

## **From Bonn 1996 to Santiago 2006: Ten Years of GSDI, Achievements and Challenges**

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### **Abstract**

The World Summit on Sustainable Development - WSSD (Johannesburg, 2002) is also known as Rio +10 because it took place 10 years after Agenda 21 or Declaration of Rio was promulgated. Agenda 21 established a new global framework for partnership and cooperation among States, societies and people to attain ambitious goals for the benefit of the Earth's human environment through Sustainable Development.

In a way, Agenda 21, along with the ICT revolution, was the incubator for global initiatives like the Global Spatial Data Infrastructure, established in Bonn, Germany in 1996 and alike Rio +10, the GSDI 9 Conference should allow the community to advance a similar comparative exercise by revisiting the original ideas, recognizing its major difficulties and important achievements in order to better address the future of the community, based on innovative visions and concepts of institutional relevance.

In order to provide the necessary historical perspective for a GSDI session on Global Visions for Spatial Data Infrastructure Development, this paper advances an introductory exercise of this nature, based on the experience and perspective gained by the author working for SDI development as a teammate at multi levels.

After visiting the original SDI ideas, the difficulties resulting from the complexity of the immense effort executed in its first decade, the author reconfirms (1) SDI as a multilevel, interdisciplinary, intricate and dynamic process that is a major contributor to the expansion of the Information Society and a structural prerequisite for nations in progress to accomplish multidimensional developments goals; and (2) the GSDI as an association supportive and respectful of diversity, where multiple approaches to technology and change are considered and promoted by professionals representing different ethnic, national and disciplinary perspectives.