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**Invited papers on recent developments in geospatial information
management in addressing national, regional and global issues**

The Argentine Experience at Sharing Information **

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THEME: SPATIALLY ENABLING GOVERNMENT

THE ARGENTINE EXPERIENCE AT SHARING INFORMATION

The Argentine National Geographic Institute (IGNA), with a history of 133 years, is the agency in charge of the capture and production of basic geographic information which is necessary for the production of the Argentine Republic official cartography.

The basic geographic information production begins with the generation of a unique Geodetic Framework which is its support, as no cartography can be possible without a geodetic reference frame. So, the IGNA is also responsible for determining, updating and maintaining said Frame.

These are and have been, from the very beginning, the Agency's responsibilities, which have always pursued the production and management of geographic information according to the best and most productive technologies and techniques. The responsibility of producing said information meant the IGNA's unique ownership and increased the Agency's significance as its information could be hegemonically managed, and the idea of sharing information represented disempowerment. At present, in the 21st century, we have learnt that that idea about information management has become archaic, and, taking into account the technologies we have at present, it is more fruitful putting all the information together and sharing it; that is, socializing it.

The IGNA has been moving on this path for more than a decade when it began sharing the information related to the National Geodetic Reference Frame, free of charge, through the Internet. This began with the creation of an Argentine Continuous Satellite Monitoring Network (RAMSAC). For this reason, permanent GPS stations have been set up and the data generated were uploaded at the IGNA's web page. At present, there are 57 stations distributed all over the country, and steadily growing. Apart from this Network, we have the possibility of transmitting real time positioning differential corrections, which means the possibility of increasing information and the generation of a free of charge public service.

Geographic information capture began by using the idea of a Geographic Information System, which means that the information was not only used for the manufacture of cartography, but was also useful to be saved in a Data Base, with a structure which allowed being easily shared. A considerable

progress about this has been achieved, with some difficulties at first, but at present we have got the solid notion of Spatial Data. This allows the integration of data coming from many agencies so they can be efficiently shared.

As regards this, the IGNA has made progress in the last years as regards socializing geographic information. To achieve this, the IGNA has developed strategies related to its own task and others concerning its connection with the rest of information producers.

The strategies related to the Agency refer to reworking the operational and production organization, which were based on:

- The development of instruction manuals to adjust the available resources and human capital, according to international standards and regulations that guarantee the compatibility of cartographic and geographic information products.
- The addition of technology to support production based on a corporative data base model that may facilitate the management of the information that has been produced by the capture areas, and support regular updating and the uploading of the so generated geographic information
- Integration to a new Digital Aerophotogrammetric Geographic Data Base as the first source of data capture for the production of geographic information (line cartography, ortophotomaps, DTMs, and Geographic Information Systems.).

The strategies developed for the Agency to bind with other information producing agencies are related to an IGNA's openness policy towards society. This openness is reflected in the setting up of IGNA's provincial offices in Argentina, after having agreed with provincial governments, as a way of integration in order to work jointly in the production, training and make IGNA's products known.

Another strategic working line to place the IGNA into a highly technical society is the development of the Argentine Republic Spatial Data Infrastructure, so all the governmental geographic information users and producers may participate and integrate all social actors, ranging from scientists to public in general.

In the Argentine National Geographic Institute, we are aware of the hard job we have to face, but we know this is the way to satisfy a society that is eager of geographic information, not only for their private needs but also to improve the quality of life of all inhabitants.