

Rehabilitation of Haiti's Geographic Reference Information

The geographic data acquired in the emergency situation following the earthquake that ravaged Haiti in January 2010 were unfortunately not able to be put to optimal use. France has financed a preliminary study aiming to operationally rehabilitate the Haitian National Centre of Geo-Spatial Information (CNIGS) and to reconstruct the country's geographic reference information.

On 22 March 2012, IGN France International presented the results of the preliminary study conducted for the rehabilitation of the CNIGS and the reconstruction of its geographic reference information in Port-Au-Prince. This seminar took place in the presence of representatives from the French Embassy and several users affected by geographic information in Haiti.

Following the earthquake that devastated the country in January 2010, IGN France (National Institute of Geographic and Forest Information) immediately provided the CNIGS with the data from an aerial campaign completed in 2002. Lost during the catastrophe, this orthophoto was thus able to be quickly dispatched to all of the organisations that arrived to help the country of Haiti.

However, and despite an abundance of information (during the weeks following 10 January 2010, the Haitian territory was more highly observed than is usual with any other part of the world, resulting in high and very high-resolution satellite images, aerial acquisitions or simply the data acquired by field surveys), the data acquired in the emergency situation during this catastrophe were not able to be put to optimal use as a partial coverage of the territory, data that was not qualified qualitatively, or data were unavailable.

This particular context led to the completion of a preliminary study for the functional rehabilitation of the CNIGS and the reconstruction of the geographic reference information. This study addressed the various components.

An overview and a diagnosis of the existing completed via a series of interviews of the main stakeholders and users of geographic information in Haiti (available data, collection of requirements, use of data, potential applications, etc.)

The completion of a prototype for a topographic database, a map at a scale of 1:25,000 over the Croix des bouquets area and at 1:10,000 over the urban area, and the implementation of a core station within the CNIGS

A series of recommendations based on the experience acquired during the completion of the prototype that take the needs expressed in phase 1 into account, in order to extend this operation to the entire Haitian territory and to provide Haiti with a geographic reference database that is homogenous and perfectly qualified on which a number of operations related to the country's reconstruction could rely. The finalised recommendations concern the country's geodetic infrastructure, the acquisition of source data for the construction of the reference database, the structuring of the associated databases, their cartographic representation as well as the organisation that must be implemented within the CNIGS in order to ensure the production and maintenance of this reference database.

This preliminary study was performed using FASEP (Fund for the study and aid of the private sector) funding, French financing that aims to support the implantation and development of small and medium-sized French companies abroad through a fund that guarantees investments against economic risks.