI Association hosted the Conference in cooperation with the Chile Military Institute of Geography, The Spatial Data Infrastructure of Chile (SNIT), ESRI, Intergraph and the US Federal Geographic Data Committee. The GSDI Conference was very important to the Chilean Geospatial data community. High level Government Officials made presentations, and many political, military and government officials attended the opening reception for the Conference.

The GSDI is an ambitious effort to establish a common Spatial Data Infrastructure at the global level. The GSDI encompasses the data, standards, technology, policy procedures and resources to more effectively access, share and use geospatial information across nations for social, economic and ecological issues. GSDI Conferences are held approximately 12-18 months apart and are rotated among the regions of the world.

Approximately 425 persons from 52 nations attended the GSDI 9 Conference. The Conference schedule included 8 Workshops, over 60 Sessions and Meetings of the GSDI Board of Directors, Council and Committees. The meeting was very successful in bringing together a wide array of countries and individuals and the draft resolutions of the Conference reflect the growing capability around the world of nations and regional organizations to develop and implement SDIs. The key to this growth is the recognition that there now exists a baseline of adopted international standards, which enable compatible SDIs. Further, the development of globally regional implementation profiles is stimulating collaboration and implementation in many parts of the world.

The Institute of Military Geography of Chile hosted the Conference and had many activities focused on Latin America. A special edition of the GSDI Regional Newsletter

was published for the Conference and can be seen at:  
<http://www.gsdi.org/newsletters/SDILACv3n11English.pdf>

### **Other Meetings**

In addition to the GSDI 9 Conference several other organizations took advantage of the event and also conducted meetings. Many of the attendees of these meetings also were participants in GSDI 9. These included:

**The United Nations Geographic Information Working Group** - The United Nations geographical Information Working Group (UNGIWG) is a network of professionals working in the fields of cartography and geographic information science to build the UN Spatial Data Infrastructure needed to achieve sustainable development. UNGIWG was formed in 2000 to address common geospatial issues - maps, boundaries, data exchange, standards - that affect the work of UN Organizations and Member States. UNGIWG also works directly with non-governmental organizations, research institutions and industry to develop and maintain common geographic databases and geospatial technologies to enhance normative and operational capabilities.

**International Cartographic Association (ICA) - SPATIAL DATA STANDARDS COMMISSION** - The Commission was originally organized to examine standards that specify the spatial data transfer process, and any standards associated with that process. The earlier cycles of work discussed international developments for transfer standards, conducted a detailed examination of the transfer standards themselves, and then examined the national and international metadata standards. In its fourth cycle of work, the Commission examined the developing Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) at the Global, Regional, National levels, and its ramifications on the world of the ICA. Now in its fifth cycle of work, the Commission proposes to develop a conceptual model of the SDI and define the technical characteristics of the SDI.

**Permanent Committee for the Infrastructure of Geospatial Data of the Americas (PCIDEA)** was established pursuant to Resolution number 3 of the Sixth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas (UNRCCA), convened in New York City, June 1997. At the present time the Organization includes 24 countries in the American Continent. PCIDEA aims are to put together common interests for national spatial data infrastructures to be integrated in a regional context as well as in the global one and for the establishment and coordination of policies and practical standards for the development of the regional infrastructure of Geospatial data for the Americas. Additionally PCIDEA objectives are to promote the interchange of geospatial information between all members of the American community with due respect to their autonomy and according to their policies and national laws.

**International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM)** was established in February 13, 1996 with the primary purpose to examine measures that concerned national, regional and international organizations can take to foster the development of Global Mapping in order to facilitate the implementation of global agreements and conventions for environmental protection as well as the mitigation of natural disasters and to encourage economic growth within the context of sustainable development. Global Map is a group of global geographic data sets of known and verified quality, with consistent specifications, which will be open to the public. Global Map is considered a common asset of mankind, and will be distributed worldwide at marginal cost.

**The Pan-American Institute for Geography and History (PAIGH)** - is an international organisation that has been, since 1949, a specialised non-profit organisation attached to the Organisation of American States – OAS – with the following objectives:

- To encourage, coordinate and publicize cartographic, geographic, geophysical and historical studies as well as related sciences of interest to the Americas.
- To promote and carry out studies, projects, and training in these disciplines.
- To promote cooperation among the Institutes of these disciplines in the Americas, as well as with related organizations.

In order to support these activities, for each of the four fields of Cartography, Geography, Geophysics, and History the PAIGH contains a Commission that prepares and executes the scientific, technical and institutional programs activities related to each field.

## **Results and Opportunities**

Presentations and Meetings: I gave three presentations while attending the meetings. I had been invited by the Conference Organizing Committee to make a presentation as part of a Panel, which discussed the Global Vision for Spatial Data Infrastructure. In addition, to this previously planned presentation, I was able to arrange two other presentations. Despite the uncertainty of whether I would attend until a little over 2 weeks prior to the Conference, I was fortunate to be asked to make these additional presentations. Presentations included:

**GSDI - Are the Vision and Concepts Still Relevant?** – This was presented to the GSDI Conference – this presentation was not focused on the Americas, however it provided the opportunity to make the point that one of the important actions in SDI implementation is a multi-national collaborative activity.

**Standards in Action: Interoperability the Key to Enabling the Collective Capabilities of Geospatial Information and Intelligence** – Presented to the United Nations Geographic Information working Group - this presentation focused on the use of the geospatial baseline of standards to achieve interoperability. Again it provided the

opportunity of pointing out the need for regional collaboration on standards profiles for implementation.

**ISO Metadata Standard North American Profile: Fostering a Framework for the Development of Spatial Data Infrastructures in the Americas** – Presented as part of a Workshop on the Latin American Metadata Profile. This presentation was focused on the opportunity to harmonize the Metadata Profile activities of North America and Latin American and to explore the potential of a broader effort to develop Profiles/Standards for the Americas.

Additionally, Harold Moellering gave a presentation on the North American Profile in a Panel Session on Geographic Data and Metadata. This presentation highlighted the work which the US and Canada are doing to develop the North America Profile. Hal did an excellent presentation and along with the presentations of David Danko on Metadata activities. These presentations helped demonstrate the commitment of the USA to standards activities.

**GSDI Association Board of Directors and Committee meetings** – I was also able to attend the two Board of Directors Meetings, which were held and participated in the Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Committee. I am not an official Board member, but because of my previous membership and role in establishing the GSDI concept and organization, I was invited to participate in an advisory capacity.

**Individual Discussions:** During the course of the Conference, I had numerous discussions with individuals regarding the potential for developing spatial data infrastructure standards for the Americas.

### **Opportunities:**

I believe that there are several opportunities for furthering the standards process and coordination in the Americas:

1. Include Mexico in the North American Profile work – Jesus Olvera Ramirez the Director of Spatial Data Infrastructures for INEGI, Mexico was very receptive to participating in the NAP activities. During the course of the meeting I introduced him to Dave Danko and Hal Moellering. We agreed to follow-up and provided him with a copy of the current version of NAP.
2. Initiate Coordination with Colombia – Colombia through the Agustin Codazzi Geographic Institute has done excellent work on Metadata Implementation. I spoke with Dora Ines Rey Martinez the Chief of the office conducting this work about future coordination. She was very receptive to the idea.
3. Initiate a process with the Pan American Institute for Geography and History to harmonize the NAP and the Latin American Metadata Profile activities. This work can then be assessed to determine its potential as a building block

for further cooperative activities. Discussions with Santiago Borrero, the Secretary General of PAIGH indicated a high degree of interest. Mr. Borrero and I discussed some possible first steps after metadata harmonization, which will need to be further fleshed out.

4. Continue to pursue agreed upon priorities with Canada as outlined from previous meetings. Include Mexico from the beginning of any activities and look for opportunities to expand the work into any Standards for the Americas deliberations.

### **Recommended Actions**

I recommend that the INCITS L1 Committee develop a Plan for each of the identified opportunities and initiate action for each in 2007.

Submitted by:

John J Moeller  
November 27, 2006