

Towards a Directive Establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe (INSPIRE)

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SUMMARY

The paper describes the background to, the key objectives, and the current process being established for the development of a European Spatial Data Infrastructure to support environmental policies and policies or activities which may have a direct or indirect impact on the environment. This infrastructure (INSPIRE) has been the subject of an intense collaborative process over the last three years, leading to a proposal for a legislative framework adopted by the European Commission in June 2004. This proposal, which foresees an infrastructure based upon those established and operated by the Member States, is currently being discussed by the European Parliament and the Council. During the co-decision-making process to approve this proposal, the European Commission has already launched a series of initiatives aimed at drafting the rules that will be required to guide the implementation of this legislative framework. The paper describes the key components of INSPIRE: metadata, spatial data themes and services; technology, policy agreements, coordination and monitoring procedures, as well as the process being established to include wide sectors of the GI community across Europe.