Summary of Map Creation

This section summarizes four major steps involved in map creation.

- Step 1 - Defining a Map Profile

- Step 2 - Defining a Map

- Step 3 - Defining Map Fields

- Step 4 - Saving a Map Definition

Step 1 - Defining a Map Profile

You define a map profile (that is, the field delimiters, format settings, context settings and filler characters to be used) by selecting the required settings from a menu.

Step 2 - Defining a Map

You define a map before or after you make the corresponding data definitions in the Natural object(s) that reference the map, such as a program or data area. The two methods of defining a map are described below:

- First define a prototype map, next make the corresponding data definitions in the object that references the map, then integrate the map into the application.

  Fields can be defined directly in the map editing area. Each field is assigned a default name. Subsequently, when the corresponding data definitions have been made in the respective object, these data definitions can be assigned to the map fields (post assignment).

- Define a map by using existing data definitions.

  If data definitions already exist in an object that references the map, the map fields can be created by using the data definitions contained in this object. In this case, all characteristics of the data definitions are copied into the map.

Step 3 - Defining Map Fields

Map fields can be created by either typing the field definitions directly in the map editing area or by selecting data definitions from another Natural object as explained in *Selecting Data Definitions*.

The map editor provides the following functions to define fields:

- Full-screen or split-screen editing mode.

  Full-screen mode displays the map editing area where you actually design the map and enter the field definitions.

In split-screen mode (this is the default setting), the upper half of the editing screen can be used to display data definitions of other Natural objects. The lower half of the screen displays the map editing area.

- Screen positioning commands.

- Line commands, which are used to define tables and manipulate lines.

- Field commands, which are used to define arrays and manipulate fields.

- Editor facilities, which are used to edit processing (validation) rules.

Step 4 - Saving a Map Definition

Once a map has been defined as described in the previous steps, it can be saved as a source object and/or cataloged object in the current library and Natural system file. Once saved as a source object, the map can be read and modified during a subsequent map editor session. Once saved as a cataloged object, the map can be invoked from a Natural program.

Note:
The map editor uses the **Auto Save Numbers** function of the program and data area editors described in *Editors - General Information*.