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Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda*

Toponymic data files and gazetteers

e) Data services, applications and products

National Land Survey of Finland topographic and names data now freely available

Submitted by Finland **

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National Land Survey of Finland topographic and names data now freely available

The Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry issued a decree on 21 December 2011 on the fees of the National Land Survey of Finland (NLS). The decree prescribed that as of 1 May 2012 the NLS will make its topographic datasets available to all interested parties to be used freely and free of charge. The NLS Geographic Names Register data and services were made freely available already in the beginning of 2011.

The aim of opening the datasets is to promote the use of accurate and up-to-date spatial and names data as well as the creation of new applications and innovations. The availability of free and easily-accessible authorised names data is also seen as a key driver in encouraging the use of nationally standardised names.

The availability applies to all NLS digital topographic and names data products and services, such as

- the Geographic Names Register data and services
- the Topographic Database and products and services derived therefrom (including small scale datasets and topographic raster maps in scales 1:25 000–1:8 million)
- elevation models (2 m, 10 m, 25 m, 200 m)
- aerial photographs and orthophotos
- laser scanning datasets
- benchmarks

The availability does not apply to

- data in the Land Information System (including the cadastral index map)
- printed maps and map printouts
- information on depths and aids to navigation of sea areas and largest lakes provided by the Finnish Transport Agency and included in the NLS Topographic database

Available datasets can be acquired from a downloading service, or by using the data via internet services (Web Feature Service, Web Map Service). The downloading service is a self-service through which the customers can select the products and areal coverage, the format, and the co-ordinate system they want. The service provides the customer with a web address, from where the selected data can be downloaded.

Early statistics on the use of geographic names datasets and services free of charge

The National Land Survey made the Geographic Names Register (GNR) products and services together with small scale map dataset in 1:1 million and 1:4.5 million freely available already on 1 January 2011. During 2011 (12 months) there were

- 70 new registered users of GNR Web Feature Service (WFS)
- 4 119 successful downloads of pre-defined GNR data files (nation-wide coverage)
- 7 254 successful downloads of small scale map data files (vector and raster)

The purpose of use given by the users (names data files, names WFS, small scale map data files):

- private use 56 %
- internal use of the organisation 13 %
- commercial service 4 %
- internet service 4%

- mobile service 2 %
- publication 5 %
- research 7 %
- studies/education 9 %

More information on the NLS topographic data free of charge can be obtained from address <http://www.nls.fi>.