



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **BENIN NOW HAS AN UP-TO-DATE NATIONAL MAP**

In October 2014 IGN FI was awarded a contract to carry out digital mapping of the entire country of Benin at a scale of 1:50,000.

Apart from a very few exceptions, the cartography of Benin had never been updated since the country gained its independence.

The project to update Benin's national mapping is co-financed by the European Union in the framework of the Global Climate Change Alliance and by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and will be officially completed during the week of April 15th. The UNDP will mark the occasion by presenting the result to the Benin government in a ceremony to be held on April 18th at the French Institute in Benin, which will be attended by numerous officials.

An evening is also being organized for the public at the French Institute in Benin on Tuesday April 16th beginning at 6.30pm with the theme "New maps for a new Benin".

In parallel with these two events an exhibition is being held, also at the French Institute in Benin, from April 16th. Devoted to "the Tata circuit" it will include the contribution cartography has made to producing the heritage inventory of the Otammari people's "Tatas".

*"By exhibiting old maps and newly produced maps of the same area to the public we hope to be able to show the contribution that new technologies can make to describing the country. A map on the floor will also show an assembly of all the maps produced at scale 1:50,000. In addition, we will be presenting the tourist maps of the Tata Sombas which were produced in parallel with the project",* explains Cyril Romieu, project manager.

In the framework of this ambitious undertaking 120,000 km<sup>2</sup> have been photographed and mapped, more than 15,000 images acquired, more than 20 international experts (in imagery, geodesy, GIS, toponymy, cartography...) have been mobilized and 4 production workshops have been set up and supervised, involving more than 50 Beninese operators who have been trained in exploiting data and in cartography.

In addition to the digital topographic map at scale 1:50,000, Benin now has a digital terrain model (DTM) which enables many applications to be utilized, in terms of land or agricultural development for example, plus a Geoportal which enables available data to be visualized online and printed copies of the new map.

Christophe Dekeyne, General Director of IGN FI, stresses the structural nature of the project for Benin: *"The detailed knowledge of the country gained from updating the national map is of fundamental significance in establishing development policies. The data produced will be the basis for multiple applications, not only in terms of formulating public policy in the areas of land development, urban development or agriculture for*

*example, but also in terms of its use by the public at large. Updating the country's national map also lets the people reclaim their country".*

Benin thus joins the group of West African countries with an up-to-date topographical database which is standardized across the entire country together with the tools enabling it to be exploited. The national map of Senegal was updated in 2012, of Mali in 2016 and of Burkina Faso in 2015.

#### About IGN FI

IGN FI is entirely devoted to export activity and is recognized for its skills and know-how in the fields of geographic information as well as its innovative approach to managing and utilizing geospatial data. In addition to its technical expertise, IGN FI conveys its values by transmitting knowledge and skills everywhere it operates.

IGN FI has successfully delivered numerous cartographic projects in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali, Luxembourg...

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