

The Development of National Atlas – Malaysia’s Experience

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SUMMARY

A national atlas is an essential multi-subject geographic atlas of a country. It is a widely known cartographic product which contains the summary representation of contemporary scientific knowledge of the country in the field of physical, economic and political geography. The conception of a national atlas is a complex and no trivial matter. Nevertheless, a national atlas is deemed necessary for infrastructural planning, pre-investment studies and as a source for geospatial information transfer that enables international comparability. On top of that, it is a symbol of national unity, scientific achievement, and political independence. Realising its importance, the new National Atlas of Malaysia project was initiated in mid-2014 and later completed then published in late-2016. This paper aims to share the experience of developing the National Atlas of Malaysia. The methodology of designing the national atlas is explained, while issues and recommendations from Malaysia’s perspective are also highlighted. The ongoing progress of updating the national atlas is also deliberated to ensure the relevancy of the national atlas to the public. By publishing the national atlas, the dissemination of popularised but authoritative scientific information about the geography of Malaysia from a national perspective can be achieved.

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