

Preface

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED or Earth Summit) adopted “Agenda 21”, an action plan of humankind towards achieving sustainable development, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In order to contribute to the implementation of Chapter 40 on “Information for Decision Making” of Agenda 21, the Government of Japan proposed a project of developing “Global Map” in the same year. The idea of Global Mapping Project was supported by National Geospatial Information Authorities (NGIAs) in the world and the international geospatial information community. Their strong support led to the establishment of the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM) in 1996.

ISCGM developed the Global Map specifications that define a set of basic geospatial information at the scale of 1:1 million, so that it will be used for global-level activities including sustainable development, environmental protection and disaster mitigation. ISCGM also developed an implementation framework for the development of Global Map, which invites NGIAs in the world to participate in the Project by developing and verifying the Global Map of their own countries. Many countries supported the idea and actively participated in the Project. As a result, two thirds of the world’s land surface (including Antarctica) has been covered with Global Map by December 2016. In addition, Global Map Global Version data, namely, land cover, percent tree cover, and elevation datasets that cover the whole land surface, have been successfully completed and provided to the public.

The number of countries/regions voluntarily participating in the Project from all over the world reached 184, and their strenuous efforts made it possible to achieve the above mentioned magnificent results in Global Map data development. In other words, the Project provided the NGIAs community with an international cooperation framework to work together and collectively develop the Global Map data. Through such cooperative efforts, the Project also significantly contributed to raising the standards of NGIAs’ capacities, particularly those in developing countries, through the preparation and sharing of their digital map data.

Recognizing that the objective of Global Mapping Project was mostly achieved by the collective efforts of ISCGM and the participating NGIAs, the 23rd ISCGM meeting held in August, 2016 adopted the resolution of dissolving ISCGM and transferring the Global Map data to the Geospatial Information Section of the United Nations. The 20 year journey of the Global Mapping Project thus came to end. The Global Map data are expected to be used for various activities of the United

Nations Secretariat in the future.

This report summarizes the activities and achievements of Global Mapping Project which was led by ISCGM. On behalf of the ISCGM Secretariat, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude and appreciation to all those in the geospatial information community, including NGIAs, the industry and academia, who kindly supported and contributed to the Project, and hope that this report will not only be used to commemorate the Global Mapping Project, but also be useful for facilitating future efforts of international cooperation by the NGIAs in the world on geospatial information management.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Toru Nagayama', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Toru Nagayama

Secretary General, International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM)

Geospatial Information Authority of Japan (GSI)