

# Creating a Global Index of National Spatial Data Infrastructures



The need for an integrated agenda across the environmental, economic and social sectors is encapsulated in the UN Agenda 2030 through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Spatial evidence is required to monitor and assess progress towards a large proportion of the goals. To achieve this, a country needs to have the underpinning and supporting infrastructure to allow spatial data to be accurate, transparent, open and interoperable – something that a National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) can help to achieve. Despite this, there is currently neither an available global measure of a country's NSDI to perform these functions, nor a way to identify where improvements need to be targeted.

The GSDI project to create a global index of NSDIs proposes a set of indicators to score NSDIs globally. The index consolidates and condenses a large body of scholarship and experience on NSDIs into a set of key components that can be assessed and benchmarked using six indicators. The index will provide a top-level, multi-actor assessment and is intended to both support and stimulate more detailed assessments for regions of the globe where strong transnational planning capacity is vital and urgent for users.

The NSDI index is being executed by Georgina Chandler, with assistance and supervision from Prof Joep Crompvoets (KU Leuven), Paul Jepson (Oxford University), Susanne Schmitt (World Wildlife Fund-UK) and Dave Lovell (GSDI president-elect).

## Pilot tests

The index will be pilot tested on a selection of 10-15 countries and the results, along with the proposed index, will be published and presented in an academic paper. The index will be rolled out globally using an online platform hosted on the [GSDI website](#). The results, without weighting, analysis or conclusions being drawn, will be made available as an overall averaged score from all respondents to give the index value for each country.

Ultimately, the scoring that a comprehensive and stakeholder-relevant index provides will allow investment and decision-making to be directed towards any weak or problematic areas of NSDI development. It will promote collaboration between government departments and other stakeholders and will motivate them to improve their spatial data quality, management and availability. There is also the potential for the index to raise awareness of potential barriers to a country effectively reporting spatial data evidence to the Sustainable Development Goals and other international agreements.