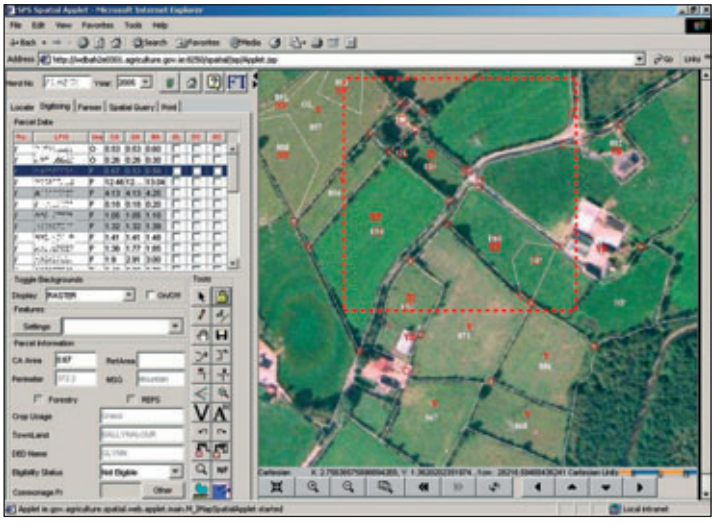
DAF Uses SPS Application

Integrated and Web-based Environment

Land management in the EU is changing. In order to meet the growing need for improved accuracy and efficiency in the administration of farm grants, the European Union is driving efforts to implement IT systems capable of automating this process and providing a comprehensive overview of agricultural assets and resources.

By Orla Power



iMAP Administration User Interface.

Single Payment Scheme Application

Ireland's Department of Agriculture & Food (DAF) is a 4,500+ employee, central government body. DAF, whose wide range customer base of over 300,000 encompasses government departments and individual citizens, deployed a Single Payment Scheme (SPS) Application. It is based on an original solution built by GIS and enterprise geospatial technology company eSpatial, and Accenture, international management-consulting and technology services company.

The solution integrates application-form processing data with geospatial information which enables the DAF to manage and process Single Farm Payment applications and payments in an integrated and web-based environment. The SPS application recently won the award for best project in 'Government to Business' category in the Irish 'Innovation through Technology Awards'.

Leverage Skills

DAF's key aims were for a new, integrated system to meet EU regulations and new reporting requirements, introduce new business efficiencies, and offer new web-enabled services to its customers. In addition, the system had to leverage core employee skills without lengthy training sessions. Crucially, it also had to be delivered in less than a single payment cycle to allow the following year's schemes to be supported, hence delivering a short-term return on investment.

DAF chose eSpatial's technology for the spatial component of SPS as it is fully extensible, offers flexibility, and is built using open, standards-based, platform-independent architecture. DAF was particularly attracted by the fact that eSpatial's spatial-information management solution hosts all spatial data in Oracle 8.1.7. Another factor was the fact that eSpatial can deploy and integrate geospatial applications using standard IT infrastructure, rather than separate GIS infrastructure.

All Users

The eSpatial design enables the consolidation and integration of spatial and business data, making SPS information available to non-GIS-specialist users. Thereby it opens up the use of spatial information to all users within DAF as well as remote agricultural land owners. eSpatial developed the geospatial system and provided consulting services on spatial technology, specific application training, and ongoing support services.

eSpatial's iSMART technology, which provides the platform for the spatial component of the application, is a standards-based, extensible development and run-time platform for embedding geospatial capabilities in business applications using Oracle Spatial and J2EE application servers such as Oracle9iAS. Oracle supplied the application server and database for the tool, which integrates all existing DAF datasets, including geospatial information and SFP transactional data, in one environment.

Disease Tracking

In addition to facilitating payments, the SPS system provides a single, homogenous view of all agricultural land use for which direct payments have been claimed so that claims can be validated. It also supports other critical functions within DAF, such as other direct payment schemes and disease tracking.

eSpatial's iSMART Geospatial platform can be used for the development of integrated spatial and business systems such as SPS. In addition to this system, Accenture and eSpatial have developed a system for forestry contractors to make applications for grants for forest productions directly over the web. This system (FIMS) shows how technology such as iSMART, eSpatial's flagship product, can be used to replace existing paper based processes with fully integrated electronic application systems accessible by the general public.

The Greek Ministry of Agriculture's Payment Agency (OPEKEPE) has also chosen eSpatial for its data capture application of Integrated Administration and Control System. This application also developed using iSMART, is part of the EU administrative responsibility for area aid and subsidy payments.

Orla Power (opower@espatial.com) is Marketing Manager for eSpatial. For more information have a look at www.espatial.com.