

# ICA in Mapping the World

ICA takes its international responsibilities seriously, notably in Africa. A previously published ICA page (by Nyapola in GIM International, January 2005) described the scope of the ICA Working Group on Mapping Africa for Africa. ICA president Konecny and past-president Rystedt continue to devote time to meetings and initiatives which have direct relevance to progress both in African cartography and mapping and to more general international projects. ICA has an ex-officio seat on the board of the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI). ICA participation in the April 2005 GSDI meeting in Cairo was extensive. GSDI operates via six standing committees, and the Technical Committee chaired by Doug Nebert has developed the GSDI Cookbook with a special edition for Africa.

Further, there was a simultaneously held meeting of the Joint Board of Geo-spatial Information Societies (JBGIS). Constituted by the presidents of FIG (Federation Internationale de Geometres), IAG (International Association for Geodesy), ICA (International Cartographic Association), IHO (International Hydrographic Office), IMTA (International Map Trade Association), ISCGM (International Steering Committee for the Global Map) and ISPRS (International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing), JBGIS was formed in 1999. This was when the International Union of Surveying and Mapping (IUSM) was dissolved. Along with decisions made about the administrative structure of JBGIS, discussions focused on how to be visible at the World Summit for Information Society, to be held in Tunis next November. Former ICA president Fraser Taylor reported that, so far, the final document does not include geo-spatial information as part of the information society. One option would be to have a slot on geo-spatial information in the ICSU (International Council of Scientific Unions) side-event. ICSU has been informed of JBGIS interest in contributing. The Joint Board has decided to establish an ad hoc group for disaster management (under Bengt Rys-tedt) and for education and capacity building in Africa (under Ian Dowman). It was expected that the first report on disaster management would be presented at the meeting of the ICA Working Group on Early Warning and Risk Management in A Coru a, Spain, in July 2005.

The International Steering Committee for Global Map (ISCGM) also met in Cairo in April 2005 to conduct its twelfth meeting. The Global Map project is a Japanese initiative presented to Agenda 21 in 1992. The project was recognised by the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg 2003 and UN has adopted ISCGM as an "NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations". The main objective of the Global Map project is to achieve a database with geo-spatial data at a resolution of 1km or better. In April 2005 the list of participating or considering organisations contained 142 countries. The aim is to achieve global coverage by 2007. Global Map data has eight layers: Boundaries, Drainage, Transportation, Population Centres, Elevation, Land Cover, Land Use, and Vegetation. One of the basic ideas of the project is the educational and capacity-building aspect. It provides training, technical support and advice to the National Mapping Organisations (NMO) on how to compile the data. When data is verified it will be available to everyone at "a marginal cost".

Next month's ICA page will present further ICA involvement with mapping Africa via the CODI project and its most recent conference in Addis Ababa.