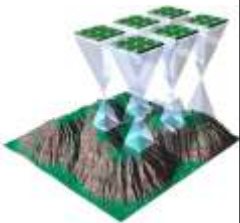




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# Open Access to Geo-spatial Information

**Dr Derek Clarke**

Chief Director: National Geo-spatial Information

Chair: CODIST-Geo

Vice-President: International Cartographic Association



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## *Greetings from International Cartographic Association*

Of relevance is:  
Commission on Cartography in Early Warning and  
Crisis Management

# Three Essential Requirements



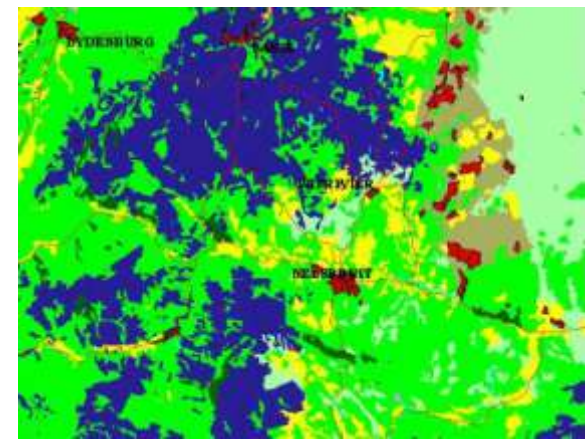
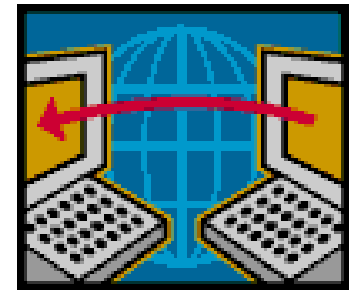
***Usability***



***Accessibility***



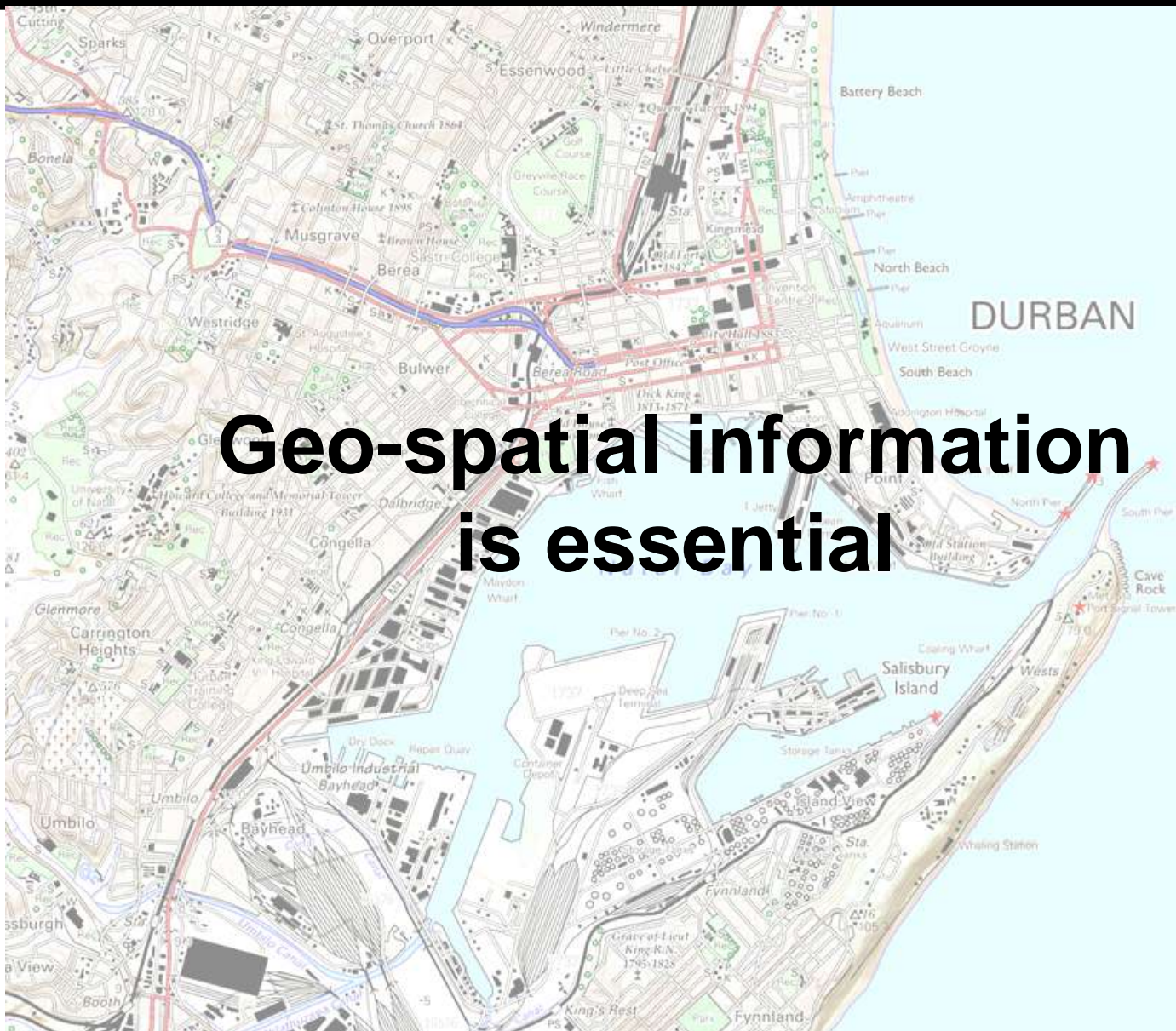
***Availability***







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**Geo-spatial information  
is essential**

# Essential requirement

## Accessibility:

- User knows what data is available.
- Source of data transparent to user.
- ICT infrastructure (including bandwidth and cost).
- Format of data.
- On-time.
- Standards.
- **Affordability (cost) of data.**
- **Open data (restrictions).**



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# Two arguments

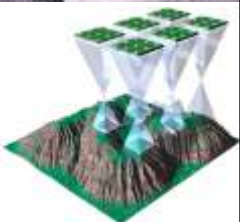
Pro-Restricted and Charged Data

VS

Pro-Open and Free Data



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# Pro-Restricted and Charged Data



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- National security.
- Protection of personal information/identity.
- Protection of intellectual property.
- Protection of sensitive information, including endangered species.
- Users do not appreciate the value of information if it is free (no charge).
- Data collection and maintenance is expensive and costs must be recouped.
- Governments do not fund data collection – information is only a means to an end.
- Institutional protection.

# Pro-Open and Free Data



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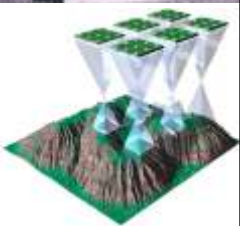
- ✓ Information has no purpose unless used.
- ✓ Information must be affordable to all.
- ✓ Restricted access will limit use of information.
- ✓ Restricted access will drive the user to other sources – with risk of reliability and quality.
- ✓ Open data promotes democracy.
- ✓ Public data collection paid for by fiscus should not be charged for – double taxation.
- ✓ In cases of emergency fast and ready access to information is critical – no time to resolve access issues and payments.



# Key Challenges in Africa



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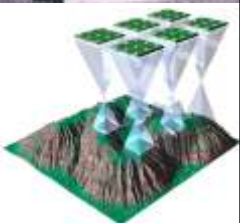


- Politicians do not appreciate need for fundamental geo-spatial information.
- National mapping agency suffers lack of financial support.
- Institutional survival – rivalry, lack of cooperation.
- National mapping agency in some countries is part of military – information is classified.
- Incapacity to collect, maintain and disseminate geo-spatial information.
- ICT infrastructure limited and unreliable electrical energy supply.

# Opening Up Access to Geo-spatial Information



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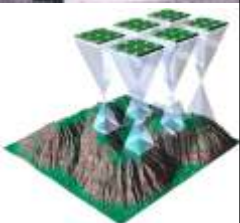


- Fundamental geo-spatial information must be accessible to all.
- Appropriate data policies – limited restrictions only (national security, privacy of individual); affordable; institutional cooperation and collaboration; synergistic arrangements; timely access to relevant, reliable information.
- Capacitating users.
- Political support.
- Mapping Africa for Africa initiative – making a difference in availability of and accessibility to fundamental geo-spatial information.

# Opening Up Access to Geo-spatial Information



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- South Africa's national mapping agency changed its data policy about 10 yrs ago to cost of supply (COFUR).
- Result in change to COFUR = 500% increase in dissemination of geo-spatial information.
- Direct data dissemination = +2 Tb digital data and  $\pm 90,000$  maps annually.
- 34 data distributors, including Google Earth.
- Multiplier effect to economy unknown – studies in Europe indicate 1:100.
- Cost to saving lives and assets is even more.



# Conclusion



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***Access to open and affordable geo-spatial information is essential in disaster risk reduction and in saving lives and assets.***

***There can be no justifiable reason to restrict access to geo-spatial information for disaster risk reduction and emergency response.***

Thank you