

Global Mapping and Sustainable Development: Progress and Promise

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This paper will outline the progress of the Global Map project from its inception in the early 1990's until February 2004. The author is Chair of the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM), which has responsibility for determining the policies governing Global Map. At the time of writing Global Map is supported by 129 organizations, most of them being national mapping organizations. Global Map makes an indispensable contribution to Global Spatial Data Infrastructures by providing a concrete framework of eight spatial datasets at the 1:1 million scale. Global Mapping was endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 where ISCGM was named as a Type 2 implementation agency of UNCED. By July 2003 only 12 percent of the world's land surface had been fully covered but over 20 nations had submitted their data for processing bringing the coverage to about 50 percent, an impressive total. The goal is to complete full coverage of Global Map by 2007. Initial Progress on Global Map was slower than anticipated but in 2002/2003 important changes were made to the implementation of Global Map. The paper will describe and assess these changes and discuss the presence of Global Map as a key component of a Global Spatial Data Infrastructure.

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