



“GeoSur develops geographic services on a free-access web platform”

The Editor's Note

GeoSUR Newsletter is born. Its purpose is to disseminate GeoSUR Program's achievements and characteristics as well as sharing events, projects and best practices for the application of geospatial information into sustainable development and decision making in the region, as part of the Geospatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas. It aims at encouraging dialogue, cooperation and strengthening of actions to promoting consolidation and use of the above applications. Original contributions will be presented in the form of

interviews, permanent columns of GeoSUR/CAF and PAIGH, in addition to alerts on GeoSUR Portal's novelties. The Newsletter is directed to the Americas and the international community engaged with topics addressed by GeoSUR, therefore its production in English, Spanish and Portuguese. The Portuguese translation is performed by **Eduardo Freitas** (Brazil), both editor of MundoGEO website and magazine and coordinator of GEOeduc Institute. We wish to receive your contributions and suggestions; please send them to: **Nancy Aguirre**, Editor GeoSUR Newsletter at cnaguirre@ipagh.org.

Inside this Issue:

- Interview of the month with Antonio Rodríguez, Deputy Assistant Director of the CNIG (IGN) of Spain.
- From Eric's desk highlights both cooperation possibilities both with European organizations, and agencies or initiatives at global levels.
- From PAIGH's General Secretariat shares the beginning of a new management, and the Pan-American Technical Assistance Program-Projects for 2014 and 2015.



Antonio F. Rodríguez-Pascual, Deputy Assistant Director of the National Geographic Institute (IGN) National Center for Geographic Information (CNIG) of Spain, has a degree in Physics and works in the IGN of Spain since 1986. He is experienced in GIS, quality, metadata, data modeling, web services and SDI. He has been part of the SDI of Spain since its inception in 2002.

“Many assets generated in Europe ... are adaptable to the Americas.”

Interview of the month with Antonio Rodríguez: Pan-American and Pan-European Cooperation

The CNIG has a long history of cooperation with the PAIGH and now with CAF / GeoSUR. Is CNIG a natural partner to establish mutual cooperation relationships with pan-European initiatives such as INSPIRE?

The [CNIG](#), an autonomous commercial body affiliated to IGN Spain, can play the role of bridging and connecting two grounds in which we are inserted: the Latin American countries' Community and the European setting revolving around [INSPIRE](#). We have deep association bonds with the above two realms and believe that information flow, synergies and collaborative projects may be very beneficial for both. On one hand, Latin America can leverage best experiences and good practices cultivated in the European nursery to adapt them where possible; and on the other, we believe that the European Union needs an opening outwards and the influence of vitality and creativity from this dynamic and vibrant a region. Many assets generated in Europe, including models, strategies, formats, interfaces, software and standards are adaptable to the Americas. Very interesting cross business opportunities for all may also surge. The [CNIG \(IGN\)](#) knows firsthand the value and potential derived from connection of different environments: being both a member of the Open Geospatial Consortium ([OGC](#)) and knowable of the standardization world; holding the Spanish Association for

Standardization and Certification (in Spanish [AENOR](#)) Committee 148 Secretariat and collaborating on the playing field of normalization and the International Standardization Organization ([ISO](#)); and being involved in the implementation of the [INSPIRE Directive](#). These three organizational and technological fields feed off each other while allowing the establishment of links and relationships that are worth benefiting from.

What is the future of virtual education at CNIG?

Just to mention few specific lines of action, the [CNIG \(IGN\)](#) will maintain its Online-Course Program on GIS, SDI and related issues, while adapting them to requirements that may arise and latest technical innovations; it will also promote activities for harmonization of ISO 19100 terminology and standards within the [R3IGeo Network](#), which have led to notable achievements such as the [Pan-Hispanic version](#) of the ISO/TC211 glossary; CNIG will continue the undertaking of consulting, assessing and training projects on demand, as it has done so far in several countries; and will maintain participation in strategic European projects such as ELF (European Location Framework) in which a group of European mapping and cadastral agencies cooperate to implementing a set of reference web services in The Cloud that are based on official geographic data.

From Eric's Desk

Dear friends, it is my real pleasure to participate in the launch of this novel GeoSUR-Program Newsletter.

Hereby we want to share information about data, geoservices, relevant experiences and developments that are advanced in the region by both GeoSUR and the many institutions that produce and use geographic information as to achieving a high development level for our cherished Latin America and the Caribbean.

GeoSUR is a decentralized and collaborative institutions' initiative in our region, pursuing an increased use and dissemination of geographic information while positively impacting decision making in many realms. We like to think that GeoSUR, along with other valuable initiatives, is helping to lay foundations for a Spatial Data Infrastructure in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Inside this first issue I want to highlight cooperation possibilities we are exploring with European institutions. On one hand,

a Letter of Intent was signed in June by CAF, EuroGeographics, the PAIGH and PSMA (Australia) during the INSPIRE Conference in Aalborg, Denmark, which sought to explore joint initiatives, particularly actions that build on progresses achieved in Europe on geographic information production and reuse.

Moreover, GeoSUR continues exploring various cooperation prospects with agencies and initiatives globally.

Among them are included the Joint Research Centre and the INSPIRE initiative, the Group on Earth Observation (GEO), the Association for Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI), the Environmental Agency in Europe, the UN-GGIM Americas, and the Geocentric Reference System for the Americas (SIRGAS), among many others.

We want GeoSUR to be properly integrated into global information networks, and to provide our bit to global governance.



Eric van Praag, GeoSUR Program Coordinator



Dave Lovell, EuroGeographics Executive Director, and Eric van Praag signing a Letter of Intent during the INSPIRE Conference 2014 in Aalborg, Denmark

From PAIGH's Secretary General

By participating in this new idea that emerges from the collaboration between PAIGH and CAF (Development Bank of Latin America) for the development of GeoSUR Program, I wish to share with readers that I began in office with a formal visit to José Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the OAS (Organization of American States) where I had the opportunity to discuss the importance of geospatial data for sustainable development in the Americas, including significant topics such as climate change, natural hazard management, and land use planning (territorial ordering).

In this regard, the General Secretariat of PAIGH received 34 projects for its Technical Assistance Program 2015, which dealt directly or indirectly with the above subjects and whose evaluation was subject for the PAIGH's Meeting held

this July in Mexico. Projects implemented as part of the Technical Assistance Program 2014 are advancing with interesting results, as is the case of "Scenarios for Latin American Spatial Data Infrastructure New Trends Analysis: Challenges and Opportunities" an initiative coordinated by Dr. Daniela Ballari of Ecuador, which outcomes will be available by the end of this year.

Finally, in GeoSUR Newsletter we are looking forward to informing on progresses from the joint coordination between PAIGH, [SIRGAS](#), [UN-GGIM Americas](#) (Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Americas), and GeoSUR as to implement the [Joint Action Plan for Development of the Spatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas](#).



Rodrigo Barriga Vargas, PAIGH Secretary General

The [Pan-American Institute of Geography and History \(PAIGH\)](#) is an international, scientific and technical institution under the Organization of American States dedicated to knowledge production and transfer in the fields of cartography, geography, history and geophysics, as to keep Member States' researchers and scientific institutions both updated and in continuous communication.

GeoSUR Portal's Novelties

A virtual course on environmental indicators and incorporation of environmental and statistical data to mapping services in The Cloud was held during May and June.

The course was offered by the National Center for Geographic Information of Spain (in Spanish CNIG) with 64 specialists from Latin America and the Caribbean attending it. This training was part of a joint project by CAF, PAIGH and the Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi in the framework of the Eye on Earth global initiative to developing a global data network.

In a second phase of this project, specialists from both CNIG and GeoSUR will support selected institutions to migrate their data and geoservices to The Cloud.

Likewise, GeoSUR has been very active in recent months in order to incorporate the following regional spatial data to its [map viewer](#):

- Land cover change map 2013 of Latin America and the Caribbean produced by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT,)
- WMS service with ongoing flooding in the region and a map of floods in 2013 developed by the University of Colorado,
- Northern Andes Species Distribution map by Nature Serve,
- Map of Ecoregions by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and
- A Mangrove map prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

Including these data, more than 700 supranational digital maps are now available for free access and download in the regional map-viewer.

Flooded areas in Bolivia and Paraguay during the months of March and June respectively were mapped in real time with support of the University of Colorado. This information, along with daily river-flow data measured in the affected areas - by way of remote sensing - have been incorporated into the GeoSUR Platform for public access.

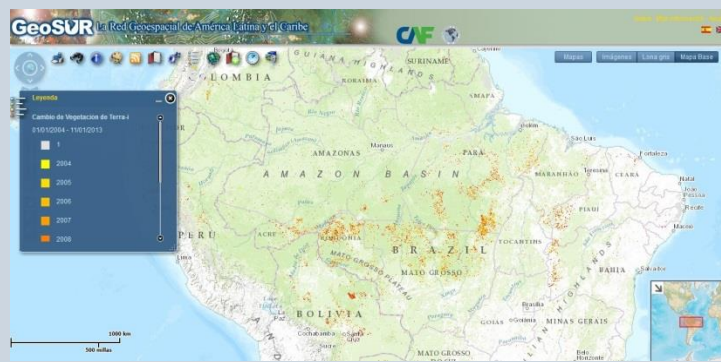
The above initiatives are also moving forward with support of key institutions to GeoSUR's development: the PAIGH, the National Center for Geographic Information (CNIG) of Spain, and the USGS, as well as being fostered by more than 100 institutions currently participating in one way or another with GeoSUR.



GeoSUR develops geographic services on a free-access web platform.

GeoSUR's regional map viewer provides access to spatial data at local, national and regional levels.

The new [Portal available through ArcGIS Online](#) complements functionality of the [GeoSUR Program Regional Portal](#), that offers a more advanced functionality directed to Geographic Information Systems users with basic knowledge.



Land Cover Change Map of Latin America and the Caribbean 2013 produced by CIAT

GeoSUR Program: Basic Figures

Years in Operation	7
Participating Institutions	95
Beneficiary Countries	25
GeoSUR Network Specialists	500
Officials Trained (6 Regional Workshops)	250
CAF Officials Trained	120
Virtual Workshops Offered	35
Available Digital Maps	10,000
Available Metadata	14,000
Map Services (WMS)	250
WFS Services	25

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Other events in the region

CAF: ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT IN FAVOR OF PARAGUAY COMPETITIVENESS

CAF (Development Bank of Latin America) and the government of Paraguay signed a loan agreement for a total of US\$272 million to facilitating transportation of goods through departmental, regional and international productive corridors. CAF will finance implementation of road infrastructure through various projects in road sections of the national and departmental roads that are located in three departments bordering Argentina, Bolivia and Brazil. The physical infrastructure planning and development for the integration of Latin America requires adequate access to seamless and standardized georeferenced spatial information. As part of the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA), CAF has developed the GeoSUR Program. [Source: CAF]

"Investment in infrastructure is one of key developmental and regional integration factors and, therefore, a priority in the comprehensive development model that promotes CAF for Paraguay and Latin America," said Fernando Infante.



Panel "GeoSUR Program: The Geospatial Network of Latin America and the Caribbean"



Awards Ceremony at MundoGeo#Connect 2014

PANEL ON GeoSUR PROGRAM AT MUNDOGEO#CONNECT

A new edition of MundoGEO#Connect Latin America, one of most important geospatial events in Latin America, was successfully held from May 7 to 9 in Sao Paulo, Brazil including 4,680 participants, 185 speakers and 57 exhibitors. The seminar titled "Public Geoinformation Managers" included the Panel titled "GeoSUR Program: The Geospatial Network of Latin America and the Caribbean," which featured 1,200 virtual registries and active participation of 700 persons simultaneously connected. It was designed to sharing successful Program implementation experiences that were recognized with the GeoSUR Prize of 2012 and 2013 editions. With facilitation of Santiago Borrero, former Secretary General of PAIGH, and presentation of Eric van Praag, coordinator of GeoSUR Program, the projects on "Geospatial Data Integration for Central America" by Rigoberto Magana, Director of the Institute of Geography and Cadastre of El Salvador; CIAT's "Terra -I" initiative, presented by Alejandro Coca, Colombia; and "Deploying the MINAM-Peru Geoserver" by Alexander Montero, responsible for the Ministry of Environment of Peru Portal Services, were exhibited. Among the awardees of MundoGEO#Connect 2014 Santiago Borrero (current senior adviser of GeoSUR Program) received a Special Award for his contribution to the spatial integration in the region.

UN-GGIM AMERICAS TO MEET IN SEPTEMBER

The Regional Committee of the United Nations on Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas (UN-GGIM: Americas) will hold its next meeting on September 22-25, 2014 in Mexico City as part of the Latin American Geospatial Forum. The program includes discussion on first working year progresses and activities, regional and international cooperation, the [working groups](#), and future plans for the Regional Committee, among others. [Source: Monica Aguayo, [UN-GGIM: Americas](#)]