How to use the INSPIRE directive to manage your geodata?

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Quickly, Isogeo is a French software company specialized in geodata management since 2009. We edit and commercialize a web-based platform that allows public and private organizations equipped with a GIS to discover, document and share their geodata. We are a team of experts on the INSPIRE Directive. Most of our clients need to know how to respond quickly and effectively to the complex European INSPIRE Directive and our team provide them with effective solutions.

We will start this presentation with two French champions of the INSPIRE Directive. Most of the time, professionals use the regional level talk about the INSPIRE Directive. But, we decided to choose lower level(s) to illustrate the subsidiary principle and the necessity for INSPIRE (the infrastructure) to be close to the territory.

1. **geomayenne** is a geographic data infrastructure which has multiple goals:

- Increase the value of the geodata produced by the department's players, especially in the context of Open Data.
- Promote exchange and distribute both metadata and geodata in compliance with the INSPIRE Directive.

We helped to set up the Geocatalogue tab of the departmental platform by offering all its players (EPCI –Intercommunal Cooperation Public Bodies–, public entities, associations, private companies, and other players on the territory) a cataloguing service that allows them to bring their own data and services to the departmental Geocatalogue.
Mayenne's General Council was able to set up a network geomatics players in Mayenne, while respecting the principle of subsidiarity of the INSPIRE Directive.

2. Different scale, but same principle with the **Greater Community of Lorient**: a unique interface on the catalogue of geodata and web services.

We can say that these two projects have in common the same vision.
Since the introduction of the Inspire directive, the European countries have been required to take a top-down approach to implement data management solutions.
I mean that all SDI Architecture depend on central and local government decisions, rather than on end-user geodata management requirements. The end-users involved in the Inspire directive, such as cities, national parks, fire stations have to register and document their data on these SDI platforms.
This is typically a top-down approach. The return of investment is minimal for several reasons:

- Firstly, it is time consuming and boring to comply with the requirements of Inspire
- Secondly, the inventory or catalogue cannot be used internally
- And thirdly it is difficult to control any updating process.

We prefer another approach that takes into account end-users requirements and considerations such as:

- Where is the data I need?
- Is it up to date?
- Are there any legal restrictions I should be aware of?

On this basis, we have identified 3 tips or good practices:

1. First an Inventory

This inventory should have several characteristics: being up-to-date, documented and exhaustive.
It allows to increase the knowledge of the territory, which means to have a complete knowledge of the geodata available on the territory.

It is also about controlling the release of this knowledge with catalogue, with the following principle: one inventory and one catalogue per use. INSPIRE is one use among several. This control is the base to add value to the data assets.

2. Interoperability

Interoperability is the second point. This is at the heart of INSPIRE, and this is also essential for us. It means:

- first, to have a description of the data assets with standards, and so easily understandable, and that allows to share at different scales and to different kind of jobs (and particularly non-GIS specialists)
- second, it also means interoperability with the information systems already in place: upstream with the inventory of data, whatever their formats, and downstream with the data release within the platform SDI and the GIS software (desktop and web) in place at the players (ArcGIS and QGIS to quote the most famous)

3. A mean to an end

The last is more about the approach/vision. We all know that metadata are the forgotten aspect of the GIS. We have realized it is just because the metadata should be made for yourself, and not only for others. So, the approach is to use metadata to answer internal needs of knowledge, management, added value, and not to live metadata as a regulatory obligation.
From that point, the catalogue and the metadata are concretely used to add value to the data assets.

With our experience in France, we have noticed that the INSPIRE Directive is not only an opportunity to have a better knowledge of the data assets, but it is also the first step to start an open data project.