



## **SDI development in the Americas**

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### **Abstract**

The Permanent Committee for Geospatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas – PC-IDEA ([www.cp-idea.org](http://www.cp-idea.org)) has been established based on the Resolution No. 3 of the Sixth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas - UNRCCA, held in New York in 1997. It operates under the scope of these Conferences and submits its recommendations and respective activity reports to them. The general purpose of PC-IDEA is to maximize the economic, social and environmental benefits derived from the use of geospatial information, through knowledge and exchange of experiences and technologies between the countries, based on common standards which would allow the establishment of the Geospatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas. PC-IDEA is currently composed by 24 member countries of the region.

This paper presents the current status of the PC-IDEA activities, especially for the 2009-2013 period (e.g., from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> UNRCCA). According to the resolutions of the 9<sup>th</sup> UNRCC, PC-IDEA should establish working groups to carry out activities during this period covering the following themes: (a) Institutional strengthening, education and training; (b) Technical standards and specifications; (c) Best practices and applications; and (d) Innovations for national mapping agency business models. In addition to that, the Permanent Committee should also: set up mechanisms to develop guidelines on geospatial data (creation, management and dissemination), metadata, and geospatial information policies and legal issues relevant to the region, using as a model the various initiatives developed by the INSPIRE Directive; conduct a study of the status of mapping by country and region; create a forum to exchange and share spatial data infrastructure best practices; convene a meeting on disaster risk management and spatial data infrastructure that would allow the participation of the majority of Latin American and the Caribbean countries; support the development of local, national and regional spatial data infrastructure in the developing countries of the Americas, and in particular in the Caribbean region; etc.

Based on the above, a Working Group on Planning (PC-IDEA GTplan) was set up in May 2010 to develop planning activities in seven topics, each one under the responsibility of a specific country representative: (1) Institutional capacity building, education and training (Colombia); (2) Standards and technical specifications (Mexico); (3) Best practices and guidelines for the development of SDI (Canada); (4) Innovations in national cartographic agencies in matters pertaining to their work (Brazil); (5) Knowledge gathering on topics relevant to the SDI for the region (Guatemala); (6) Status of SDI development in the Americas (Cuba); and (7) Implementation of technological means for discussion related to access to geospatial data and the role of governments in the management and dissemination of these data (Chile). Due to these activities, a questionnaire is being submitted to PC-IDEA member countries, whose results are going to be released during the next PC-IDEA meeting, to be held in August 18-19, 2011, in Rio de Janeiro, in conjunction with the Latin American Geospatial Forum ([www.lagf.org](http://www.lagf.org)).

It should be mentioned that PC-IDEA activities are aligned with the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management – GGIM initiative ([un.ggim.org](http://un.ggim.org)), which proposes a multilateral/global mechanism that will play an important leading role in promoting global geospatial information availability and accessibility. The First High Level Forum on GGIM will be held from October 24 to 26, 2011, in Seoul, Republic of Korea.