

Abstract

GSDI5

Title: **Investing in an SDI: Why would a multi-lateral development bank finance a spatial data infrastructure?**

The multi-lateral development banks (MDBs) ought to consider financing of a spatial data infrastructure (SDI) in a developing nation as they do other types of national infrastructure. An SDI is a vital part of the information infrastructure and is an essential element of a programmatic lending structure. The development of an SDI involves the coordinated collection and use of spatial data layers, such as transportation, hydrography, land use, utilities and sanitation, vegetation, and administrative boundaries. These geographic features can also be linked to economic and social indicators in order to advance health, education, and welfare-related development goals.

The fundamental data layers of an SDI can be used for various phases of development project planning and evaluation and for environmental impact assessments (EIAs). Additionally, the SDI will support decision-making activities related to resource allocation, engineering and project design, and allow for integration of project data into a comprehensive country development strategy. Current development projects create many datasets that if compiled in a standardized way would contribute to an SDI. It would be wise to have the terms of a development loan mandate that spatial data layers generated for any project be organized and maintained by the government as a foundation for their SDI. The future benefits of an SDI are numerous to both the developing nation and to the multi-lateral development banks. Long-term benefits of spatial data collection and analysis include more economically efficient government programs, and with open data access policies, create a market for spatial data within the country.

Respectfully submitted by:

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