

Plenary Panel

VGI – Legal and Ethical Issues

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The Panel

- **Teresa Scassa** (University of Ottawa)
- **Dave Coleman** (University of New-Brunswick, President, GSDI Association)
- **Harlan Onsrud** (University of Maine, Executive Director, GSDI Association)
- **Michael Goodchild** (Univ. of California, Santa Barbara and Director of UCSB Center for Spatial Studies)

Audience Participation!

Q1. How many people in the room have participated in collecting GI on a volunteer basis?

Q2. How many regularly post information on a social network that either includes positioning information directly or indirectly (i.e. with a place name or address)?

Q3. How many of you know the rules that may apply to use/mis-use of your data when you contribute it to a web site, answer a survey, update your blog or participate in a social network?

Setting the Scene

Q1. What is included in VGI – only geo-tagged data (i.e. typically collected using GPS-enabled devices or other technologies that can pinpoint location) - or any data to which a location can be assigned, i.e. much social network data which contains place names, addresses, etc.?

Q2. Are the legal and ethical issues surrounding VGI different to those relating to any other form of location based information? If so, how?

Some of the Issues

- **Quality – where and when does quality matter?**
- **Authoritativeness – what is the role for ‘unofficial’ GI, i.e. in land tenure/administration and other applications?**
- **Ownership – do you surrender ‘control’ over your VGI when you release it? What is the legal position?**
- **Derivative uses of VGI – what are the rules about adding value to VGI collected by others?**
- **Data mining of your VGI by others – some companies see data mining of ‘big data’ from social networks as an ‘exciting new business opportunity’!**
- **Misuse – what is your recourse, legally – if any, if you see misuse of VGI that you have contributed?**