

Spatial Data Infrastructure Development in Lesotho: Overcoming Obstacles

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SUMMARY

Basic to the ingredients for sustainable development for any nation is the availability of good information pertaining to national resources and services. Such information is vital to governments, parastatals and NGOs for planning purposes and decision-making. Information is derived through manipulation, analyses and interpretation of data. Information serves as a basis for knowledge. In order to plan the appropriate use of their resources, nations require the appropriate knowledge about their environment.

This paper describes efforts to develop spatial data infrastructure in Lesotho. It concludes that the common practice of over-protection of spatial/environmental data by government departments and institutions is a serious liability to such governments. Data is of value only if it can facilitate generation of information that can be used to benefit the community. Lesotho is yet to benefit from tones of spatial and environmental data accumulated over the past years and yet is still inaccessible in offices. The influence of international organizations on national projects associated with spatial data as an example of best practice is highlighted.