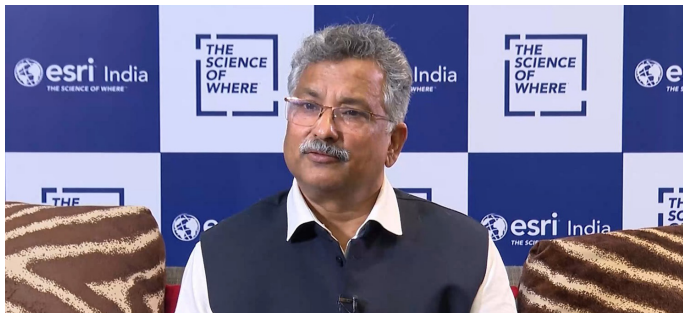


USAC: Enabling Smarter Governance Through GIS



Governance today requires timely information, informed decision-making, and seamless coordination across departments. Geographic Information System (GIS) has emerged as a powerful enabler, helping governments integrate diverse datasets, visualize complex challenges, and deliver citizen-centric services more effectively. At the **Uttarakhand Space Application Centre (USAC)**, GIS is playing a pivotal role in supporting planning, resource management, disaster preparedness, and digital governance across the state. In this interaction, **Prof. Durgesh Pant, Director, USAC**, shares how geospatial technology is transforming governance in Uttarakhand, the impact it has created over traditional systems, and the value of collaborating with Esri India to build innovative, location-driven solutions.

What are the core functions of USAC?

USAC was established to address the state's growing need for space technology and geospatial applications. Our primary objective is to provide technology-driven solutions to various government departments using satellite imagery, GIS, and other space-based technologies.

How are you using GIS in your work?

GIS has become the foundation of many of our initiatives. Geospatial information is relevant across virtually every sector, from agriculture and land use to urban planning,

water resources, disaster management, and forestry. GIS has become an integral part of the decision-making processes of the government departments. Today, USAC works closely with these departments to develop innovative applications that solve real-world challenges and support better governance.

One of our significant projects focuses on managing government assets and addressing encroachment issues. We have also created an integrated GIS dashboard for one of Uttarakhand's border districts, bringing together nearly 200 data layers on a single platform. We are now developing a similar dashboard for Rudraprayag district, home to the Kedarnath Temple.

We look forward to building GIS-based dashboards for every district in Uttarakhand, enabling administrators, policymakers, and citizens to access reliable, location-based information for informed decision-making and improved public service delivery.

What benefits have you observed in using GIS over traditional systems?

Earlier, most government departments relied on manual processes or basic spreadsheet-based systems. GIS has completely transformed how information is managed and analyzed.

Today, we can accurately locate settlements, link them with multiple attributes, visualize relationships between datasets, and perform complex spatial queries that were previously impossible. This has significantly improved planning, monitoring, and decision-making across departments.

Instead of working with isolated datasets, GIS provides an integrated view of information, helping stakeholders understand patterns, identify issues quickly, and implement more effective solutions.

We appreciate Esri India's commitment to bringing advanced GIS capabilities to users and enabling organizations like ours to build impactful applications. We look forward to strengthening our collaboration and exploring new opportunities to leverage geospatial technology for better governance and public service.