

Evaluating (N)SDIs: some general questions

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Wageningen workshop

Context - 1

- SDI has become a much overused term.
- Need to clarify what is meant by the concept before we can embark on monitoring and evaluation
- Important to ensure that we are comparing like with like
- Or, if not, that we are aware of the differences
- And understand their implications
- Particularly important in the context of the implementation of SDIs

Context - 2

- Also useful to consider what we mean by the terms
 - Monitoring
 - Evaluation
 - Assessment
- MEA
 - For who?
 - By who?
 - For what purpose?

Presentation

- Considers following questions
 - What is a SDI? And what will it look like?
 - What do we mean by national? Illustrates some of issues involved with reference to current developments in the UK
- Basic assumptions
 - SDIs are inherently multi level in nature
 - This must be built into the frameworks that are developed for their monitoring and evaluation

What is a SDI?

- “The [Global] Spatial Data Infrastructure supports ready global access to geographic information. This is achieved through the coordinated actions of nations and organisations that promote awareness and implementation of complimentary policies, common standards and effective mechanisms for the development and availability of interoperable digital geographic data and technologies to support decision making at all scales for multiple purposes.”

Four main components

- Overriding objective to maximise the use of national geographic information assets
- This requires some form of coordinated action on the part of government
- It must be user driven 'to support decision making at all scales for multiple purposes'
- This involves a wide range of activities including technical and institutional matters and human resource development

Comment

- Useful starting point but not really definitive. More motherhood and apple pie
 - The terms '*maximise the use*' and '*national GI assets*' are capable of many different interpretations
 - So is the term 'some form of action on the part of government'
 - And what sort of decision making?
 - And which kind of activities?
- Clear that SDIs are multi faceted and mean different things to different people

Some implications

- Many different versions fit the definition of SDI
- And many SDIs may not meet all these criteria
 - May be restricted to central government decision making
 - Different views of what constitutes an asset
 - May include or exclude key stakeholders

Conceptual problems

- The process product dilemma
 - Products easier to evaluate because finite thing
 - But typically argued that SDI is an ongoing process. So what are we evaluating and when?
 - Nancy Tosta has even argued that NSDI is a verb rather than a noun. We **do** (participate in) SDI

What will a SDI look like?

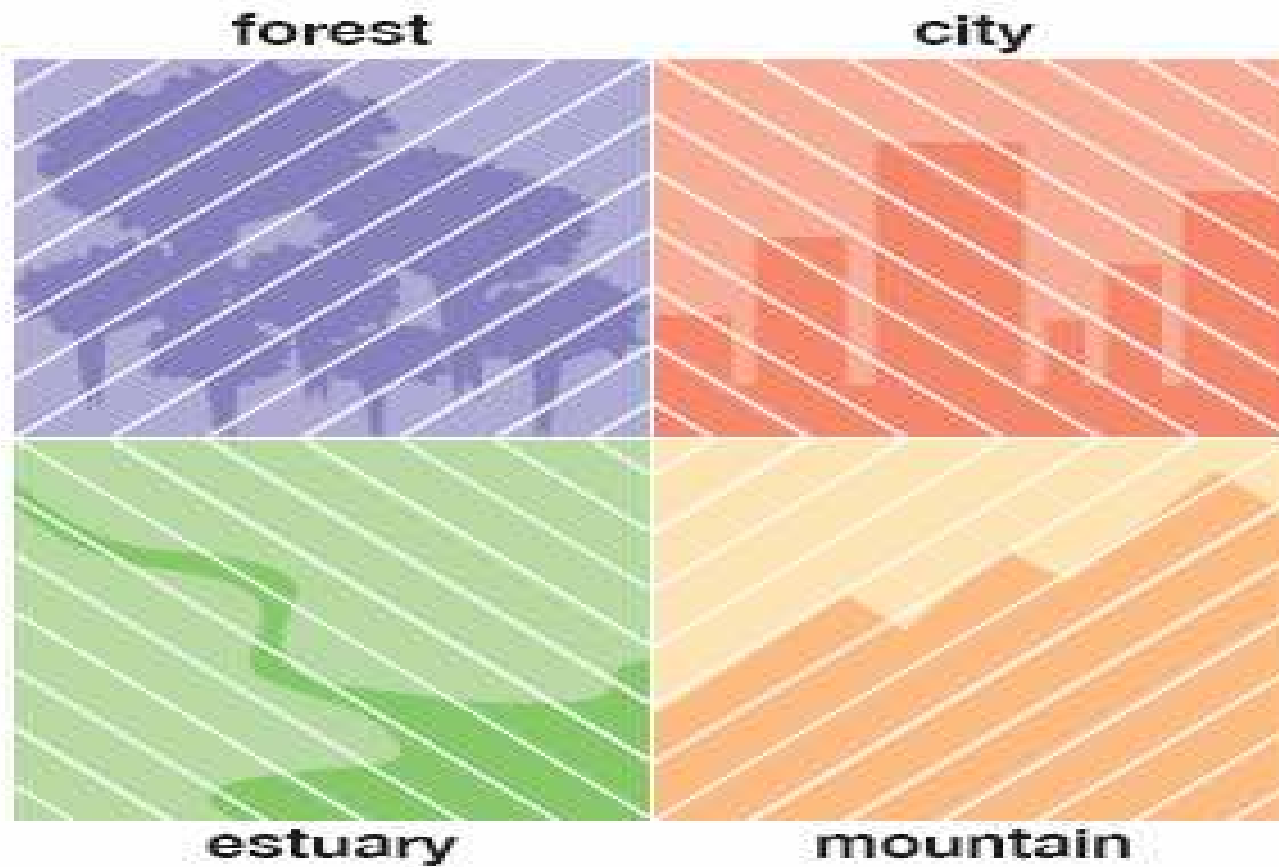
- One NSDI or many SDIs?
 - Top down or bottom up? An NSDI is the sum of its constituent parts. Impossible to evaluate the outcome without considering the components
 - Possible analogies
 - A patch work quilt
 - A collage

The patchwork quilt analogy

- Definition
 - 'pieces of cloth of various colours sewn together to form a cover'
- Section of thousand pyramids patchwork quilt from 1890



SDIs as a patchwork quilt



Comment

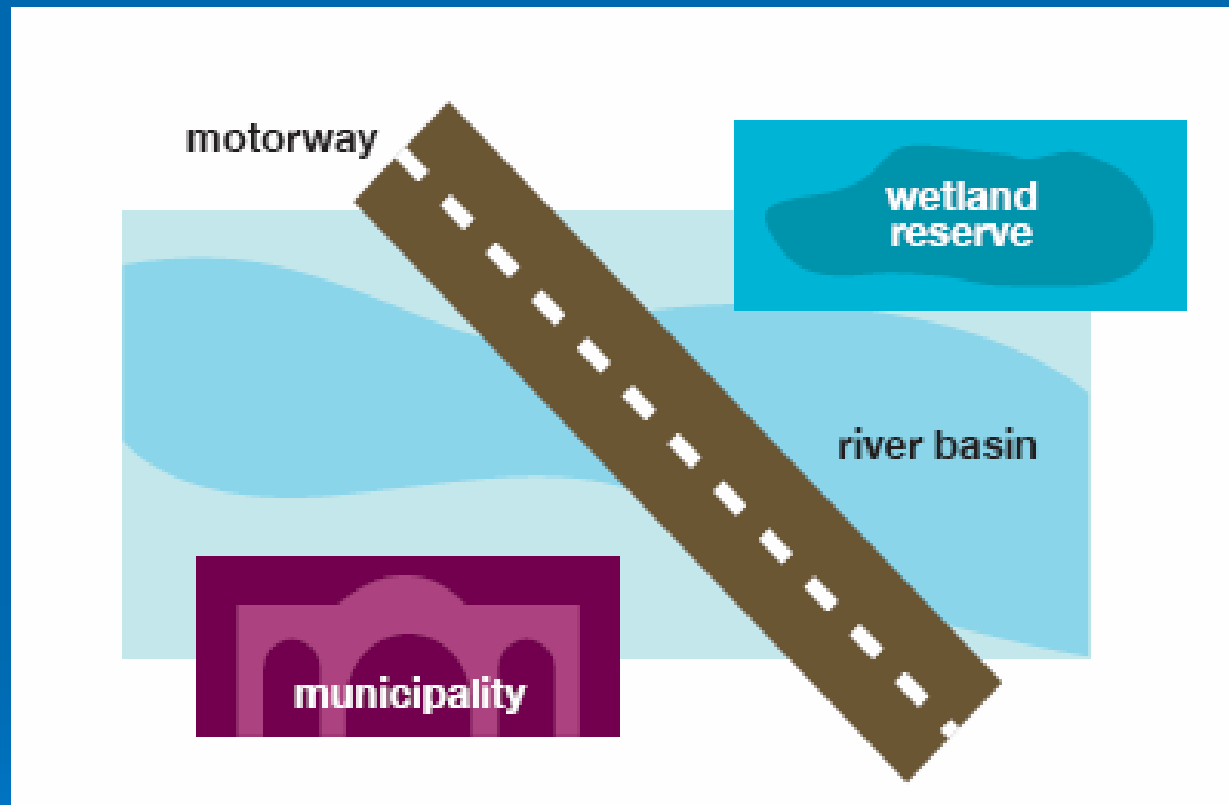
- Useful in connection with administrative regions carrying out similar functions – eg the US 50 states initiative
- Recognises diversity of participants – mountainous regions have different problems from coastal regions

The collage analogy

- Definition
 - ‘a picture built up from different pieces of paper, cloth and other materials’
- George Braque's collage of Violin with candlestick from 1910



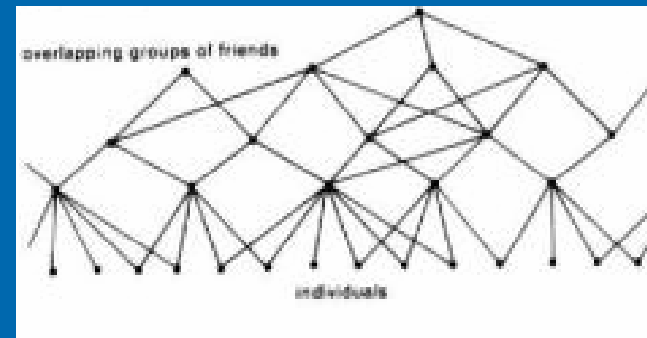
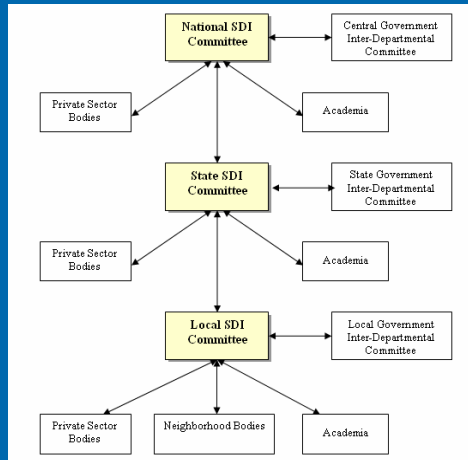
SDIs as a collage



Comment

- Useful where there are overlapping pieces and pieces that fit within other pieces
- Recognises diversity of participants – not just administrative regions but also environmental agencies and transportation network operators

A hierarchy or a semi lattice?



- Hierarchy: fixed order of relationships between different levels – patchwork quilt
- Semi lattice: overlapping relationships between different levels - collage

How national is a NSDI?

Concept relative rather than absolute

- Depends on who is included
 - USA: FGDC federal in orientation
 - Canada: GeoConnections includes all levels of government and academia and the private sector
- Also depends on distribution of administrative responsibilities
 - Centralised structures in Nordic countries
 - Devolved structures in Australia, Germany and Switzerland

An illustrative case study – the UK

- Case of UK illustrates the some of difficulties of 'national' evaluation
- Devolution of powers to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales (but not England)
- Differing areas of administrative responsibilities
- Different SDIs
- Conflicts over IPR

The United Kingdom

	Number (000s)	Percentage UK population
England	49,139	83.6
Scotland	5,062	8.6
Wales	2,903	4.9
North Ireland	1,685	2.9
Total	58,789	100.0

Distribution of responsibilities

- Surveying and mapping
 - Ordnance Survey of Great Britain
 - Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland
- Land titles registration
 - Land Registry (England and Wales)
 - Registers of Scotland
 - Land Registers of Northern Ireland
- Etc., etc.

UK SDI history

- National Digital Geospatial Framework (NGDF) 1995-2001
 - Regional initiatives
 - Geographic Information Strategy for Wales 2001-
 - Geographic Information Strategy for Northern Ireland 2001- MOSAIC 2004
 - One Scotland – one geography 2004-
- A location strategy for the UK 2007-

Some of the UK 'nationals'



The National
Land & Property Gazetteer



The National
Street Gazetteer

Some more of the UK 'nationals'



The National Spatial Address Infrastructure debacle

➤ Launched May 2005

- Aim
 - ‘to create a national high quality spatial address infrastructure that will be maintained through a partnership approach and a collaborative framework of address and property identifiers’
- Main partners Ordnance Survey and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) for local government

The National Spatial Address Infrastructure debacle - 2

- AGI response to manifesto
 - ‘It is not at all clear what the ‘National Spatial Address Infrastructure’ actually is, whether it is a product, a service or a process and how it will be delivered.’
 - ‘The scope needs to be specified in detail, including explicit statement of the things being addressed and the form that the addresses will take.’
- Press release August 2005
 - ‘Ordnance Survey and IDeA announced yesterday that plans to transfer ownership of the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) [a database run for local government by a private company] to Ordnance Survey as an input to the NSAI had not reached agreement within the original timescales.’
 - ‘Further negotiations have been suspended whilst all parties consider the implications for the future.’

Some messages from the UK

- No consensus about 'national'
 - UK and/or the regions?
 - Central and/or local government?
- No agreement about IPR
 - Trading Fund model
 - Free our data campaign
- Possible costs
 - Office of Fair Trading report on the commercial use of public information suggests that more competition would add half a billion £ a year to the national economy

Conclusions

- Presentation considered the following questions
 - What is a SDI? And what will it look like?
 - What do we mean by national? Illustrates some of issues involved with reference to current developments in the UK
- In the process it has highlighted some general questions that need to be taken into account in developing a multi view framework for (N) SDI assessment