Organised Spatial Data Interest Community and the Development and Use of Enabling Digital Earth Technologies in Hungary

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Due to the recession and financial crisis in Europe the important role of research and development as well as the need to identify innovative solutions is widely acknowledged in order to ensure improved competitiveness and employment and economic growth. It is increasingly being realised that proper organisation and management of geographical information (GI) can play a signficicant role in addressing these issues.

Exploiting the GI related opportunities fully requires input from major sectors of society, government, private sector and community.

At the European level the European Union has put in place the INSPIRE Directive which aims to establish a European Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) based on SDIs established at the national level. Currently consideration is being given to initiating a process of establishing a European Union Location Framework which will move the agenda beyond INSPIRE in the latter part of the current decade. Sub-national SDIs are increasing playing a role across Europe. The European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information (EUROGI) is supporting a data base of such sub-national SDIs and developing the related network. Digital Earth technologies are playing an increasing role in developing these infrastructures.

Given its flexibility and capacity for innovation, the private sector, often in conjunction with academic bodies, also has an important role to play. A European Union initiative to promote the re-use of public sector information represents an important inititative in this regard. It is currently under review with the view to strengtherning its operation.
Digital Earth technologies and data outputs can provide a strong basis for private sector contributions.

Community input through crowd sourcing is growing and will in the future make an increasingly important contribution. This area of innovation and growth will complement the activities of NGOs operating in the GI field. The role of the Hungerian national GI association, HUNAGI, will be discussed with emphais on its role in providing a forum for interested parties (government, academia, industry) to exchange ideas and raising awarens by disseminating information

and knowledge on geospatial data related services and enabling Digital Earth technologies.

The paper briefly introduces the domestic and international legislative frameworks which are influencing positively the emerging use of GI in priority societal benefit areas. After identifying the key drivers and members of the Spatial Data Interest Community (SDIC), major emphasis will be given to illustrating the developments and applications of Digital Earth technologies in Hungary in the categories spatially enabling government, the spatially enabling industry and spatially enabling citizens.
Some achievements in innovation, research and development will be introduced and the important role of scientific institutions emphasized. Recent initiatives related to legal challenges (ie. accessibility and usability of GI), as well as education and capacity building are highlighted.
Finally a flashback and short outlook is given from HUNAGI perspective on how the SDI and the Digital Earth communities are - as anticipated -mutually interested to work together.