

# UNSDI Implementation Strategy: Ten Random Reflections

Professor Harlan J. Onsrud  
President, Global Spatial Data infrastructure

UNGIWG Seventh Meeting

02-04 November 2006

Military Geographic Institute (IGM) – Santiago - Chile

# ... international geospatial enterprise architecture

**For what purpose?**

To provide the core elements for efficient and effective use of spatial data among large numbers of managers and technical users

# Random Thought 1

**What should be the ultimate goal of the UNSDI vision?**

Perhaps: provide and advance geographic information technologies and systems such that people anywhere can gather the critical data they need for themselves

# Random Thought 2

Where will the architectural priority of UNSDI be focused?

1. **Desktop** - software and data on your machine but data may be drawn from anywhere on the web
2. **Multipurpose or database focused** - (a) many users accessing and using same remote database (e.g. spatial appliances) (b) many users potentially drawing from and updating multiple standardized databases
3. **Web services** - stand alone that anyone can access or distributed and shared, highly focused applications

# Random Thought 3

**Does there exist a next core global dataset that almost all UN agencies would use and be willing to support?**

Past and Present: perhaps “gold standards” are gridded population of the world & administrative boundaries

Future: gridded gross domestic product?  
comprehensive global roads dataset?  
other?

# Random Thought 4

**Is there a reasonably achievable global data set that could be openly accessible that would provide a base upon which many other data sets could be built?**

- creates a no-strings-attached default standard enabling sharing

# Random Thought 5

**What is the one highest priority web service that almost all UN agencies would want, use and support?**

# Random Thought 6

**Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals includes making the benefits of information technologies more broadly accessible in all developing countries.**

Why not make the UNSDI an exemplar in fulfilling that goal?

## Average data creator would like to be able to:

- create an ironclad license for her dataset in a minute or less,
- create standards-based metadata in ten minutes or less,
- ensure automated data provenance tracking,
- ensure automated long-term archiving,
- access and contribute to a peer evaluation system.

## Random Thought 7

The UNSDI should support both a ***Global Commons in Geographic Data and Processing*** and a ***Global Marketplace in Geographic Data and Processing***.

## A. Global Commons

**Commons:** users know they can use data sets without obtaining prior permission from the data's contributor, as long as any conditions the contributor places on the use of the data are respected.

- Use open approach to intellectual property protection

14 Security: use FGDC approach for assessing

## B. Global Marketplace

- UNSDI becomes enabler for micro IS business growth on a global basis
- Core data must be open access
- Anyone who sells data through the global marketplace automatically donates it to the commons after a commercially reasonable time, provisionally five years

# Random Thought 8

**“No current rules of engagement upon which to base cooperation among agencies are believed to exist.”**

**Advice: keep it simple**

*Licensing* - commons licensing as simple as it gets  
*Metadata* - user needs to create minimally acceptable metadata or doesn't get benefits of the commons or market

# Random Thought 9

**Is there a geo information capability not yet developed that would be of specific and substantial benefit to poor communities or nations?**

**If yes, might UNSDI make it happen?**

**Development Science Prize in Spatial Technologies?**

# Random Thought 10

The GSDI Association promotes international cooperation and collaboration in support of local, national and international spatial data infrastructure developments that will allow nations to better address social, economic, and environmental issues of pressing importance. It is an inclusive non-governmental, non-profit international organization of organizations, firms, and individuals from around the world formed exclusively for educational, scientific, and research purposes.

**Would working in cooperation with GSDI and other global geographic organizations and initiatives be beneficial? .... absolutely**