

# SPATIALLY-ENABLED SOCIETY

THE BELIEF THAT SPATIAL ENABLEMENT LEADS TO MORE ACCOUNTABLE, RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT GAINS FURTHER OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT



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**Spatially-enabled societies recognise that all activities and events have a geographical and temporal context, make decisions and organise their affairs through the effective and efficient use of spatial data, information and services.**



His Excellency Dato Sri Douglas Uggah Embas, the Malaysian Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, receives the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Spatially Enabled Government and Society from Dr. Hiroshi Murakami, Vice President of PCGIAP

This was certainly recognised by those participating in a recent Expert Group Meeting and International Symposium on Spatially Enabled Government and Society with its theme "Towards Spatial Maturity". This international gathering was hosted in mid-February by the Survey and Mapping Department of Malaysia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre and supported by FIG.

## Declaration

The outcome of the three-day event is the *Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Spatially Enabled Government and Society*<sup>1</sup> ... one that resolves to fully support the initiative of the United Nations to implement global mechanisms that foster geospatial information management among

the Member States, international organisations, and the private sector. The Declaration also:

- Affirms the importance of authoritative and assured data and information
- Encourages the incorporation of volunteered information
- Develops enabling platforms for locating, connecting and delivering information of different scales, purposes and origins
- Confirms the importance of common geodetic reference frameworks, positioning and network infrastructures.

In accepting and declaring the Declaration, the Malaysian Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, His Excellency Dato Sri Douglas Uggah Embas, noted in his closing speech that, *"it is very important for a nation to have ready access to all its spatial information to assist the nation in ensuring sustainable growth and to tackle issues related to the current economic slow-down, climate change, biodiversity conservation and agricultural production. Spatial data infrastructures and fundamental data are crucial in our quest for environmental resilience and sustainable development towards a developed country"*.

He added that, *"based on this Declaration, the (Malaysian) National Mapping and Spatial Data Committee will formulate a national action plan to implement the Declaration. At the same time, I hope the foreign delegates to this Symposium would present this Declaration to their respective governments and advise them especially within the 56 PCGIAP jurisdictions on the hope and the aspiration of this Declaration"*.

This latest endorsement reinforces the belief that spatial enablement leads to a more open, accountable, responsive and efficient

government, as well as better policies, evidenced-based decision making and sustainable actions.

The International Symposium is an activity of the United Nations sponsored Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific (PCGIAP). The Expert Group Meeting was convened on the day preceding the symposium by PCGIAP Working Group 3, the FIG Task Force on Spatially Enabled Society, and the GSDI Association.

The EGM brings together and provides a forum for professionals from the public and private sector, academic and scientific institutions at which to discuss the issues, trends and technologies that impact a spatially-enabled government and society. Participants from the FIG at the EGM included President CheeHai Teo, Vice President Prof Ing. Rudolf Staiger, FIG Commission 4 Chair, Dr Michael Sutherland, FIG Task Force on Spatially Enabled Society Chair, Dr Daniel Steudler, Peter Laarakker from Dutch Kadaster/GIN, Enrico Rispoli from CNGGeL Italy and Brent Jones from Esri.

The FIG Task Force on Spatially Enabled Society brings its work over the past three years to a close in May at FIG's 2012 Working Week in Rome, Italy. One of its achievements – a publication on the subject, prepared jointly with the PCGIAP and GSDI – is expected to be released later this year.

<sup>1</sup> Full text can be found at <http://m.jupem.gov.my/issegs2012/declarationfinal.pdf>



**CheeHai Teo,**  
President,  
International  
Federation of  
Surveyors (FIG)

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