

Geospatial Information and Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

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A Belgian perspective.

In the resolution adopted by the General Assembly, ‘The future we want’ World leaders *‘acknowledge the need to further mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects and recognizing their interlinkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions.’*

As head of the Nationaal Geografisch Instituut of Belgium the word ‘interlinkages’ has an important relevance to the work we do on behalf of our nation and the work we do on behalf of Europe.

The word is important because we see on a daily basis that it is geospatial information that provides the inter-linkage between economic, social and environmental issues. As this becomes increasingly realised by politicians, scientists, business leaders and citizens across the world; so we see the demand for reliable and authoritative geospatial information increasing too.

In Belgium we have responded to this by re-defining our role, from data gatherer, to data integrator, from data integrator, to data broker. In Belgium’s role as the production manager for EuroGeographics’ EuroRegionalMap we also gather and integrate data from Europe’s national mapping, cadastre and land registry authorities. In the European Location Framework project we intend to take this further and to contribute this exciting development project as Europe’s contribution to the United Nation’s ‘Global Map for Sustainable Development.