

Meeting Sustainable Information for Development Requirements with Advanced Geospatial Technologies

Thirty years of civilian satellites and geospatial information technologies have witnessed significant developments in the applied integration of Remote Sensing and Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies. Periodic assessments of information requirements which can be met by remote sensing and GIS technologies have shown how these advanced geospatial information technologies are increasingly relied upon to locate, assess, and manage natural resources and the environment, to plan and manage infrastructure, and to support decision-making processes related to health, education, and public policy sectors. Information needs as well as information management are supported by these technologies.

Practical applications of geospatial technologies, increasingly receptive policy-makers, and advanced technical capabilities have created compelling cases for integrated Information Technologies as important tools for addressing sustainable development needs. Major advances continue to occur in areas of data acquisition, data processing and analysis, and information management. Today's dynamic and expanding abilities to collect data of appropriate spatial, spectral and temporal resolution, and to modify data in geographic information systems that address problems ranging from simple to complex problems, and across disciplines, are efficiently and effectively integrated.

The InterAmerican Development Bank is working with countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to ensure that the deployment of advanced geospatial technologies are integrated with information and communication technologies to respond to unique values, needs, conditions, resources and aspirations of the countries in the Region. Many countries have demonstrated the capacity and desire to incorporate these technologies in their development programs. The challenges are clearly more institutional than technical.

Within the InterAmerican Development Bank, the Information Technology for Development Division facilitates matching the needs of countries in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for development with the resources and capabilities of the Bank. Member countries are generating synergy to ensure that their ICT activities, which increasingly include remote sensing and GIS programs, operationally contribute to achieving development objectives. And the Bank is generating synergy to respond effectively and in a timely manner to new sets of integrated requirements from the Region.

Specifically, the Division provides technical backstopping for project development supported by the Bank in the geospatial information technology fields, and offers strategic and technical advice to governments on how to make better use of available geospatial information technologies. In addition, the Division is responsible for developing cooperation agreements and co-financing arrangements to support research activities, studies, training, seminars, technical assistance and pilot projects.