



# “SPATIAL INFORMATION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC”

Positioning nations of Asia and the Pacific for regional and global development

## BACKGROUND

The Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific (PCGIAP) operates under, and reports to, the United Nations Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP). It was established as a result of a Resolution of the triennial meeting of the Conference in Beijing, May 1994.

Membership of the Permanent Committee comprises the 55 nations of Asia and the Pacific, as defined by the UN. The countries span a wide part of the globe from Iran and Armenia in the west to French Polynesia in the east; from the Russian Federation and Japan in the north to Australia and New Zealand in the south.

The Permanent Committee meets annually. Member nations are represented on the Committee by directorates of national survey and mapping organisations and equivalent national agencies.

An Executive Board coordinates the Committee's work program. Working Groups are established, where required, to undertake projects in pursuit of the Permanent Committee's aims and objectives.



## AIMS

The aims of the Committee are to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits of geographic information in accordance with Agenda 21 by providing a forum for nations from Asia and the Pacific to:

- A. cooperate in the development of a regional geographic information infrastructure;
- B. contribute to the development of the global geographic information infrastructure;
- C. share experiences and consult on matters of common interest; and
- D. participate in any other form of activity such as education, training, and technology transfer.



*Agenda 21 acknowledged that the availability of geographic information is critical for environmental decision making*

*The region can benefit from better management of its spatial information*

## AGENDA

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, 1992, took steps to reverse environmental deterioration and establish the basis of a sustainable way of life into the next century. A program for addressing global environmental challenges while continuing to support sustainable economic development was resolved.

Agenda 21 sets out measures for, among other things, protecting the atmosphere, combating deforestation, preventing pollution, halting the depletion of fish stocks, and safely managing toxic wastes. In Rio it was acknowledged that the availability of geographic information is critical for environmental decision making.

The Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21 (Earth Summit+5), held in June 1997, reaffirmed the importance of spatial data for sustainable global development.

## WHAT IS A SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURE ?

The concept of national infrastructures is not new. In all nations, the major road and telecommunications networks, and basic health and education facilities, have been funded by governments. The rationale is that it is a legitimate role of government, on behalf of the community, to provide a common, consistent infrastructure upon which a variety of government, private sector and community activities can take place. Similar principles can apply to regional needs.

The PCGIAP views geographic (or spatial) data as an infrastructure, with the same rationale and characteristics as roads, communications and other infrastructure. As the regional coordinating body for the management of geographic information, the PCGIAP believes that a spatial data infrastructure is needed to support the region's economic growth, and its social and environmental objectives, backed by international standards, guidelines and policies on access to those data.



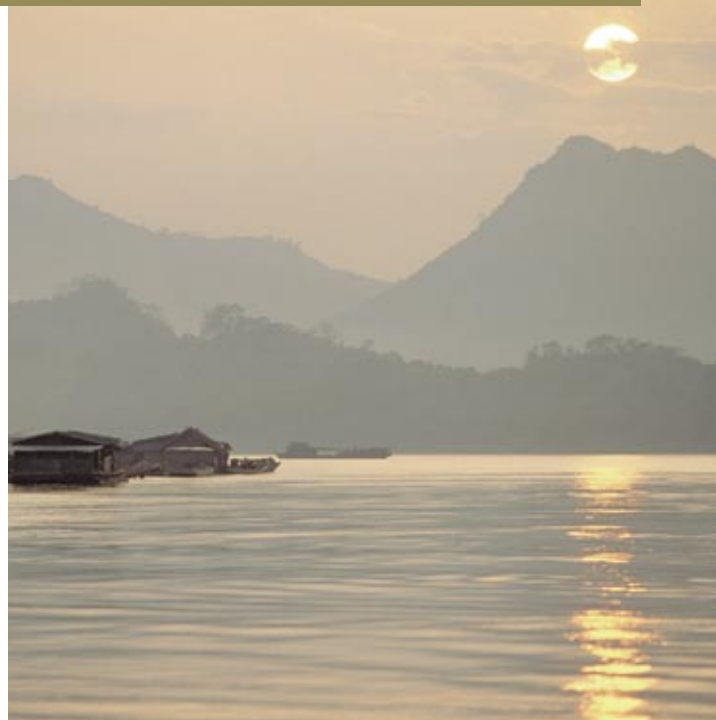
## WHY IS THE ASIA-PACIFIC SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED ?

A significant proportion of the region's economic development and social and environmental well being is heavily dependent upon the use of land and water resources. For example, mining, farming, forestry, transport, tourism, coastal zone management and the planning of services for the community to name a few.

Aspirations of nations in the region can only be realised if good, consistent spatial data is available and readily accessible. This is especially important when planning for the future.

Spatial data describes information that can be related to a position on the Earth's surface whether that be on the land, sea or in the air. Information about vegetation, minerals, road networks, property ownership, soils, air quality and population distribution can all be spatially related. Regional issues such as catchment management, land development and transport planning all require good, consistent spatial information. There are few areas of cooperation between nations which do not rely either directly or indirectly on this kind of information.

The PCGIAP believes that the region can benefit from better management of its spatial information by taking a perspective that starts from the national level and works up to the regional level. The PCGIAP has close links with other relevant regional and global development activities, such as, Global Mapping and the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure initiative.



## OPERATIONAL AREAS

The PCGIAP operates a program and structure based on an Executive and three core areas:

**Executive/Secretariat:** responsible for planning and managing the activities of the PCGIAP and defining the regional spatial data infrastructure.

The Executive is currently supported by three working groups:

**Regional Geodetic Network Working Group:** responsible for the implementation of a regional, precise geodetic network and coordinating regional geodetic campaigns.

**Regional Fundamental Data Working Group:** responsible for establishing regional fundamental datasets and mechanisms for sharing these data and fostering an understanding of the benefits in using regional fundamental data.

**Regional Development Needs Taskforce:** responsible for identifying members' GIS related development needs and recommending support programs and funding options.

The above activities of the PCGIAP are together satisfying the aims of the Committee and providing the means for developing the Asia-Pacific Spatial Data Infrastructure (APSDI). The PCGIAP is also supporting cadastral activities in the region.

## PCGIAP MEMBER COUNTRIES

1. Afghanistan	19. Japan	37. Northern Marianas
2. Armenia	20. Kazakhstan	38. Pakistan
3. Australia	21. Kiribati	39. Palau
4. Azerbaijan	22. Korea North (DPR)	40. Papua New Guinea
5. Bangladesh	23. Korea South (Republic)	41. Philippines
6. Bhutan	24. Kyrgystan	42. Russian Federation
7. Brunei Darussalam	25. Laos	43. Samoa (American)
8. Burma	26. Macau	44. Samoa
9. Cambodia	27. Malaysia	45. Singapore
10. China	28. Maldives	46. Solomon Islands
11. Cook Islands	29. Marshall Islands	47. Sri Lanka
12. Fiji	30. Micronesia	48. Tajikistan
13. French Polynesia	31. Mongolia	49. Thailand
14. Guam	32. Nauru	50. Tonga
15. Hong Kong, China	33. Nepal	51. Turkmenistan
16. India	34. New Caledonia	52. Tuvalu
17. Indonesia	35. New Zealand	53. Uzbekistan
18. Iran	36. Niue	54. Vanuatu
		55. Vietnam

## MEETINGS

MEETING	LOCATION	DATE
13th UNRCC-AP	Beijing, China	May 1994
1st PCGIAP Meeting	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	12-14 July 1995
2nd PCGIAP Meeting	Sydney, Australia	29 Sept. - 4 Oct. 1996
14th UNRCC-AP /3rd PCGIAP Meeting	Bangkok, Thailand	1 - 2 February 1997
4th PCGIAP Meeting	Tehran, Iran	28 Feb. - 4 March 1998
5th PCGIAP Meeting	Beijing, China	19 - 23 April, 1999
15th UNRCC-AP / 6th PCGIAP Meeting	Bangkok, Thailand	Feb 2000
PCGIAP Meeting	tba	2001

Note: At the time of the triennial UNRCC-AP meetings the PCGIAP holds its annual meeting for that year.

## PCGIAP PUBLICATIONS

"PCGIAP Publication No. 1: A Spatial Data Infrastructure or the Asia and the Pacific Region" is the first in a series of special publications being produced by the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific.

This paper sets out the vision of the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific (PCGIAP) for a regional spatial data infrastructure that comprises fundamental data, standards, institutional arrangements and access mechanisms.



## PCGIAP SECRETARIAT

For more information about the PCGIAP please contact:  
Executive Officer

Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure  
for Asia and the Pacific

PO Box 2

BELCONNEN ACT 2617

Australia

Ph: +61-2-6201 4267

Fax: +61-2-6201 4366

e-mail: [BobIrwin@auslig.gov.au](mailto:BobIrwin@auslig.gov.au)

WWW: <http://www.permcom.apgis.gov.au/>

Please contact the Secretariat for additional copies of the brochure or for other material prepared by the PCGIAP. The Secretariat can also provide information about points of contact for spatial data infrastructure development in member nations.