

To: Rijkswaterstaat
T.a.v. A. Versluis
Postbus 5023
2600 GA DELFr

Amsterdam, April 23rd 2013

Dear Sir,

It is with great interest that we learned about your initiative Maps4Society. We have verified that Maps4Society fits well in the ICT Roadmap, as it is well fitting in the themes "ICT for a connected world" and "Data, data, data" thereof.

The top sector ICT is particularly interested in developing and exploiting the potential of the vast amounts of data in the digital world. Data as they originate from formal manual observations, sensory observations or informal sources such as social media. To bring these diverse sources together is a challenge and an opportunity, both for science and for the business. In Maps4 Society, the main target is map construction a core activity in the Netherlands over ages, and the fuel for economic expansion. Where in ages a map was vital for survival and build on scarce unreliable sources, the situation currently is not very different, with the exception that the sources are abundant. To integrate all the information to a picture of what is happening where, reliably, has remained the same, however. In the end, almost all disciplines in science and economy now have links with geo-rooted information: mobile location services, patterns of economic development, migration of humans, pollution plots, and burst crowd control to name only a few topics. The main challenges are in ICT: the diversity of sources even when all formal data, the integration of formal information with ad-hoc, incomplete, and partially deliberately distorted data, the large amounts of information even on the scale of ICT, the nature of the geo-semantic reasoning being quite different from non-spatial information, and the maintenance and (remote) presentation of information in multi-layered maps. These are all sufficiently many challenges, each with a considerable economic impact.

We envision multiple opportunities for cross overs with applications in smart grids in energy and water, high-tech data processing, logistics, agro remote sensing and in essence almost all other top-sectors. Maps4Society is a vital initiative. It will allow the Netherlands to maintain its leading role as a playground for the new society enabled by the Internet-savvy population eager to test new services. In current times, society cannot do without such a program, so I strongly recommend your program for funding,

sincerely,

Arnold Smeulders, top team ICT, director of COMMIT at CWI, professor at UvA