

**11<sup>th</sup> CHRIS MEETING  
IHB, Monaco, 16-18 November 1999**

**ICA COMMISSION ON SPATIAL DATA STANDARDS  
(Ing. en Chef Michel HUET)**

This Commission of the International Cartographic Association held its latest meeting in the vicinity of Ottawa on 10-13 August 1999. The Meeting was chaired by Professor Harold Moellering, Ohio State University, USA, with ten persons in attendance from Canada, Denmark, Israel, Russia, South Africa, USA and the IHB.

The ICA Commission on Spatial Data Standards, which meets yearly, aims at **studying and assessing standards** that have been developed by various organisations, whether international, regional or national, to deal with geographical information. Since 1996, the Commission has been working on the assessment of all known standards for metadata (i.e. any information necessary to describe, as comprehensively as possible, a particular data set) that were developed worldwide. Additionally, only those metadata standards, which are independent of any transfer standards, have been considered in this exercise.

To allow for such assessment, a set of metadata characteristics has been developed by the Commission. This includes general and administrative information on the metadata standard itself and detailed criteria to describe a geo-spatial data set (e.g. identification, status, extent, data content, data quality, spatial data organisation, spatial reference, availability and distribution, and authorisation and verification). These characteristics were put in the form of a questionnaire, which was addressed to a number of recognised authorities for metadata standards. As a result, more than 20 metadata standards have been reviewed by the Commission. This includes the standard on metadata that has been developed by ISO/TC211. All reports will be included in an ICA publication to be released in the course of the year 2000 and which is intended to assist potential users of metadata in selecting a metadata standard appropriate to their needs. The Ottawa meeting additionally finalised a glossary of terms relevant to the metadata characteristics, which will also be part of the ICA publication.

The next task of the Commission, for the period 1999-2003, will be to study and report on Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) at the global, regional and national levels. This will include data standards, data management, data policies, organisations involved, and institutional aspects. With a view to avoiding duplication of work with other institutions involved in the matter, e.g. Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) or FIG, an exploratory sub-group has been formed to identify the SDI topics to be addressed by the Commission.

The next meeting of the ICA Commission on Spatial Data Standards has been planned at the IHB, Monaco, on 5-9 June 2000. Additional information on its activities is available from the Commission web-site at <<http://ncl.sbs.ohio-state.edu/ica>>.

