

**Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management**  
**Fifteenth session New York, 6 - 8 August 2025**  
**Item 20 of the agenda**

**Report of the Committee of Experts on its fifteenth session**  
**Informal paper containing draft decisions (Part I & II) 8 August 2025**

**15/101 Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the comprehensive report of the Bureau and the Secretariat and commended the significant efforts in implementing strategic and practical actions to strengthen and enhance global geospatial information management arrangements in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2022/24 of 22 July 2022;
- (b) Endorsed its strategic framework for 2025 - 2030, providing the required strategic direction and approach to guide the programme of work of the Committee of Experts including for the new global agenda post-2030; further requested the Bureau to work with the Secretariat to undertake a full review of the programme of work and priorities of the Committee, and developing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the delivery of the strategic objectives and priorities of the Committee, including a coherent global capacity development programme;
- (c) Urged the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in the context of the UN80 initiative, to safeguard all the geospatial information management positions dedicated to the Committee's normative and implementation work on global geospatial information management and the achievement of its operations; and in this regard, requested the Bureau to convey the need to safeguard and fill these geospatial information management positions;
- (d) Expressed serious concerns of the impact of the UN80 initiative on the Committee's normative and implementation work, and in the Secretariat's efforts to facilitate and coordinate the operations of the United Nations global geospatial centres, further emphasized the need for effective oversight, coherence and coordination of the mandates, roles and responsibilities of these offices away from Headquarters, and the need for setting priorities and for governance across the Secretariat;
- (e) Expressed its appreciation to the Government of Mexico for the successful convening of the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management held in México City in October 2024; further welcomed the offer from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host the Third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in late 2026;
- (f) Welcomed the proposal to establish a 'world geospatial day' to raise awareness of the pressing need to advance geospatial information for social, economic, and environmental benefits, and entrusted the Bureau and the Secretariat to develop a consensus-based draft resolution for submission to the General Assembly at an appropriate date;
- (g) Welcomed a translation task team under the auspices of the Bureau to support the translation, particularly into United Nations official languages, of vital reference documents and resources of the Committee of Experts, prioritizing the UN-IGIF suite documents; and

- (h) Appreciated the many contributions and extrabudgetary funding from Member States and urged additional efforts including from the Secretary General of the United Nations, to mobilize additional resources, including through the means of trust funds, expert secondments and other sources, as appropriate, to support the activities of the Committee of Experts.

### **15/102 Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Expressed appreciation to UN-GGIM Americas in coordinating the preparation of the report jointly prepared by the five regional committees that provided an overview on their implementation of global geospatial frameworks in their regions, and for supporting regional and inter-regional activities, as a means to exchange and share knowledge, and in this regard, noted the importance of strengthening the inclusive interregional dialogue series initiated ahead of the session, and extending them to the inter-sessional periods;
- (b) Welcomed efforts in deepening regional and inter-regional cooperation including participation in each other's plenary meeting, contributing to exchanges of knowledge, experiences, and expertise; further noted the dates of plenary meetings of respective regional committees, and in this regard, urged Member States to participate and contribute to these plenary meetings;
- (c) Noted the persistent challenges of participation by Member States to the annual plenary meetings of regional committee and recognized the need to mobilize resources to support the participation of Member States, from developing countries, particularly small island developing states and least developed countries, in these plenary meetings and regional capacity development activities;
- (d) Requested regional committees to actively contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, in particular as relates to its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and to explore collaborative partnerships to strengthen and enhance regional and inter-regional cooperation and initiatives, including the proposed hybrid global hub on effective land administration proposed by UN-GGIM Europe;
- (e) Noted the critical role of the regional committee in enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements and called on the support of the operational United Nations global geospatial centres and the thematic networks of the Committee to identify and disseminate good and innovative practices, current perspectives and emerging trends, and support national capacity development activities, particularly the most vulnerable and developing countries; and
- (f) Acknowledged that the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Regional Committee for the Arab States would be responsible for coordinating the next joint report of the five regional committees for the sixteenth session.

### **15/103 Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report compiled by the Secretariat (see E/C.20/2025/6) together with background documents prepared by the four thematic networks, appreciated their contributions, participation, research, education and capacity-development activities during the intersessional period, the inter-network exchanges and collaboration including with regional committees and functional groups of the Committee of Experts, particularly the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial

Information Framework, and the promotion of innovative technologies such as geospatial artificial intelligence, Earth observation, and data platforms for national priorities, progress and global agenda;

- (b) Encouraged the thematic networks to deepen their cooperation and expand efforts to: support the development of coordinated training and educational programmes, especially for developing countries, pursue innovative approaches to sustainable development and capacity development, and enhance communication and outreach, ensuring that the benefits of advances in geospatial information management are inclusive and widely recognized;
- (c) Appreciated the role of the thematic networks in advancing their respective workplans and in demonstrating the value of geospatial information management and innovation to address for the Sustainable Development Goals and national priorities, and in this context, noted that the UN Geospatial Network and its constituent entities should further collaborate with the UN global geospatial centres to raise awareness and more effectively demonstrate the benefits of geospatial information; and
- (d) Encouraged the thematic networks to advance the proposed next steps outlined in the report on the future geospatial information ecosystem (E/C.20/2024/8/Add.1) and its related background document, and further encouraged the networks develop a coordinated series of policy, insight, and research documents to serve as comprehensive knowledge resources for the global geospatial community, while focusing and aligning their work of the broader global geospatial information agenda;

#### **15/104 Future geospatial information ecosystem**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Commended the considerable efforts and activities under the leadership of the Bureau and its writing team including the global webinar, survey and the preparation of the paper on *Positioning the future geospatial information ecosystem*;
- (b) Acknowledged the need for the geospatial community to continue its journey to preparing itself for a dynamic and rapidly changing digital landscape and to contribute bridging the digital divide; and recognized that the positioning of the future geospatial information ecosystem was a strategically important activity to remain agile and adaptable to technological changes in data science, artificial intelligence and machine learning, and to contribute effectively to international frameworks including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Digital Compact, and future global agendas;
- (c) Noted the successful convening of global webinar and its broad engagement with a variety of stakeholders and cross-cutting themes from the wider digital ecosystem providing innovative and inclusive perspectives from across sectors, disciplines, technologies and regions;
- (d) Considered that the next steps outlined in the paper *Positioning future geospatial information ecosystem* should guide the development of coordinated periodic series of foresight, policy and research documents that can serve as a comprehensive knowledge resource on future trends and enable Member States identify emerging opportunities and challenges impacting the digital ecosystem; and in this context requested for regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks and the United Nations global geospatial centres to advance these next steps and the proposed periodic series documents; and
- (e) Agreed that having successfully achieved its objectives, the activities of the writing team are now concluded, and that the activities under the agenda on the future

geospatial information ecosystem be entrusted with the overall coordination and guidance of the Bureau supported by the Secretariat, and aligned with the strategic framework 2025-2030 of the Committee.

### **15/105 United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the High-Level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and commended the High-Level Group for improving the visibility and sustaining the adoption of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework with its strategic leadership, priorities, and progress for enhanced coordination, coherence, alignment of activities and synergies with regional committees, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre, Thematic Networks and other implementing partners;
- (b) Encouraged all Member States to implement the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework as a foundational element for geospatial information management to address to national priorities, and to share their country-level action plans widely to the through the website to foster knowledge, good practices, dialogue and promote collective progress on implementing the Framework;
- (c) Welcomed the communication materials developed by the High-Level Group noting their importance in raising awareness and supporting global capacity development efforts, and further encouraged Member States to contribute to the development of case studies demonstrating the successful benefits of the implementation of the Framework;
- (d) Welcomed the sustainable funding guide as a critical resource to support countries to prepare budget assessments, economic evaluation models, and business case strategies to support long-term, country-led investment towards the implementation of the Framework, and further noted the upcoming global webinar on this subject;
- (e) Recommended that the Global Survey on implementation of the Framework be conducted, if possible, annually as a consolidation of regional surveys, and be conducted by the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre under the guidance of the High-Level Group and in close collaboration with regional committees and other relevant partners; and
- (f) Appreciated the support of the translation task team to support the accessibility of the Framework suite of documents to the wider community and agreed to transition its role under the auspices of the Bureau to support the translation, particularly into United Nations official languages, of vital reference documents and resources of the Committee of Experts, prioritizing the UN-IGIF suite documents.

### **15/106 Global geodetic reference frame**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Subcommittee on Geodesy and appreciated the progress and activities undertaken, including the substantial and coordinated efforts with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to advance the implementation of General Assembly resolution 69/266;
- (b) Appreciated the work of the Subcommittee to raise awareness and strengthen evidence on the importance of geodesy as a vital foundation for satellite services, in particular, timing and time synchronization services, which support critical infrastructure, national economies and national security, and encouraged the Subcommittee to continue working with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence to

consult with policy makers and communicate the importance of geodesy using real-world use cases which demonstrate tangible benefits;

- (c) Appreciated the agreement of Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding which provided an opportunity for Member States to raise awareness of the importance of the global geodesy supply chain within their governments, and as a mechanism to help establish country-level working groups on to address frequency specturm;
- (d) Requested the Subcommittee, with support from the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to assist Member States establish bilateral or multilateral arrangements to strengthen geodetic cooperation and address critical gaps, with considerations of fit-for-purpose governance to address the operational, cybersecurity, and strategic misalignment risks stemming from the fragmented management and operation of the global geodesy supply chain;
- (e) Appreciated the work of the Subcommittee and the Centre to raise awareness of the importance of geodetic observations, in particular from Very Long Baseline Interferometry, to create geodetic products needed for satellite operations, and welcomed the establishment of a Subcommittee Working Group on Frequency Protection for Geodetic Observations;
- (f) Requested the Subcommittee Working Group lead a collaborative and coordinated approach with national spectrum management agencies and the International Telecommunications Union to safeguard geodetic observations through national policies and international regulatory frameworks;
- (g) Appreciated the work of the Centre in conjunction with the Subcommittee on the First Joint Development Plan on Global Geodesy and encourages partners to join on its implementation;
- (h) Expressed its appreciation of the capacity development training provided by the Centre in conjunction with Subcommittee and welcomed further forums to consider the mitigation of risks including software, cybersecurity, and scientific workshops, conducted with partners related to GNSS analysis and challenges related to joining land and sea datasets; and
- (i) Welcomed proposed organization of the sixth plenary meeting of the Subcommittee together with the meeting of the international advisory committee of the First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy during the upcoming intersessional period.

## **15/107 Geospatial information for sustainable development**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report jointly prepared by the Secretariat and the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and the many efforts to strengthen the use of geospatial information and statistical data in addressing the needs of the 2030 agenda, the sustainable development goals, and other global development agendas;
- (b) Welcomed the paper ‘Rescuing the SDGs: How geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring and dissemination of SDG indicators’ and called for its wider dissemination and the provision of capacity development activities that enable Member States to implement the recommendations contained therein, as the instruments provide concrete support to help close the data gaps, particularly in the national context with limited capacities such as developing countries and Small Island Developing States;

- (c) Supported decision 56/105 on the Statistical Commission on the Global Indicator Framework for SDGs and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (d) Welcomed the enhanced cooperation with SDG Custodian Agencies to produce examples of good practices across the SDGs on how geospatial information can strengthen the production, measurement, monitoring and dissemination of geospatially integrated indicators, in including the intersection of gender and access to land ownership and on the environment and biodiversity;
- (e) Noted the many good practices and resources shared by the Committee of Experts, including Storymaps, national experiences and other related initiatives, and in that regard, urged increased dialogue and participation among, and between, regional and global initiatives that support the use of geospatial information for sustainable development; and
- (f) Recognized that advancing geospatial integration in the SDG's monitoring requires strengthened infrastructures, knowledge sharing and developing capacity among stakeholders and called for efforts and activities that promotes geospatial data literacy, foster collaboration across sectors, and technical cooperation among countries.

#### **15/108 Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the reports of the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience and the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management, and the efforts made by the task team to further position the Committee of Experts to address climate resilience with integrated geospatial information, and the efforts of the working group to collaborate across the international community of disaster risk management, and encouraged the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters;
- (b) Welcomed the paper “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges” and its compendium of national experiences prepared by the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience; as well as the activities undertaken to advocate for and raised awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience, and further agreed that having successfully achieved its objectives, the activities of the task team are now concluded;
- (c) Welcomed awareness raising activities of the Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management including with the wider United Nations system, agenda and frameworks and agreed to follow this model on the broader domains of climate, environment and disaster resilience, and encouraged the continued collaboration among national disaster, and geospatial and mapping agencies;
- (d) Emphasized that demonstrating the value for geospatial information management on the topics of climate, environment and resilience remained an urgent imperative for the Committee of Experts and that it was critically important to advocate for and raise awareness on its potential for a broad range of topics;
- (e) Considered the importance of comprehensive and joined up approach of activities including on a variety of topics including climate, resilience, environment, disasters, early warning, risk management, marine and costal management, or ecosystem development; and encouraged all Member States and stakeholders to contribute to a joined up approach; and
- (f) Agreed to the preparation of a comprehensive holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and resilience are considered holistically, while anchoring

geospatial information management into the broader frameworks of the United Nations, with the view to present the holistic report to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

**15/109 Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report and progress of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (see E/C.20/2025/12), encouraged Member States to continue their efforts to implement and operationalize the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, and commended the Expert Group on its approach and contributions to the work programme of the Statistical Commission, including its efforts to include the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and geostatistical techniques in the fourth revision of the ‘Principles for Population and Housing Census’ document;
- (b) Endorsed the second edition of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, recognizing its alignment with the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and called upon Member States to support its translation into the six official languages of the United Nations, prioritizing the UN-IGIF suite of documents, and to mobilize resources to support its implementation, particularly in developing countries.
- (c) Welcomed the paper ‘The Benefits of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for the Statistical Domain’, invites Member States and regional bodies to share national experiences of how elements of the UN-IGIF are used to support national and regional statistical systems and encourages their participation in future global consultation on this paper.
- (d) Supported the Expert Group’s Strategic Plan and Vision for 2030 and its Work Plan 2025–2027, as a means of reinforcing the coordination of activities for operationalizing and implementing the GSGF and encourages relevant stakeholders to mobilize additional resources to accelerate the implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework. Furthermore, welcomed decision 2025/8 of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on a universal unique identifier for cities, recognizing the importance of the integration of unique identifiers and cross-referencing systems for standardization;
- (e) Encouraged national geospatial information agencies to collaborate with their national statistical offices as a means of enhancing the management of geospatially integrated statistical data towards building more coherent national data ecosystems, and urged the Expert Group to promote and raise-awareness of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework to various statistical domains, including the environment, agriculture, social, and demographics.
- (f) Welcomed the many offers to support implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and urged the continued development of guidance relating to the production and dissemination of geospatially integrated statistical data, and the disaggregation of statistics by geography, as a means of sustaining momentum to support the production of high quality, geospatially enabled statistics for the 2030 Agenda and future global development frameworks.

**15/110 Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management and its ongoing efforts to communicate and raise awareness of the importance and benefits of effective land administration at all levels and acknowledged the need to strengthen advocacy, awareness and provision of guidance for the implementation on the Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) alongside the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN IGIF), in accordance with national circumstances;
- (b) Noted the compilation report and future priorities identified by the Working Group including the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, aligned with the strategic framework 2025-2030, recognizing its value for addressing climate change, disaster resilience, blue economy development, coastal management, and the land-sea interface; and noted a second part of the Compilation Report is forthcoming.
- (c) Noted with appreciation the progress made by the Expert Group in implementing its workplan, including activities across its five defined focus areas, and the continued coordinated, inclusive, innovative, adaptable and cross-cutting approach for promoting efficient land administration; appreciated the preparation of the Compilation Report on the Terrestrial and Maritime Domains (Part I), developed through collaborative efforts, which synthesizes global good practices and lessons learned, and recognizing the importance of integrated domain management—aligned with the UN-IGIF-Hydro strategic pathways and for the Sustainable Development Goals; and further noted that a second part of the report is forthcoming;
- (d) Noted the growing expectations for capacity development, knowledge sharing, application of innovative technologies and standards for the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, addressing the land-sea interface and supported the initiative to establish a hybrid hub on land administration to strengthen capacity building and the implementation of existing frameworks like FELA, and invited the Expert Group on Land Administration to coordinate the drafting of a detailed proposal, to be presented to the Committee at its sixteenth session
- (e) Commended the Expert Group's growing engagement with regional committees, thematic networks, and other international partners, including its considerations on further collaboration — particularly with Indigenous peoples and local communities — to strengthen awareness, capacity development, and implementation of Framework for Effective Land Administration; and
- (f) Acknowledged the leadership transition within the Expert Group, thanked Singapore for its contributions as outgoing Co-Chair, and welcomed the Netherlands as incoming Co-Chair.

### **15/111 Integrated marine geospatial information**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information and the continued leadership to provide practical guidance and raise awareness to Member States, to sustain the efforts to implement the UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro in accordance with national circumstances
- (b) Established the UN-GGIM & IHO Joint Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information bringing together the UN-GGIM working group on marine geospatial information and the IHO's marine spatial data infrastructure working group, noted its terms of reference and working modalities; and in this context noted further the consolidation will optimize resources and enhance global coordination

- (c) Noted the workplan, compilation report and future priorities identified by the Working Group including the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, recognizing its priority to address the land-sea interface and develop integrated national strategies with particular attention on the need for integrated geodetic information and unified reference systems, including horizontal and vertical datums addressing climate resilience, blue economy, coastal development, biodiversity, disaster risk management; and noted a second part of the Compilation Report is forthcoming;
- (d) Emphasized the importance of capacity development and strengthened partnerships to support UN-IGIF-Hydro implementation through Member States, regional committees, UN entities, the IHO, and other organizations; and
- (e) Noted the need to address the operational requirements and share good practices of all Member States, in particular for developing and most vulnerable countries.

**15/112 Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report and background document of the working group on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management and expressed its appreciation for the progress addressing relevant and complex policy and legal issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies;
- (b) Endorsed the paper “Authoritative Data for Crises” as an important reference document supporting Member States in leveraging authoritative geospatial data during crises and disasters, as a practical guidance in identifying governance gaps and ensuring transparency, accessibility, and accountability in high-stakes environments;
- (c) Noted the updated paper “Data for Public Good in the Digital World”, which aligns with the objectives of the Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact, and provides considerations for formulating geospatial policies for the public good grounded in an era of digital transformation with the aim to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (d) Endorsed the “Rallying Statement to the Geospatial Sector on the Development of a Legal and Regulatory Framework for AI,” and the “International Regulations on AI in Geospatial Applications”;
- (e) Noted the concept paper “Addressing the Implications of the Developing Legal and Regulatory Framework on AI for the Geospatial Sector,” and emphasized the importance to engage with regulators and stakeholders to ensure policies are targeted, effective, and proportionate for AI governance for the geospatial domain; and

Noted the Working Group’s Workplan for 2025–2027, which outlines new areas of focus; and welcomed the upcoming in-person meeting of the Working Group to be held in Riyadh, 7–9 October 2025, and encouraged active participation.

**15/113 Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the Open Geospatial Consortium and their complementary ongoing efforts to meet the Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable (FAIR) principles and provide a

- strong foundation of an authoritative global geodesy supply chain and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;
- (b) Encouraged standards bodies to collaborate closely with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence to maintain an authoritative ISO Geodetic Register containing Member States' geospatial reference system metadata and knowledge graph, and further the collaboration to continue supporting Member States in contributing their data to the Register;
  - (c) Welcomed the IHO's progress in advancing its Universal Hydrographic Data Model, including the release of operational S-100 standards for electronic navigational charts, bathymetric surfaces, water levels, and surface currents, which are now available for official use, and recognized the valuable contribution of these standards to disaster preparedness efforts, particularly for small island developing states;
  - (d) Acknowledged the importance of, and encouraged Member States to actively participate in international geospatial standards development, processes and meetings, and to adopt the best practices offered by the three organizations to meet the practical needs of Member States including national development programs and social inclusion, particularly in vulnerable areas by enhancing access to essential services; and
  - (e) Acknowledged, when possible, Member States should implement open standard policies as a default for geospatial and location information programs to encourage data sharing and minimize duplication.

#### **15/114 Standardization of geographical names and collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- a) Welcomed the report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and the outcomes of its 2025 session, including its efforts to advance the standardization of geographical names and implement its 2021–2029 Strategic Plan and Programme of Work;
- b) Acknowledged the progress of the collaborative project between the Committee and the Group of Experts, commended the leadership of Indonesia and the United States of America to develop “Good Practices of National Mapping Agencies and National Geographical Names Authorities”, and recognized the need continued efforts to enhance collaboration and coherence between National Geospatial Information Agencies and National Name Authorities;
- c) Endorsed decision 2025/8 of the Group of Experts regarding the concept of the Universal Unique Identifier for Cities and encouraged national contributions to the World Geographical Names Database, recognizing these as critical elements for enhancing interoperability and the integration of geographical names at the global and local levels;
- d) Noted the important role of geographical names in supporting sustainable development and inclusive, evidence-based decision-making; and in this context reiterated the importance of implementing the ‘geographical names’ data theme of the Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Theme to be in alignment with prevailing UNGEGN standards and guidelines, including those related to cultural heritage, indigenous and linguistic diversity; and
- e) Encouraged the continued collaboration between the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts, including with the geographical and linguistic divisions of the

Group of Experts and working groups to support the standardization of geographical names.

**15/115 Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the operational United Nations global geospatial centres, acknowledged the activities undertaken to implement Economic and Social Council resolution 2022/24 and enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements, and commended the efforts of the Secretariat in facilitating and coordinating the establishment and operationalization of the centres;
- (b) Expressed concerns over the lack of resources in the Secretariat to ensure adequate oversight, supervision and coordination across the operations and activities of the centres, and further expressed the need for effective and clear internal oversight and supervision mechanisms and to ensure coherence and coordination of the mandates, roles and responsibilities of these offices away from Headquarters;
- (c) Requested, during the intersessional period, that the workplan of these centres be reviewed together with the Bureau and assessed against the priorities of the Committee, in particular, those of the High-Level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Subcommittee on Geodesy;
- (d) Appreciated the substantial efforts of the United Nations global geospatial centres in developing capacity through the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the strengthening of the global geodesy supply chain, and requested for sustained capacity development and training opportunities tailored to national operational needs and circumstances, and aligned with the Committee's Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030;
- (e) Acknowledged the progress made by the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in finalizing its workplan, appreciated its alignment with the strategy of the High-Level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and urged the Centre and the Secretariat to focus on assisting Member States with practical, results-driven support for national implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;
- (f) Appreciated the First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy, provided by the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence in all official languages of the United Nations, as practical guidance for Member States to strengthen the global geodesy supply chain, and requested to the Subcommittee on Geodesy working with the Centre to support Member States with their implementation efforts, including development of policy briefs and guidance materials, together with efforts for spectrum protection for geodetic observations; and
- (g) Encouraged all government departments and agencies in Member States, private sector, academia and civil societies to participate in the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening the Global Geodesy Supply Chain, and to advance stronger international governance for global geodesy.

**15/116 Programme management report**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the oral report delivered by representatives of the Secretariat on the programme management of the Committee of Experts; and

- (b) Welcomed the presentation by the General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on their plans and preparation for the third congress in 16 – 19 November 2026 at the Hilton Riyadh and further welcomed the early and well-considered preparatory efforts undertaken for the congress and appreciated the thoughtful approach in laying a strong foundation for its successful organization.



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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

### Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements

## Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report of the Secretariat on enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements, prepared with the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#), entitled “Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements” and, in this context, to examine the strengthening and enhancement of such arrangements by the Committee, as well as on the way in which the global geospatial information management community contributes to efforts by Member States to improve, strengthen and enhance their national geospatial information management arrangements.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/101, in which it commended the significant efforts in continuing to take strategic and practical actions to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#).

The Committee expressed its appreciation for the establishment of a new and enlarged secretariat for the Committee of Experts dedicated to the Committee’s normative and implementation work on global geospatial information management, and in that regard requested the Secretariat to focus, in particular, on: (a) supporting the

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).



Bureau to develop a strategic framework for the period 2025–2030; (b) strengthening effective global coordination and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres; and (c) supporting a global programme of national capacity development aligned with the Committee’s operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.

The Committee expressed its appreciation for and welcomed the opportunity to convene as a global community in Mexico City for the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management and urged Member States to embrace the opportunity and participate in this global forum to intensify dialogues and discussions on how geospatial information supports resilient and sustainable development. The Committee requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to initiate preparations for the third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, to be convened after the sixteenth session of the Committee of Experts, in 2026, and to report back to the Committee at its fifteenth session.

In the report, the Secretariat provides information on efforts and progress made in continuing to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements and the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts and its continued benefits to all Member States. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#), the report contains information about coordination activities with functional groups, regional committees and United Nations global geospatial centres, aimed at supporting and developing a global programme for national capacity development that is aligned with the operations of the Committee that are focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.

The report contains information for the Committee about the current progress being made in relation to the establishment of the secretariat dedicated to the Committee’s normative and implementation work on global geospatial information management, including the overall status of recruitment and the financial context, including regular and extrabudgetary funding from Member States that supported the activities of the Committee of Experts.

The Secretariat provides the Committee with a brief overview of the progress made towards the operationalization of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, and the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China, and the progress made towards the establishment the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Riyadh. It is noted in the report that further details are provided under the new item on the provisional agenda entitled “Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements”.

In the report, the Bureau informs the Committee of the outcomes of its in-person meeting, held in February 2025 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and attended by members of the expanded Bureau, during which the Bureau discussed and reviewed the provisional agenda and preparations for the fifteenth session as well as decisions pertaining to the development of the strategic framework of the Committee of Experts for the period 2025–2030. The United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees, functional groups and thematic networks were requested to strengthen the implementation of the global geospatial frameworks, norms, principles and guides adopted by the Committee, and to encourage the engagement of Member States and partners to support the overall programme of work of the Committee.

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In the report, the Bureau and the Secretariat provide information about the development of the strategic framework for the period 2025-2030 as a matter of priority, including the requested inclusion of considerations relating to environment, climate, resilience, sustainability, disaster risk management, the integration of the terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, rapid technological changes and advancements, and aspects of diversity, equality and inclusion, in accordance with decisions 14/101, 14/108, 14/110 and 14/111 of the Committee. In the report, there is also an overview of activities related to strengthening coordination, coherence and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres.

In the report, the Secretariat informs the Committee of the successful convening, in Mexico City from 8 to 10 October 2024, of the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, the theme of which was “Accelerating implementation: achieving resilience”. The report includes details on the statements delivered, the programme followed, the themes discussed and the participants who attended. Information is provided on the process to select the host of the third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, which is scheduled to be convened in late 2026. The Bureau provides information about its process for evaluating the two bids, which includes the use of an evaluation framework and considerations such as diversity and inclusivity. The decision will be announced during the fifteenth session. In the report, note is made of a background document on the proposal to establish an international geospatial information day.

The Secretariat also provides information about its efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, which include organizing expert consultations and capacity development activities, enhancing communication and web presence, coordinating with implementing partners and developing partnerships to foster coherence and collaboration and to optimize resources. Such efforts support Member States in enhancing and sustaining leadership roles within national geospatial, mapping and cadastral agencies, in line with the overall goal of strengthening and enhancing geospatial capacities, knowledge-sharing and capabilities and with a view to developing a global programme for enhancing national integrated geospatial information management arrangements.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 4 of the provisional agenda\*

### Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda

## Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared jointly by the regional committees of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa, the Americas, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe on strengthening geospatial information management capabilities and decision-making for Member States and on the contribution of the committees to the global geospatial information agenda. The report will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the operations, achievements and future plans of the regional committees.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/102, in which it welcomed and commended the report jointly prepared by the five United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees and the individual reports of the five regional committees provided as background documents, expressed its appreciation to the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Regional Committee for Asia and the Pacific for coordinating the preparation of this first joint report, and congratulated the regional committees for their contributions to and for aligning their work with the global geospatial information agenda, and for their many activities, joint initiatives, considerable progress and achievements during the intersessional period, including convening their annual plenary meetings. The Committee of Experts acknowledged that the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.



Regional Committee for the Americas would be responsible for coordinating the next joint report of the regional committees.

The Committee also welcomed all announced dates and preparations for the next plenary meetings of all the regional committees, the proposed interregional engagement, dialogues and collaborative activities among and between regional committees during the upcoming intersessional period, continuing the synergistic interactions and relationships, the dialogue and the sharing of knowledge, approaches and experiences. The Committee of Experts recognized the challenging operating environment for integrated geospatial information management within respective regional and national contexts, with emerging challenges and opportunities afforded by new technologies, cutting-edge techniques and artificial intelligence; acknowledged the inadequate resourcing for capacity development and for participation in regional activities; and in that regard requested the United Nations global geospatial centres to engage, coordinate and support regional committees to strengthen and enhance national geospatial information management in the region, and to grow the needed geospatial capabilities and leadership, in particular in developing countries.

The joint report of the regional committees is divided into six sections: (a) introduction; (b) intersessional activities and achievements of the regional committees; (c) plenary meetings of the regional committees; (d) interregional partnership and collaborations; (e) concluding remarks; and (f) points for discussion.

In the first section, information is provided to the Committee of Experts on the objectives, organizational structures and administrative arrangements of each of the five regional committees.

In the second section, the intersessional activities and achievements of each regional committee covering the main substantive areas of the Committee of Experts are outlined, and details are given on the capacity development initiatives and supporting actions taken to support Member States. The proposed dates of each regional committee's next plenary meeting were also included in the report.

In the third section of the report, the main decisions adopted at the plenary meetings of the five regional committees are featured. In addition, details are given on the actions implemented to ensure that their respective programmes of work are in alignment with the global development agendas and the global geospatial information agenda and frameworks, in particular, the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report includes an examination of some major challenges faced by the regional committees and the strategies adopted to address them, including planned activities.

In the fourth section, the report highlights the contributions of the regional committees to the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the Subcommittee on Geodesy and other functional groups of the programme of work of the Committee of Experts. In the report, note is made of interregional activities, the ongoing collaboration with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence and the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and other key collaborations and meetings. Note is also made of the forthcoming in-person interregional committee meeting, to be held in August 2025 in New York, on the margins of the fifteenth session of Committee of Experts.

The fifth section of the report includes a reaffirmation of the commitment of the regional committees to continue to align their work programmes with the work of the Committee of Experts, including its strategic framework for the period 2025–2030 and all future substantive activities that are aimed at advancing the global geospatial information agenda.

The report concludes with points for discussion, in which the Committee of Experts is invited to take note of, and to express its views on, the joint report prepared by the five regional committees. In the report, the regional committees request the Committee to take note of the dates of their next plenary meetings and to encourage Member State representatives to attend these regional plenary meetings and to continue contributing to advancing the global geospatial information agenda and the programme of work of the Committee.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*

### Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda

## Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report containing the contributions of the four United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management thematic networks, namely the Academic Network, the Geospatial Societies, the Private Sector Network and the United Nations Geospatial Network, to the global geospatial information agenda, which will be available, in the language of submission only, from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the activities and achievements of the thematic networks.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/103, in which it expressed appreciation for the continuing and valuable contributions of the thematic networks to the Committee's programme of work, including their effective representation, research, education, capacity-development activities and collaborative initiatives with the five regional committees, functional groups and United Nations global geospatial centres in advancing their workplans and in implementing the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. The Committee also expressed appreciation for the cooperation and synergies between thematic networks and Member States through open communication so as to ensure that their contributions were effective and aligned with the Committee's priorities for the benefit of Member States and contributing to their sustainable development. The Committee welcomed the support offered, including by the United Nations Geospatial Network to strengthen their contribution through the implementation of the One United Nations Geospatial

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/).



Situation Room to bring coherence on data governance and federated data services and to provide use cases to support capacity-development activities for Member States. The Committee acknowledged the work being done in researching and exploring the use and benefits of artificial intelligence, Earth observations and other innovative technologies.

In the report, the Academic Network provides an update on its continuing efforts to develop capacity- and education-related activities within the context of the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, especially in supporting the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. The report provides information on the active involvement of the Academic Network in organizing, with all the thematic networks during the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts, a joint side event on geospatial data, analytics and geospatial artificial intelligence: accelerating the Sustainable Development Goals and making an impact on national priorities and its participation in other events, such as the fifth plenary meeting of the High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the meeting of the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts and the twelfth plenary meeting of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Regional Committee for the Arab States. The newly elected Executive Committee initiated discussions with the Co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts on possible opportunities to work together in pursuit of strengthening geospatial information management around the globe by leveraging the strength of the Network. It is noted in the report that the Network began to explore collaboration with the United Nations global geospatial centres, such as the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre. It is also noted in the report that, since the Network's most recent update on its membership, in which it reported having 70 members, 6 new members have joined the Network, with 7 additional membership applications pending review and approval. The report concludes with a discussion of the continued efforts of the Network in strategic planning and actions for: (a) working closely with all functional groups of the Committee of Experts; (b) developing capacities and training programmes to support the programme of work of the Committee of Experts; and (c) collaborating with academic communities to develop capacities and educational programmes that are more closely related to the programme of work of the Committee of Experts and in close cooperation with the established United Nations global geospatial centres.

In the report, the Geospatial Societies network provides information on its principal activities and contributions. During the intersessional period, the Geospatial Societies network reaffirmed its position as a valued partner in geospatial artificial intelligence and in the geospatial ecosystem and its engagement with the broader agenda of the Committee of Experts. The Geospatial Societies network actively participated in major events, including the eleventh plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe, the thirteenth plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific, the twelfth plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States and the fifth plenary meeting of the High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, as well as proceedings on the future geospatial information ecosystem. A significant development is the new terms of reference for the Geospatial Societies network, which realigned its purpose to support the broader programme of work of the Committee of Experts. In the report, geospatial societies, such as the International Cartographic Association, the International Federation of Surveyors, the International Society for Digital Earth, the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote

Sensing, the International Geographical Union and other societies, note that congresses, annual conferences and events provide platforms through which to further discuss and promote the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals to their respective networks. It is also noted in the report that the International Science Council GeoUnions group and the Committee on Data for Science and Technology offer webinars related to geospatial artificial intelligence.

The report provides an update by the Private Sector Network on its activities and contributions during the intersessional period. In the report, the Private Sector Network reaffirms its position as a valued partner in the global geospatial ecosystem by advancing capacity development, engaging in regional initiatives and integrating private sector perspectives into the broader programme of work of the Committee of Experts. The Private Sector Network actively participated in major events, including the eleventh annual meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe, the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, the thirteenth Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific meeting, the twelfth Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States plenary and the fifth High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and contributed to the Framework's new "Sustainable funding guide", as well as to proceedings on the future geospatial information ecosystem. A significant development is the addition of 25 new member companies, underscoring the growing recognition of the value of the private sector. The Private Sector Network appeared on social media to enhance its outreach and visibility. The Network supported emerging talent by sponsoring student participation in the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Mexico. Regionally, the Network deepened its collaboration in Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, the Arab States and Africa. The report provides details of the contribution of the Network to strategic documents and its participation in shaping the future geospatial information ecosystem, with a continued focus on innovation, climate change and sustainability.

The report also provides information on the activities of the United Nations Geospatial Network and its continued efforts to strengthen the coherence and coordination of global geospatial information management across the 42 agencies funds and programmes of the United Nations system. The Geospatial Network made progress on implementation of its updated strategy for the period 2020–2025, entitled "Blueprint: geospatial for a better world – transforming the lives of people, places and planet", and the proposal for the upcoming five-year strategic document for the period 2025–2030, both of which are aligned with accelerating the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are informed by the frameworks, norms, principles and guides developed and adopted by the Committee of Experts. The report includes details of the Network's current priorities, namely: (a) to obtain sustainable sources of funding; (b) to increase communication on and awareness of the relevance of geospatial information through events and seminars; and (c) to work towards the availability and accessibility of coordinated geospatial information through the One United Nations Geospatial Situation Room, effectively delivering, collectively, one map of integrated geospatial data services, available at [onemap.un.org](http://onemap.un.org), for easy access to these resources. The report also contains information on other priorities, including organization of the upcoming activities of the United Nations Geospatial Network towards implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework to strengthen national geospatial capacities, especially in developing countries and the most vulnerable

communities, and strengthening geospatial data management, innovation, foresight and science to build a United Nations system that can better support Member States in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The One United Nations Geospatial Situation Room is recognized as an important resource for geospatial enablement of the United Nations data platform in the overall context of the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere. The report provides information on the continued efforts of the Network in terms of communication and outreach, including its participation in the Geospatial World Forum and collaboration with other networks of the Committee of Experts.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**The future geospatial information ecosystem**

## The future geospatial information ecosystem

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report on the future geospatial information ecosystem prepared jointly by the Bureau and the writing team on the future geospatial information ecosystem, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<http://ggim.un.org/meetings/ggim-committee/15th-session>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on how the global geospatial community and Member States can be more adequately prepared for the rapidly evolving digital and geospatial information ecosystem and its future developments.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/104, in which it welcomed efforts aimed at continuing to discuss and explore the future geospatial information ecosystem to assist Member States and their national geospatial information agencies in their thinking on how the global geospatial information community should be prepared to adapt to the rapidly changing geospatial information management landscape and its operating environment. The Committee also encouraged the Bureau and its writing team to consider the constantly evolving nature of the concept and scope of the future geospatial information ecosystem, to avoid a static definition and to focus on the understanding, purpose and use of geospatial information within the broader future digital ecosystem.

The Committee of Experts noted that new and emerging technologies and the growth and breadth of the data and digital ecosystems, of which geospatial information and services are a part, provided further opportunities to use geospatial information to address the complexities of national priorities, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the post-2030 global development agenda and bridging the

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](http://E/C.20/2025/1).



geospatial digital divide; and that a particular focus on trustworthiness within geospatial information management should be considered, and that the future geospatial information ecosystem should take advantage of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, with an emphasis on diversity, equality and inclusion as well as embracing innovative approaches, systems and technologies, including artificial intelligence and machine learning for societal benefits. Also at its fourteenth session, the Committee acknowledged the proposed principles and fundamental elements contained in the report and agreed to carry out further activities towards presenting a concept on the future geospatial information ecosystem with its scope, fundamental elements, principles and role within the broader digital ecosystem at the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

In the report, the Secretariat and the Bureau present the intersessional activities of the writing team on the future geospatial information ecosystem on the development of a position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem. According to the report, the writing team met at least monthly to advance the position paper and to conduct a series of activities aimed at exploring the latest trends, rapid technological changes, actors, cross-sector developments and new policies affecting both the wider digital ecosystem and the role of geospatial community within it. In its activities, the team sought to maximize inputs and views on the future geospatial information ecosystem and beyond in the broader digital ecosystem, including through a global webinar that brought together a wide range of actors, a global survey inclusive of communities beyond the geospatial community and a global consultation to include diverse perspectives on the future geospatial information ecosystem.

The report of the writing team is accompanied by a background report in which the team presents a proposed position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem. In the paper, the team acknowledges the inherent evolving nature of the future geospatial information ecosystem, includes information on drivers, principles and fundamental elements of the future geospatial information ecosystem, building on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and embraces diversity, equity and inclusion, while providing future-looking considerations on the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

The report also contains details on perspectives and options for the Committee of Experts to consider regarding the need for and relevance of continuously exploring trends, innovative approaches, systems and technologies in the rapidly evolving digital landscape and regarding the need for and relevance of preparing the geospatial community and national geospatial information agencies to contribute to and shape the future geospatial information ecosystem within the broader digital ecosystem.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

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Item 7 of the provisional agenda\*

**United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

## United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report of the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee (<http://ggim.un.org/meetings/ggim-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the progress made and the strategic leadership, coordination and oversight exercised by the High-level Group to ensure the sustained success of the Framework and its operationalization through country-level action plans.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/105, in which it commended the High-level Group for its continuing efforts to improve the visibility and advance the role, relevance and uptake of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework with its strategic leadership, focused activities, effective coordination and oversight, and engagements with regional committees and United Nations global geospatial centres.

The Committee of Experts expressed appreciation for the preparation of a sustainable funding guide and other guides and tools, and encouraged the continual development and updates of these practical guides, resource materials and references and their translation in support of efforts to operationalize the Framework at the country level. The Committee acknowledged the urgent need to refine and finalize the remaining Framework implementation guide suite of documents and to digitally publish those documents and resource materials supporting the preparation of country-level action plans. It requested the Secretariat to prioritize those tasks after

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.



the fourteenth session, and further acknowledged the need to mobilize the necessary resources, volunteered and extrabudgetary, to support and sustain those efforts.

The Committee of Experts also requested the High-level Group to consider sharing the results of its global survey with regional committees and relevant implementation partners to optimize the utility of this global survey, and in that regard urged regional committees and relevant implementation partners to coordinate their activities with the High-level Group, ensuring synergy and avoiding duplication. The Committee reaffirmed that the Framework was a key umbrella for the many activities under the purview of the Committee of Experts, reiterated the importance of coordination, coherence and alignment in the work, efforts and activities of regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and the High-level Group, and reiterated the importance of implementing the Framework together for the benefit of all.

In the report, the High-level Group presents its recent meetings and activities, and the progress it has made in implementing its workplan and three priority goals: (a) enhancing communication; (b) strengthening capacity development; and (c) mobilizing sustainable funding. It contains a description of the way in which momentum was sustained through a combination of in-person and virtual meetings, including two in-person plenary meetings, which provided opportunities for in-depth discussion and strategic alignment, as well as monthly virtual leadership team meetings and biannual expanded leadership team meetings focused on monitoring progress, addressing challenges and adapting approaches in real time. This consistent and deliberate engagement contributed to meaningful progress across all areas of the workplan.

The report contains details of the outcomes of the fifth plenary meeting of the High-level Group, held in February 2025 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In preparation for the meeting, key stakeholders – including the work groups, the chairs of the regional committees, the SDG Data Alliance, the Secretariat and the Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre – were invited to submit details of their priority activities and associated needs for 2025, which were synthesized into a comprehensive table that served as the foundation for the plenary discussions. Participants used a project management matrix with the labels “responsible”, “accountable”, “contributor” and “informed” to clarify roles and responsibilities. Many priorities were assigned to the Centre, in accordance with its workplan, while overall accountability remained with the High-level Group, with a view to ensuring strong leadership and oversight. To maintain alignment and foster continuous communication, the High-level Group invited the Centre to participate in its monthly virtual leadership team meetings. Stakeholders committed to helping to advance these activities, reinforcing a collaborative approach.

In the report, the High-level Group highlights activities related to communication and engagement, including its participation in forums, events and targeted meetings aimed at promoting the Framework, building knowledge and awareness and sharing best practices and strategies to encourage country-level implementation. Reference materials are provided as background documents to the report, in order to enhance understanding and facilitate stakeholder engagement. These include a brochure for decision makers and a quick reference guide to the Framework. Several country-level action plans have also been added to the website as references so that Member States and stakeholders can learn from real-world examples, further strengthening implementation efforts.

As noted in the report, significant progress has been made in relation to capacity development. Advances have been made with respect to refining, finalizing and

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translating the suite of documents on the Framework, including the implementation guide, incorporating feedback from the global consultation process, and with respect to the publication of resource materials to support the development of country-level action plans. The report contains a description of plans to finalize the remaining appendices and resource materials, to increase accessibility and promote broader adoption by translating the implementation guide into multiple languages and to maintain the Framework as a dynamic, living tool.

In the sustainable funding guide provided as a background document to the report, comprehensive guidance is offered on identifying and evaluating sustainable financing options for the implementation of the Framework. The guide, developed through in-depth reviews of existing funding studies and literature and through consultations with Member States, donors, the private sector and the World Bank, contains information on practical tools and insights to help Member States to identify potential funding sources, conduct a cost-benefit analysis and articulate compelling value propositions for investment to enhance nationally integrated geospatial information management.

In addition, a background document on the global survey report on the use and implementation of the Framework, which contains details of survey findings and information on implementation materials shared by Member States, is to be made publicly available through the website of the Framework, to support knowledge exchange. The raw data from the survey was also shared with the regional committees and the Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre to support more tailored regional and subregional planning and analysis. In the report, the High-level Group outlines plans for a coordinated approach that is to be used for future assessments, as agreed upon at the fifth plenary meeting, and emphasizes the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Framework.

The High-level Group continues its efforts to advance the relevance, utility and impact of the Framework through its strategic plan and workplan. By working across regions, functional groups, thematic networks, centres of excellence and partner organizations, it continues to foster collaboration, reduce duplication and maximize synergies, and it invites all stakeholders to join this collective effort to ensure that geospatial information management is embedded at the core of national priorities and decision-making, in order to drive development, innovation and informed policymaking.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

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Item 8 of the provisional agenda\*

**Global geodetic reference frame**

### Global geodetic reference frame

#### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the Subcommittee on Geodesy, which will be available, in the language of submission only, from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the progress made by the Subcommittee to address complex issues facing the global geodetic community and to implement General Assembly resolution [69/266](#).

#### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/106, in which it welcomed the reports of the Subcommittee on Geodesy and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence and their progress and activities, including their considerable and coordinated efforts to continue to implement General Assembly resolution [69/266](#). The Committee of Experts expressed appreciation for the work of the Centre and the Subcommittee to strengthen evidence, awareness and understanding of the importance of the global geodesy supply chain as a vital foundation for critical national infrastructure and global economy, and encouraged the Subcommittee and the Centre to continue to provide materials that could be used by Member States to influence decision makers.

The Committee of Experts requested the Subcommittee on Geodesy, with the support of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to provide guidance on how to raise awareness and strengthen governance arrangements through the establishment of country-level geodesy working groups, with representatives of Member State defence, policy and science agencies, and partners, to ensure that the

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).



risks associated with degradation of the global geodesy supply chain were managed appropriately.

At its fourteenth session, the Committee of Experts also requested the Subcommittee on Geodesy, with the support of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to coordinate implementation of the joint development plan to maximize the collective impact of the activities of Member States and partners, with a particular focus on capacity development, and for the plan to address the issue of the reliability and cybersecurity of the software that enabled operational geodesy. The Committee of Experts further requested the Subcommittee, with the support of the Centre, to investigate opportunities to bring the status of and the need for a more sustainable geodesy supply chain to the attention of the greater United Nations community.

Lastly, the Committee of Experts requested the Subcommittee on Geodesy, with the support of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to provide guidance on integrating geodesy for the cadastral, maritime and terrestrial domains into existing frameworks, such as the Framework for Effective Land Administration, in coordination with the International Hydrographic Organization and geodetic and maritime organizations.

In the report, the Subcommittee on Geodesy provides information on its activities during the intersessional period and on the outcomes of its fifth plenary meeting, hosted by the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, in March 2025. The fifth plenary meeting was attended by Member State representatives of all United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees and participants from international and regional organizations and geodetic research institutions and relevant stakeholders. At the meeting, the activities of the Subcommittee and the Centre were highlighted, in particular the first joint development plan for global geodesy, the multilateral memorandum of understanding, and work towards bilateral and regional memorandums of agreement.

The Subcommittee on Geodesy collaborated with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence to organize regional meetings, prepare regional capacity-development workshops, translate documents, actively encourage the participation of Member States and engage in efforts focused on development of the global geodetic reference frame. Furthermore, the Subcommittee provided advice and support to integrate geodesy into the cadastral, maritime and terrestrial domains through phase 5 (2024) of the Federated Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure initiative of the Open Geospatial Consortium and involvement in the workshop on joining land and sea organized by the Centre in Bogor, Indonesia. In addition, the roles of the Centre and the Subcommittee in working towards improved governance of the global geodesy supply chain were addressed and are summarized in the report.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*

**Geospatial information for sustainable development**

## Geospatial information for sustainable development

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report jointly prepared by the Secretariat and the working group on geospatial information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the efforts to ensure that the contributions of the global geospatial information management community are aligned with the needs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its key principles and that they are used in measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/107, in which it welcomed the report jointly prepared by the Secretariat and the working group on geospatial information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, and efforts to ensure that the contributions of the global geospatial information management community are aligned with the needs of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee also reaffirmed that geospatial information was critical for sustainable development and would be for the post-2030 global development agenda, urged the working group to stress and address the importance of integrating all relevant forms of geospatial information, including Earth observations and in situ data, essential to help countries to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda and to leave no one behind, and in that regard to note that many countries still struggled, and needed support, to collect, integrate and apply geospatial information needed for the indicator framework of the 2030 Agenda.

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.



In the report, the Secretariat and the working group provide information on the efforts made to strengthen the use of geospatial information in addressing the needs of the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and other global development agendas. The working group also discusses the outcomes of the fifty-sixth session of the Statistical Commission, including its submission of a background document entitled “Rescuing the SDGs with geospatial information: how geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring, and dissemination of SDG indicators” and the progress made in the implementation of its workplan for 2025. The report also includes information on activities aimed at ensuring that the contribution of the global geospatial information community remains aligned with the 2030 Agenda and other global development agendas.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

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Item 10 of the provisional agenda\*

**Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience**

### Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience

#### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the reports prepared by the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management and the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the reports prepared by the working group and the task team and express its views on efforts to strengthen the use of geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience.

#### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/108, in which the Committee welcomed the reports of the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience and the working group on geospatial information and services for disasters, and the efforts made by the task team to further position the Committee to address climate resilience with integrated geospatial information, and by the working group to revitalize its working modalities with renewed membership, revised terms of reference and an updated workplan for the period 2024–2025.

The Committee also recalled earlier consideration on the importance of a “joined-up” approach to addressing climate resilience and disaster risk management, requested the task team and the working group to continue with their current working modalities, planned work and activities for the forthcoming intersessional period and to continue to report under the current agenda item, and decided to rename the working group as the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/).



management, with a renewed focus on access and utilization of integrated geospatial information that supports all aspects of disaster risk management.

Also at its fourteenth session, the Committee requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to holistically consider climate resilience and disaster risk management as part of the development of the strategic framework of the Committee of Experts for the period 2025–2030, considering all current working modalities, planned activities and deliverables of the task team and the working group.

In its report, the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management outlines the progress it made and intersessional activities it carried out, including collaboration on and contributions to the development of a common statistical framework on disaster-related statistics and the joint hosting of a webinar on disaster risk reduction highlighting the importance of collaboration and partnerships supporting the use of geospatial information during all disaster phases by Member States, citing Hurricane Beryl as a relevant case study. Also noted in the report are the working group's efforts to cultivate partnerships that advance robust discussion and facilitate greater understanding and the identification of synergies between disaster risk management and climate resilience. In the report, the working group encourages collaboration and partnership among national disaster agencies and national geospatial information agencies with a view to increasing awareness and implementation of the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters; addresses the development and distribution of structured forms to collect information on national challenges relating to the use of geospatial information for disasters risk management; and presents its revised workplan for the period 2024–2026.

In its report, the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience provides details on progress made to deliver its stated outcomes during the intersessional period. These include the focus to develop and launch a paper entitled “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges”, as well as support for the convening of the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Mexico City in October 2024. Noted in the paper, which is provided as a background document, is the importance of having political leaders involved in advocating for and investing in geospatial infrastructure to increase resilience. The vital role of the Committee of Experts and its frameworks, such as the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, in supporting Member States in developing the capacity to withstand increasing risk and to recover from disasters, in a manner that is transformative and that can become the basis for long-term resilience, is highlighted in the paper through national case studies. The task team also notes in its report that, as the tasks set for it by the Committee of Experts have been delivered, it will conclude its activities at the fifteenth session of the Committee.

Both reports contain information on the meetings and discussions held between the two groups in the later part of the intersessional period with a view to forging coordination and coherence on strategic orientations and synergies with regard to activities related to geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience. The reports also include points for discussion for the Committee of Experts related to providing inputs and guidance on the substantive content associated with the agenda item; encouraging Member States and relevant interested experts to contribute to forthcoming consolidated activities under the agenda item; and expressing its views on the preparation of a single holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, the environment and resilience are considered, to be presented to the Committee at its sixteenth session.



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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

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Item 11 of the provisional agenda\*

**Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information**

### Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information

#### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-Session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the progress of the Expert Group in its efforts to implement the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and its broader efforts to strengthen the integration of statistical and geospatial information in support of population and housing censuses and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/109, in which it, inter alia, emphasized the importance of coordination and collaboration, supported the ongoing efforts of the Expert Group to strengthen engagement with the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and efforts to engage and interact with relevant functional groups of the Committee of Experts and the Statistical Commission, noting that the many data integration challenges, including for the production of national development indicators, the Sustainable Development Goal indicators, the measuring and monitoring for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, other current and future global, regional and national development agendas, priorities and programmes, required the full and coordinated implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework at the country level.

In the report, the Expert Group provides information on its recent activities, including the outcomes of its eighth meeting, convened jointly with the seventh meeting

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](http://E/C.20/2025/1).



of the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators at the headquarters of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), in Nairobi from 17 to 19 September 2024. The outcomes of the meetings included the endorsement of the approach of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names regarding a unique identifier for cities; the review of the outcomes of its workplan for the period 2022–2024; and the development of the workplan for the period 2025–2027, in which it established the task team on the coordination and communication for the alignment of geostatistical information, the task team on resources for Global Statistical Geospatial Framework implementation and the task team on Global Statistical Geospatial Framework advancement (containing subgroups that focus on the development of technical guidance on topics such as address registers, institutional arrangements, geocoding and common geographies (grids)).

The report also discusses the process of developing the second edition of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, with the updates aimed at ensuring alignment with the present geostatistical landscape. The second edition of the Framework is provided to the Committee of Experts for endorsement. In the report, the Expert Group also highlights the finalization of the paper entitled “Benefits of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for the statistical domain” and discusses opportunities for its promotion, examining future opportunities for raising awareness on the Framework to the Statistical community.

In considering the significance of the integration of statistical and geospatial information within the work programme of the Statistical Commission, the Expert Group presents in its report the outputs related to geostatistical integration of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission and discusses the steps that it is taking to accelerate the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/3](#) and other relevant mandates of both the Commission and the Committee of Experts and other subsidiary bodies of the Council. In this regard, the Expert Group has developed a report entitled “Geostatistical integration for now and the future: strategic plan and vision for 2030”, which is presented to the Committee for its review and comment, building on its previous reports, in which it has considered its own role within the evolving programme of work of the Committee and the Commission, including in relation to global agendas and national development priorities.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 12 of the provisional agenda\*

### Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management

## Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the expert group on land administration and management, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the work and progress of the expert group, including efforts to advocate, raise awareness of and promote the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains and the implementation of the Framework for Effective Land Administration and geospatial domain integration.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/110, in which it welcomed the continuing focus on communicating, promoting and raising awareness of the merits and benefits of effective land administration, acknowledged the importance of addressing the integration of the terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains and understanding the complexities of the land-sea interface, and in that regard expressed appreciation for the ongoing collaborative efforts of the expert group with regional committees and functional groups of the Committee together with relevant international and regional partners and organizations.

The Committee of Experts reiterated that the Framework for Effective Land Administration was an important element of the Committee's work that provided guidance to Member States in developing, reforming, strengthening and modernizing effective and efficient land administration systems. The Committee welcomed the

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.



implementation of the Framework by Member States in accordance with national circumstances.

The Committee noted the proposed considerations and preparations for a paper addressing the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, and requested the expert group to consider and include land registration, the use of new technologies and innovation, and to engage Member States and relevant stakeholders on use cases and lessons learned in the proposed paper.

The Committee of Experts commended the expert group for its collaborative approach and requested the deepening of engagement and collaboration with the regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks and other relevant international organizations and stakeholders in its efforts and activities and to include the views and perspectives of Indigenous communities.

In the report, the expert group provides information on its activities, including the organization of virtual and in-person meetings to engage its members and advance its workplan. The expert group also highlights its collaboration with the regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks and international organizations of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management. Of particular note were partnerships with the United Nations global geospatial centres, the working group on marine geospatial information, the International Federation of Surveyors and EuroSDR on, and joint contributions towards, promoting the Framework for Effective Land Administration and assisting Member States in their efforts to develop and modernize land administration systems.

The report contains a summary of progress made on the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, which includes the development, in collaboration with the working group on marine geospatial information, of a comprehensive guide designed: (a) to demonstrate to policymakers the value of geospatial information for sustainable development; (b) to provide technical experts with strategies aligned with the nine strategic pathways of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework; and (c) to promote innovative approaches for Member States and the geospatial community. To support the development and ensure the relevance of the guide, the expert group invited Member States to complete a questionnaire in order to collect experiences, identify challenges and good practices and analyse how the Framework's strategic pathways support integration.

The report provides a summary of the international workshop entitled “Joining land and sea”, held in December 2024 in Bogor, Indonesia, which brought together experts to support Member States in addressing the technical and governance complexities of integrating terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains. The report also provides an overview of the expert group’s activities to promote and implement the Framework for Effective Land Administration, with a particular focus on priority regions, including Africa, Latin America and the Arab States.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 13 of the provisional agenda\*

**Integrated marine geospatial information**

## Integrated marine geospatial information

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the working group on marine geospatial information, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the progress made in advancing integrated marine geospatial information.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/111, in which it welcomed the report of the working group and its leadership in continuing to raise awareness, provide guidance and encourage the availability, accessibility and integration of marine geospatial information for the benefit of society, the environment and the economy, and urged sustained efforts to provide practical guidance and to support the implementation of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management in accordance with national circumstances. The Committee also welcomed and supported the proposal for the working group on marine geospatial information and the International Hydrographic Organization marine spatial data infrastructures working group to deepen their collaboration and cooperation and optimize resourcing through the formation of a single unified global work group, and requested the working group on marine geospatial information to initiate that process by updating its current working modality and procedures.

The Committee acknowledged the importance of and encouraged a coordinated, cross-cutting and holistic approach in addressing the integration of the terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, noting its implications for addressing climate challenges, coastal resilience, sustainable coastal communities and the blue economy,

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\* [E/C.20/2025/14](https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/).



among others, and the need to tackle the technical complexities of the land-sea interface and the vertical reference frame, as well as considering cross-cutting perspectives such as institutional, legal, regulatory and policy aspects and governance arrangements.

The report provides an outline of activities undertaken by the working group during the reporting period. In it, the working group highlights its updated workplan for 2025–2026 and its collaboration with international partners, including the International Hydrographic Organization, technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization, the Open Geospatial Consortium and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence. It also promotes the use of innovation and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to facilitate the integration and implementation of marine geospatial information management efforts.

In the report, the working group highlights three priority areas of focus: (a) advancing the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, including the convening of the forum on the integration of those domains held in August 2024 and the development of a reference guide aligned with the strategic pathways of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework; (b) promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management at the national level; and (c) strengthening collaboration with the marine spatial data infrastructures working group of the International Hydrographic Organization by updating working modalities and procedures. With regard to advancing the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, the reference guide is being developed in collaboration with the expert group on land administration and management, supported by innovation and experimentation through the Joint International Hydrographic Organization-Singapore Innovation and Technology Laboratory, including the application of artificial intelligence. In support of that work, the working group and the expert group on land administration and management jointly developed a questionnaire to compile use cases and perspectives on domain integration and on ways in which the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management can support integration efforts. The questionnaire received 47 responses from 38 Member States, the insights of which are informing the development of the reference guide.

The report also provides a summary of the international workshop entitled “Joining land and sea”, held in December 2024 in Bogor, Indonesia, which brought together experts from the Committee of Experts, the expert group on land administration and management, the working group on marine geospatial information, the working group on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management, the Subcommittee on Geodesy, the International Hydrographic Organization, the Open Geospatial Consortium and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence. Participants explored the use of integrated geodetic information and reference systems to address global challenges, including measuring sea level rise and assessing the impacts of floods on freshwater aquifers.

The report provides several suggestions for enhancing collaboration and integration for the consideration of the Committee of Experts. The working group reaffirms its commitment to promoting the implementation of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management in alignment with the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and to advancing integrated marine geospatial information management to support coordinated, sustainable and resilient responses to climate impacts and ocean-related challenges. In the report, the working group also notes its commitment to

strengthening cross-cutting initiatives across terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains through continued engagement with stakeholders in land management, geodesy and the International Hydrographic Organization, within and beyond the United Nations system. These activities serve as recognition of the importance of coordinated action to deliver sustainable and integrated solutions that contribute to broader societal, environmental, and economic benefits.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

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Item 14 of the provisional agenda\*

**Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies**

### **Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies**

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the working group on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the progress of the working group in addressing policy and legal issues in geospatial information management, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies.

#### **Summary of the report**

At its fourteenth session, from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/112, in which it expressed its appreciation for the activities and progress achieved during the intersessional period under the leadership of Canada and Saudi Arabia. The Committee noted the progress on the concept paper entitled “Geospatial data for public good” and encouraged the working group to continue to analyse the complex policy and legal issues with particular attention to the impact of emerging technologies and trends on geospatial information management, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, and to explore appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks in consultation with Member States and partners.

The Committee of Experts also noted the progress related to the preparation of the paper entitled “Authoritative, fit-for-purpose data for crises”, and welcomed the upcoming broad global consultation process after the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts with a view to presenting the paper to the Committee at its fifteenth session, in August 2025. The Committee welcomed the convening of the

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](https://E/C.20/2025/1).



third in-person meeting of the working group, to be hosted by Saudi Arabia in Riyadh in October 2025, and encouraged Member States, in particular those in the region, to seize the opportunity to work together to ensure robust legal and regulatory frameworks for effective geospatial information management.

In the report, the working group provides information on the progress of its activities during the intersessional period on policy and legal issues in geospatial information management, with particular attention to the impact of emerging technologies and trends and for the positioning of geospatial information to address global challenges. The report contains details of the preparation of key deliverables provided as background documents for discussion, guidance and endorsement by the Committee of Experts, on authoritative data for crises, artificial intelligence and geospatial data for the public good.

The paper entitled “Authoritative geospatial data for crises”, which is the subject of a global consultation, supports data users and producers in identifying and mitigating potential trade-offs that can arise when responding to a crisis, outlining related policy and legal considerations for Member States. Building on previous deliverables of the working group, the paper highlights that enabling governance systems, including robust policy and legal frameworks and institutional arrangements, are necessary preconditions for trust in authoritative data for crisis response. Lastly, the paper offers guidance for data users and providers to identify gaps in governance regarding authoritative data in crisis applications to promote transparency and mitigate trade-offs in essential data characteristics.

To address decision 14/112 on continuing “to analyse the complex policy and legal issues” the working group is providing a concept paper on addressing potential implications for the geospatial sector on developing a legal and regulatory framework on artificial intelligence which highlights the need for a strategic framework to ensure that emerging artificial intelligence legal and regulatory frameworks adequately incorporate the unique requirements of the geospatial sector. It identifies priority actions, such as mapping existing regulations, analysing the impact on geospatial use cases, facilitating stakeholder consultation and promoting proactive engagement with policymakers and developing capacity for compliance and adaptation. A “Rallying statement to the Geospatial Sector on the development of a legal and regulatory framework for artificial intelligence” is also provided, with an emphasis on the urgency of establishing clear, ethical and comprehensive artificial intelligence regulations for the geospatial sector, containing a call for collective action to promote transparency, safeguard human rights and maximize the potential of geospatial artificial intelligence innovation. The statement is accompanied by a “Review of global artificial intelligence regulations in geospatial applications”, showcasing the evolving regulatory landscape, summarizing developments across regions and supporting informed decision-making and regulatory coherence among Member States.

Following the adoption, in September 2024, by Member States of the Pact for the Future and its annexes: the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations, the working group adjusted its existing concept paper on “Geospatial data for public good” to provide stronger ties between geospatial information management, the Global Digital Compact, and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The updated concept paper is provided for information as a background document to the report.

The report also contains details of upcoming priorities of the working group and its workplan for the period 2025–2027 aimed at continuing to help Member States to address complex policy and legal issues in geospatial information management, including as related to authoritative data and emerging technologies. As set out in its

updated workplan, the working group seeks to continue to engage with the policy and legal community, as well as a broad range of experts across domains. The working group aims to further respond to key priorities within a rapidly evolving technological environment including artificial intelligence and autonomous vehicles and further welcomes considerations and views from Member States on policy and legal priorities.

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

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Item 15 of the provisional agenda\*

### Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community

## Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared jointly by the International Hydrographic Organization, technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the Open Geospatial Consortium, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-Session>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the ongoing work of the three standards development organizations in the innovation, adoption and implementation of standards for the global geospatial information community.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/113, in which it welcomed the report of the three standards development organizations and their work with the Committee of Experts. The Committee welcomed the numerous examples of the ongoing standards development activities for data access and interoperability while also encouraging Member States to set policy that starts with open standards as a default for geospatial and location information programmes towards the implementation of standards-based solutions that ensure interoperability, data-sharing and flexibility to adapt to changing data sources and technologies, and to support actual real use cases for the integration of geospatial information and statistics, for the reporting of the Sustainable Development Goals, the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the use and application of artificial intelligence.

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-Session).



The Committee also urged Member States to collaborate with and participate in the maintenance, advancement and capacity development of geospatial standards, together with the standards development organizations.

In the report, the International Hydrographic Organization provides information on its continuing efforts to advance the S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model to support the creation and maintenance of interoperable maritime data product services that are compliant with the ISO 19100 series of geographic information standards. In 2024, the organization reported that edition 5.2.0 of S-100 had been released. Based on edition 5.2.0 of S-100, the organization has released a number of Phase 1 S-100 product specifications as operational editions, including S-101 Electronic Navigational Chart, S-102 Bathymetric Surface, S-104 Water Level Information for Surface Navigation and S-111 Surface Currents.

Several additional S-100-based product specifications are being developed and implemented in collaboration with several international organizations, including entities of the United Nations system and partners such as the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation and the World Meteorological Organization. The International Hydrographic Organization also reports that it has established a freely available training resource on maritime spatial data infrastructure to assist its members in aligning their country-level work to the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management.

Technical committee 211 of ISO, in the report, provides information on its activities with entities of the United Nations system and partners, including supporting the modernization of the geodetic infrastructure as a partner of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence; continued progress in the development of the ISO 19152 Land Administration Domain Model, of which parts 1 and 3 have been published and parts 2, 4 and 5 should be published by August – allowing better integration of land and sea boundaries and supporting the Framework for Effective Land Administration; ISO 19144 on land cover and land use, in conjunction with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, of which parts 1, 2 and 3 have been published and part 4 is under development with the Open Geospatial Consortium.

In the report, the Open Geospatial Consortium discusses its focus on developing and testing open geospatial application programming interface standards via pilots, projects and testbeds under its collaborative solutions and innovation programme, covering several areas including climate services, disasters, the marine environment, digital twins and the built environment. Over the past year, the Consortium has focused on a range of topics relevant to Sustainable Development Goals, including a multi-year continued focus on improved support for disaster response, increased coordination within the marine domain and innovation related to climate services. The Consortium emphasizes the integration of geospatial information with statistics and other data under the findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable data principles. The Consortium further reports that it continues to enhance interoperability with its standards, as well as the International Hydrographic Organization and ISO standards, thereby ensuring a cohesive framework for geospatial data utilization and standardization, in support of the global geospatial information agenda.



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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

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Item 16 of the provisional agenda\*

**Standardization of geographical names and collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

### **Standardization of geographical names and collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the standardization of geographical names and actions pursued to strengthen relations between the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts.

#### **Summary of the report**

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/114, in which it welcomed the report prepared by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (see E/C.20/2024/18) and the activities conducted during the intersessional period to implement its strategic plan and programme of work for the period 2021–2029, including the strengthening of its operations through increased interaction across its 24 geographical and linguistic divisions, the renewed collaboration with the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History, and its focus on the value of spiritual and emotional aspects of cultural and linguistic heritage for improved belonging of peoples. The Committee also acknowledged the redevelopment of the Group of Experts World Geographical Names database as a reliable and extendable technical platform to be integrated with other authoritative place names, including from the United Nations system, and in that regard, encouraged the development of a consistent and reliable unique identifier for cities to be implemented for the database.

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.



The Committee of Experts also welcomed the progress of the collaborative project between the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts, appreciated the leadership provided by Indonesia and the United States of America and encouraged Member States to contribute to the upcoming activities, including self-assessment exercises to identify and document good practices and other related tasks under the project, which supports the recognition of cultural heritage associated with geographical names.

In the report, the Group of Experts presents its activities conducted during the intersessional period to implement decision 14/114. It also provides a general update on the implementation of its strategic plan and programme of work for 2021–2029; the launch of the questionnaire on “Good practices of national mapping agencies and national geographical names authorities” as a first step towards developing a compendium that outlines effective institutional arrangements and operational practices in the standardization of geographical names; the adoption of a universal unique identifier for cities, including a discussion on steps for its implementation by the Secretariat; and details the Bureau’s participation in the activities of the Economic and Social Council, such as the annual meetings of its subsidiary bodies and other events.

The Group of Experts also reports on the outcomes of its 2025 session, held in New York from 28 April to 2 May 2025. These include: the renewal of its Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage; its activities towards operationalizing the “Geographical names” theme of the global fundamental geospatial data themes through the World Geographical Names database; its efforts to improve publicity and awareness of the importance of geographical names standardization for technical as well as cultural purposes and, in turn, efforts aimed at developing national geographical names capacity; and its engagements with other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, including the Committee of Experts, as a means of supporting the Council in implementing the recommendations of its 2022 review of the Council’s functional commissions and expert bodies, among other matters.

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# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 17 of the provisional agenda\*

### Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements

## Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements

### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the United Nations global geospatial centres, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements.

### Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/101, in which it requested the Secretariat to focus, in particular, on strengthening effective global coordination and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres. The Committee welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in China and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence in Germany, as well as the advanced planning to establish the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Saudi Arabia.

The Committee noted that open and transparent management and coordination between the three United Nations global geospatial centres are key to their successes and effective resource utilization, and requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to develop a suitable common governance and operational structure for all United Nations global geospatial centres, including, for instance, international advisory committees with broad expertise and geographical representation, and to

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.



make available the terms of reference of the international advisory committees as background documents for the Committee of Experts.

In adopting decision 14/105, the Committee reaffirmed that the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework was a key umbrella for the many activities under the purview of the Committee of Experts, reiterated the importance of coordination, coherence and alignment in the work, efforts and activities of regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and the High-level Group, and reiterated the importance of implementing the Framework together for the benefit of all. The Committee also urged the Centre to intensify its support to Member States to ensure the sustained adoption of geospatial information management capabilities and the operationalization of the Framework in accordance with national circumstances.

In adopting decision 14/106, the Committee welcomed the reports of the Subcommittee on Geodesy and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence and their progress and activities, including their considerable and coordinated efforts to continue to implement General Assembly resolution [69/266](#). The Committee also expressed appreciation for the work of the Centre and the Subcommittee to strengthen evidence, awareness and understanding of the importance of the global geodesy supply chain as a vital foundation for critical national infrastructure and global economy and encouraged the Subcommittee and the Centre to continue to provide materials that could be used by Member States to influence decision makers.

In the report, the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence provides details on its activities during the intersessional period and the notable progress made in implementing its mandate. Also in the report, note is made of the publication of the first joint development plan on global geodesy, which is available in all six official languages of the United Nations and which contains an outline of the priority actions for Member States, the Centre and partners to strengthen the global geodesy supply chain. In line with the plan, the Centre prioritized the following: (a) the delivery of geodesy capacity-development training; (b) the development of policy-relevant evidence to raise awareness of the role of geodesy in economic and infrastructure resilience; and (c) the strengthening of governance arrangements. Capacity-development activities included regional workshops on modern geospatial reference systems that have been held in Europe, in Africa and in Asia and the Pacific, as well as forthcoming workshops on the same topic planned for the Americas and the Arab States. The Centre also advanced the multilateral memorandum of understanding on strengthening the global geodesy supply chain, which now has 40 participating entities. The report also provides information on the extension of financial support provided by Germany to the Centre until 2030.

Also in the report, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre provides details on the activities conducted during the intersessional period, including on its continued support to Member States in the implementation of the Framework as its overarching goal. The Centre also presents its first programme of work, provided as a background document, prepared in close consultation with its international advisory committee in January 2025 and aligned with its five main goals: (a) developing leadership; (b) addressing national priorities; (c) progressing geospatial knowledge; (d) enabling innovation; and (e) communication. The contribution of the Centre to events and annual meetings of the regional committees is also presented in the report. The report also includes details on capacity-development activities, including workshops and global forums on raising awareness of the benefits of geospatial information for national priorities and efforts to raise awareness, and promote the adoption and operationalization, of the Framework.

In the same report, the Secretariat provides updates on the advanced planning and preparatory activities relating to the establishment of the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Saudi Arabia.

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# Economic and Social Council

14 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6 – 8 August 2025

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

**Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

## **Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### **Summary**

The present report contains the report of the Secretariat, prepared with the assistance of the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts, on enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/101](#), in which it commended the significant efforts in continuing to take strategic and practical actions to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#).

The Committee expressed its appreciation for the establishment of a new and enlarged secretariat for the Committee of Experts dedicated to the Committee's normative and implementation work on global geospatial information management, and in that regard requested the Secretariat to focus, in particular, on: (a) supporting the Bureau to develop a strategic framework for the period 2025–2030; (b) strengthening effective global coordination and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres; and (c) supporting a global programme of national capacity development aligned with the Committee's operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.

The Committee expressed its appreciation for and welcomed the opportunity to convene as a global community in Mexico City for the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management and urged Member States to embrace the opportunity and participate in this global forum to intensify dialogues and discussions on how geospatial information supports resilient and sustainable development. The Committee requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to initiate preparations for the third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, to be convened after the sixteenth session of the Committee of Experts, in 2026, and to report back to the Committee at its fifteenth session.

In the report, the Secretariat provides information on efforts and progress made in continuing to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements and the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts and its continued benefits to all Member States. In accordance

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

with Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#), the report contains information about coordination activities with functional groups, regional committees and United Nations global geospatial centres, aimed at supporting and developing a global programme for national capacity development that is aligned with the operations of the Committee that are focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.

The report contains information for the Committee about the current progress being made in relation to the establishment of the secretariat dedicated to the Committee's normative and implementation work on global geospatial information management, including the overall status of recruitment and the financial context, including regular and extrabudgetary funding from Member States that supported the activities of the Committee of Experts.

The Secretariat provides the Committee with a brief overview of the progress made towards the operationalization of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, and the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China, and the progress made towards the establishment the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Riyadh. It is noted in the report that further details are provided under the new item on the provisional agenda entitled "Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements".

In the report, the Bureau informs the Committee of the outcomes of its in-person meeting, held in February 2025 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and attended by members of the expanded Bureau, during which the Bureau discussed and reviewed the provisional agenda and preparations for the fifteenth session as well as decisions pertaining to the development of the strategic framework of the Committee of Experts for the period 2025–2030. The United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees, functional groups and thematic networks were requested to strengthen the implementation of the global geospatial frameworks, norms, principles and guides adopted by the Committee, and to encourage the engagement of Member States and partners to support the overall programme of work of the Committee.

In the report, the Bureau and the Secretariat provide information about the development of the strategic framework for the period 2025-2030 as a matter of priority, including the requested inclusion of considerations relating to environment, climate, resilience, sustainability, disaster risk management, the integration of the terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, rapid technological changes and advancements, and aspects of diversity, equality and inclusion, in accordance with decisions [14/101](#), [14/108](#), [14/110](#), [14/111](#) of the Committee. In the report, there is also an overview of activities related to strengthening coordination, coherence and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres.

In the report, the Secretariat informs the Committee of the successful convening, in Mexico City from 8 to 10 October 2024, of the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, the theme of which was "Accelerating Implementation: Achieving Resilience". The report includes details on the statements delivered, the programme followed, the themes discussed and the participants who attended. Information is provided on the process to select the host of the third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, which is scheduled to be convened in late 2026. The Bureau provides information about its process for evaluating the two bids, which includes the use of an evaluation framework and considerations such as diversity and inclusivity. The decision will be

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announced during the fifteenth session. In the report, note is made of a background document on the proposal to establish an international geospatial information day.

The Secretariat also provides information about its efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, which include organizing expert consultations and capacity development activities, enhancing communication and web presence, coordinating with implementing partners and developing partnerships to foster coherence and collaboration and to optimize resources. Such efforts support Member States in enhancing and sustaining leadership roles within national geospatial, mapping and cadastral agencies, in line with the overall goal of strengthening and enhancing geospatial capacities, knowledge-sharing and capabilities and with a view to developing a global programme for enhancing national integrated geospatial information management arrangements

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## I. Introduction

1. As the post-2015 development agenda was being formulated, strengthening data production and use of better data for policymaking and monitoring was increasingly recognized as a fundamental means for development, drawing from the experience of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Indeed the [MDGs Report of 2015](#) highlighted the key role of data in a compelling title *Measure what we treasure: sustainable data for sustainable development* where geospatial data was noted as a critical component as: “knowing where people and things are and their relationship to each other is essential for informed decision-making” and as “comprehensive location-based information is helping Governments to develop strategic priorities, make decisions, and measure and monitor outcomes.” The report also notes that “multiplicity of applications such as the use of geospatial information for precision agriculture, monitoring sea-level rise, health care and social interventions.”
2. In the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), references to geospatial information included “to exploit the contribution to be made by a wide range of data, including earth observation and geospatial information, while ensuring national ownership in supporting and tracking progress” and “to increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts” by 2020. Despite the plea to exploit these data, challenges remain at global, regional, national and local levels to have the necessary data to measure and track progress. Further, data disaggregation by geographic location remains largely unaddressed or insufficient to systematically be supporting global agendas.
3. In 2022, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) welcomed and noted the Committee’s comprehensive report on its implementation of its resolution [2016/27](#) on strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management ([E/2022/68](#)), and the Council adopted resolution [2022/24](#) entitled ‘Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements.’ The resolution reiterated the importance of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, particularly for the achievement of its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) to strengthen and ensure its continued effectiveness and benefits to all Member States.
4. In April 2024, at the conclusion of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4), world leaders adopted the ‘[Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity](#)’ (ABAS) and pledged to help small island developing States (SIDS) achieve their priorities over the next ten years. The ABAS underscored the “significant challenges in data collection, analysis, technical and institutional capacity, which hinders evidence-informed policy making, monitoring progress and accessing development financing.”
5. In September 2024, the action-oriented [Pact for the Future](#) and its [Global Digital Compact](#) note the importance of digital technologies and their potential for transforming our world and accelerating progress across the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)). It further recognizes the importance of digital public infrastructure, built in accordance with national priorities and needs, echoing the motto of ‘country-led, country owned’ approach advocated by the Committee through the UN-IGIF. The Committee must continue to play a pivotal role to improve the availability, accessibility and application of cohesive and comprehensive geospatial information as a critical component of a national digital public infrastructure and knowledge to address national priorities.
6. In early July 2025, the [Sevilla Commitment on Financing for Development](#) also highlighted the importance of “leveraging innovation in non-traditional data sources, including administrative records, geospatial information, mobile data as well as citizen-

generated data and remote sensing, supported by public-private partnerships and specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) indicators” and committed to “strengthen capacity for effective data-sharing and exchange”.

7. With less than five years to the end of the current development agenda, enhancing global geospatial information management remains a global imperative that requires concerted efforts and strategic partnerships. In this regard, the role of the Committee is indispensable for demonstrating the role of data for policymaking, accelerating innovation for national priorities, advancing the quest for a more equitable, sustainable world, and solving local to global challenges. It is imperative that the Committee continues to improve geospatial information capacities, capabilities, use and innovation as an essential component for collectively addressing and solving complex challenges faced by humanity.

8. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of this present report and to express its views on the implementation of ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#), in particular on its operations focused on the UN-IGIF and the SDGs. The Committee is also invited to examine ways to strengthen and enhance global geospatial information and contribute to efforts by Member States to strengthen and enhance their national geospatial information management arrangements. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 75.

## **II. Bureau and the Expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts**

9. At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/101](#), in which it commended the significant efforts in continuing to take strategic and practical actions to strengthen and enhance the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management arrangements in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/24](#).

10. The Bureau and its Expanded Bureau met in-person on the margins of the fourteenth session and discussed priority agenda items and activities to advance global geospatial information management. Discussions focused on: the upcoming Seventh High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management to be held in Mexico City on 8-10 October 2024; enhancing the programme of work of the Committee, including the Strategic Framework for 2025-2030; global coordination and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres; and perspectives on a global programme of national capacity development. An initial draft of the Strategic Framework 2025-2030 was circulated and discussed. The Director of the Statistics Division also informed the Bureau and the Expanded Bureau of the establishment of a multi-stakeholder working group on data governance at all levels under the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), established in the context of a General Assembly resolution on the Pact for the Future ([79/1](#)). Discussions concluded on the upcoming initiation of preparation for the Third World Geospatial Information Congress to be held in the last quarter of 2026.

11. During the intersessional period, the Bureau met virtually and regularly with the Director of the Statistics Division, at near monthly intervals. These virtual meetings followed up on items related to the: establishment of the expanded Secretariat; programme of work of the Committee; operationalization of the United Nations global geospatial centres of excellence; Seventh High-level Forum; ECOSOC coordination segment; preparation of the World Geospatial Information Congress; and other matters such as the involvement of the Committee of Experts in other forums.

12. The Bureau and the Expanded Bureau met in person on 3 February 2025 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, hosted by the General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information of Saudi Arabia. At this one-day meeting, the Bureau had the opportunity to engage and discuss in person with its Expanded Bureau, the High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (HLG-IGIF) and invited experts. The agenda included updates on items such as the programme of work of the Committee; events and activities of the Committee; establishment of the expanded Secretariat; operations of the United Nations global geospatial centres of excellence; and other matters from the Secretariat.

13. The Bureau informed participants of their upcoming involvement in the coordination segment of ECOSOC entitled “Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs for leaving no one behind” to be held from 6-7 February 2025.

14. The Bureau asked for volunteers to support the Secretariat in finalizing the draft Strategic Framework 2025-2030 towards its consideration at the fifteenth session in August 2025, given that a new Strategic Framework is of critical importance to the Committee of Experts and that it could not be postponed another year. In agreement with the Bureau and members of its Expanded Bureau present at the meeting, the regional committee of Europe, UN-GGIM Europe, volunteered to support the Secretariat in reviewing and organizing the consultations on the Strategic Framework 2025-2030, in accordance with the modalities from the report “that the bureau will consult the draft Strategic Framework with its expanded bureau, regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks and relevant stakeholders”.

15. In discussing the agenda item on ‘climate, environment and resilience’, the Bureau and Expanded Bureau reiterated the need to address the activities on this item in a holistic manner and highlighted the importance to combine the activities of the various groups and teams on these topics. The Bureau also emphasized the importance to ensure synergies with other events and platforms, outside the geospatial realm, related to climate, environment and resilience, and in this context decided to further identify opportunities that would help combine activities of the Committee of Experts and its various groups with other international community efforts and experts on the topic.

16. The Co-Convenors, from Saudi Arabia and South Africa, of the writing team on the ‘Future geospatial information ecosystem’ provided an overview of their current work plan and activities towards the completion of their requirements to deliver a position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem for the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

17. The five regional committees of the Committee of Experts provided updates from their regions, specifically highlighting ongoing challenges in securing adequate resources to support capacity development and in promoting participation and contributions in strengthening national geospatial leadership. The four thematic networks also provided updates on their activities and progress in supporting the programme of work of the Committee. The Bureau expressed its appreciation to the thematic networks for bringing their perspectives and engagement to the Committee, and welcomed their continued efforts to contribute to, and align their activities with the global geospatial information management agenda.

### **III. ECOSOC Resolution 2022/24 - Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

18. ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#) decided to enhance the institutional arrangements of the Committee of Experts as a subsidiary body of the Council in

charge of all matters related to geospatial information, geography, land administration and related topics, in accordance with the terms of reference annexed to the resolution. The Committee comprises experts from all Member States and in appointing their national representatives, Member States will seek to designate experts with specific knowledge of geospatial information management and its many interrelated fields<sup>1</sup>.

## **Geospatial positions dedicated to the Committee of Experts**

19. As noted in report E/C.20/2024/5/Add.1 of the Committee of Experts, the General Assembly decided to establish a Secretariat, comprising seven new positions (six professional and one general service), for the Committee of Experts in the 2024 programme budget. The General Assembly noted the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/78/7) that recognized the important functions of the Committee of Experts and the need to support Member States in implementing related technical recommendations to strengthen their geospatial information management capacities.

20. Five of the seven new positions were advertised in May 2024 through the United Nations Careers Portal. However, owing to the overall financial outlook and liquidity situation for the 2024 fiscal year, the United Nations Secretariat instituted a hiring freeze for regular budget positions.

21. In August 2024, in making decision 14/101, the Committee of Experts appreciated the establishment of a new and enlarged Secretariat for the Committee of Experts.

22. In December 2024, in the 2025 programme budget (A/79/7), the ACABQ recalled the establishment of a Secretariat of the Committee of Experts and its seven posts, and was informed that the job openings were published between mid-May and early July 2024 in accordance with the appropriate resolutions, reports, generic job profiles and administrative instructions. Additionally, in the 2025 programme budget, the ACABQ agreed to the proposed reassignment of three posts<sup>2</sup> from statistics-related functions to geospatial information functions within the Statistics Division. This reassignment recognizes the need to strengthen the application of geospatial information in Member States with related methodological approaches to address the growing need for the integration of geospatial information with statistics and other data.

23. In summary, the new and enlarged Secretariat is comprised of seven new regular positions<sup>3</sup> and three extrabudgetary positions<sup>4</sup> which are dedicated to the Committee's normative and implementation work on global geospatial information management, including implementing recommendations of the Committee approved by ECOSOC and the General Assembly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the UN-IGIF. Further, the Global Geospatial Information Management Section<sup>5</sup> which focuses on strengthening and coordinating the Division's geostatistical work is comprised of three regular positions.

24. In the 2025 programme budget of December 2024, the ACABQ indicated to trust that all vacant posts will be filled as soon as possible and that an update on the recruitment status of all vacant posts will be provided to the General Assembly. However, with a worsening financial outlook, a deepening liquidity crisis in the

<sup>1</sup> Geospatial sciences, geomatics, surveying, geography, land administration, geodesy, cartography and mapping, remote sensing, hydrography and oceanography, land/sea and geographic information systems and environmental sciences

<sup>2</sup> See A/79/7 with 1 P-5 (until 2030), 1 P-4 and 1 P-3

<sup>3</sup> See A/78/7 with 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 P-2 and 1 General Service

<sup>4</sup> Provided under the agreement for the operationalization of the UN-GGKIC with 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service

<sup>5</sup> In the Environmental Statistics and Geospatial Information Branch of the Division

2025 fiscal year, and the continued hiring freeze for all regular budget positions since May 2024, selections have not progressed for the seven new positions in the Secretariat, and also for the now vacant (retirement in December 2024) Senior Geospatial Information Officer position in the Section.

25. In May 2025, the Secretary-General of the United Nations indicated plans to conduct a System-Wide Reform, known as the ‘UN80 Initiative’<sup>6</sup>, including a proposed meaningful reduction in the overall budget level of the United Nations Secretariat, inclusive of the elimination of 20 percent of the posts as a reference for the reduction exercise. The proposed budget for 2026 to the ACABQ was revised in June 2025 and will be presented in September for approval before the end of the year. With no incumbered posts for the seven new positions in the Secretariat and one vacant Senior Geospatial Information Officer in the Section, the geospatial positions in Statistics Division are particularly vulnerable to the UN80 Initiative, its ongoing exercise to reduce the overall budget level of the United Nations Secretariat, and the elimination of 20 percent of posts for respective Departments in the United Nations Secretariat.

26. In this overall context, and despite best efforts to support and advance the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, with the concurrent vacant new positions selection and retirement of senior officers in the Division, the work of the Secretariat and the Section is seriously affected preventing many of the activities from being conducted. The current gaps in the Secretariat resources, further aggravated by the vacant position of Director of the Statistics Division, could impact several key components of the programme of work of the Committee of Experts including overall delays in delivering on ECOSOC resolution 2024/22.

27. Overall, the lack of resources could affect the implementation on the UN-IGIF (Result Based Budgeting indicators) and related country-level action plans; impede the services and documentation for the intergovernmental proceedings including annual plenary sessions, expert groups, and normative work of the Committee; and finally, deprive of oversight and enhanced authority at the Headquarters level causing lack of internal control, coherence, coordination, and compliance of activities in offices away from headquarters (i.e., UN Global Geospatial Centres of Excellence in Deqing, Bonn and upcoming Riyadh).

### **Regular and extrabudgetary funding resources**

28. In addition to the challenges related to the selection of geospatial positions and to sustaining these positions in the context of the UN80 Initiative, the current budgetary situation for the Secretariat remains a challenge. As noted in the report of 2024 ([E/C.20/2024/5/Add.1](#)), during the initial discussions and informal consultations leading up to ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#), some Member States expressed the need for regular budget allocations to support experts from developing countries to participate in the annual sessions of the Committee of Experts and key calendared technical meetings, including those for capacity development. Some Member States also advocated for dedicated United Nations conference management services, including interpretation and full support for the annual sessions of the Committee of Experts.

29. As noted in paragraph 19, while the General Assembly decided to establish a Secretariat, comprising seven positions, for the Committee of Experts in the 2024 programme budget, as per the report of the ACABQ ([A/78/7](#)), no provisions were made to include regular budgetary resources for securing conference management services, interpretation, technical support for the annual sessions of the Committee of Experts, or participation of Member States. In its report, the ACABQ indicated

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<sup>6</sup> See statement [SG/SM/22644](#) of 12 May 2025

that it trusted that extrabudgetary contributions would be mobilized to support the participation of experts, in particular from the most vulnerable countries.

30. Despite decision 14/101 (i) in which the Committee of Experts emphasized the critical need to mobilize extrabudgetary resources at the global level to support national efforts and the global and regional activities of the Committee of Experts, the absence of regular or sustained extrabudgetary resources are a constant challenge for the Secretariat to support the participation of experts. In the absence of these regular budget resources, the Committee of Experts may wish to consider mobilizing extrabudgetary resources, dedicated to supporting experts from developing countries to participate in the annual sessions and for editing and translating reports of the Committee.

31. The [Sevilla Commitment on Financing for Development](#) contained direct references to “leveraging innovation in non-traditional data sources, including administrative records, geospatial information, mobile data as well as citizen-generated data and remote sensing, supported by public-private partnerships and specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) indicators” and to “strengthen capacity for effective data sharing and exchange, as appropriate, within government and between government and the private sector”. This call provides an opportunity to advocate for mobilizing further extrabudgetary resources for the Committee of Experts given its contribution to addressing the SDGs and future agendas and possibly supporting the participation of Member States from developing countries.

## **Resources, contributions and partnerships**

32. In making decision 14/105 (e) the Committee of Experts acknowledged the importance of ensuring the currency of and translating and publishing the UN-IGIF suite of documents and resource materials to facilitate the implementation of the Framework by countries. Given the unavailability of sustained budget resources in the Secretariat (paragraph 28) to facilitate knowledge sharing and translations of key frameworks, a task team comprising volunteer translators from Member States and the Academic Network dedicated significant efforts to make available the UN-IGIF in multiple languages. The task team's efforts in translating reference frameworks of the Committee of Experts are critical in promoting, sharing knowledge, and sustaining the adoption of the frameworks across Member States. The in-kind contribution by several Member States to contribute to the availability and accessibility of these critical resources is recognized and appreciated across regions. The translation task team<sup>7</sup> also expressed its willingness to further engage and contribute to the universal access to the other guidance, reference documents and frameworks developed by the Committee of Experts. The Committee may wish to consider formalizing the role of the translation task team under the guidance of the Bureau, to ensure it prioritizes appropriately critical documents to translate, and in close coordination with the Secretariat, to develop adequate processes and to align the work with processes of the relevant services of the United Nations.

33. To address ongoing challenges of resources to advance geospatial information management since the inception of the Committee in 2011, the Statistics Division established partnership with key organizations. In 2019, a strategic partnership was established with Geospatial World through exchange of letters. The partnership aimed to address the common goal of demonstrating the true value of the global geospatial knowledge, the data ecosystem, public-private partnerships and the advancement of the global development agendas. Through its continued engagement and support, the partnership allowed to raise awareness on the value and benefits of geospatial information management for society and

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<sup>7</sup> Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, and the United Arab Emirates

extend the outreach and communication on the role of the Committee of Experts. During the intersessional period, another partnership was formalized between the Division and PVBLIC Foundation towards strengthening the geospatial capabilities of Member States and supporting the enhancement of national geospatial information management arrangements, leveraging the UN-IGIF. The establishment of the partnership was also a means to formalize the ongoing collaboration of the Secretariat and the SDG Data Alliance, as well as to promote the use of geospatial data and technologies in developing countries to accelerate progress toward achieving the SDGs and advancing national development priorities.

34. In 2023, financial resources were provided through Eurostat in the context of its overall cooperation with the Statistics Division and included covering the costs related to organization of important events or actions for capacity development. In this context, the grant, which was extended to March 2025, provided an opportunity to conduct a dedicated workshop in Europe to increase connectivity and collaboration between statistical, geospatial and data user communities, share knowledge about good practices and relevant use cases, and raise awareness on new technologies relevant for improving the data integration process. The grant also offered an opportunity to design and develop a dashboard to monitor the achievements of implementing the UN-IGIF.

35. In July 2025, the United Kingdom offered the secondment of one of its experts to the Secretariat for a period of eight weeks to temporarily augment the ability of the Secretariat to discharge its functions to the Committee of Experts and to facilitate the preparatory work of the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts. The secondment was formalized, and the expert provided support to advance and finalize background and other documents for the session and beyond. In the coming period, the Secretariat will also investigate opportunities related to the recruitment of junior professionals in geospatial information management and interns to support the work and proceedings of the Committee.

36. Finally, the Secretariat also wishes to acknowledge the leadership, in-kind contributions, expert contributions and technical support provided by Member States to advance global geospatial information management, to conduct the proceedings of the various groups of the architecture of UN-GGIM, and to develop relevant documents and guidance.

## **IV. Strengthening the programme of work of the Committee**

37. In making decision 14/101, the Committee also requested the Secretariat to focus, in particular, on: (a) supporting the Bureau to develop a Strategic Framework for the period 2025–2030; (b) strengthening effective global coordination and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres; and (c) supporting a global programme of national capacity development aligned with the Committee’s operations focused on the SDGs and the UN-IGIF.

### **Strategic Framework 2025–2030**

38. In 2018, the Committee of Experts recognized the importance of having a Strategic Framework to guide its programme of work and developed a Strategic Framework for the period 2018–2022 as annexed to its report on ‘Strengthening of geospatial information management’ E/C.20/2018/4/Add.1. In 2022, at its twelfth session, in making decision 12/101, the Committee of Experts “supported the proposals for the revision of the Committee of Experts and developing a short-term strategic plan for 2022–2024 that identifies the key activities and priorities of the Committee along with adequate resources and required outcomes.” The proposed

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revision of the strategic plan did not materialize due to resource constraints in the Secretariat.

39. In 2024, in its report ‘Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements’ ([E/C.20/2024/5/Add.1](#)), the Committee of Experts noted that a new Strategic Framework could encompass the Committee’s operational focus on the SDGs and the UN-IGIF to effectively support Member States to enhance their national geospatial information management arrangements and contribute to national development priorities. The report proposed that the Secretariat would analyze the most recent Framework (2018 – 2022) against key activities and priorities of the Committee, identify any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and gaps, and evaluate emerging trends and future needs. Based on these insights, an updated draft Strategic Framework would be prepared and provided to the Bureau for initial consideration. The report also indicated the expectation “that the Bureau will consult the draft Strategic Framework with its Expanded Bureau, regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks and relevant stakeholders” and for the Bureau to “recommend a new Strategic Framework for consideration by the Committee of Experts at its fifteenth session.”

40. A draft of the proposed Strategic Framework 2025-2030 was circulated at the meeting of the Bureau and Expanded Bureau in New York in August 2024, and subsequently in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in February 2025. At its meeting in Jeddah, as noted in paragraph 14, the Bureau agreed to advance, including through the support provided by UN-GGIM Europe, the draft Strategic Framework through several rounds of consultation that included the Expanded Bureau, experts, regional committees, and finally, through a global consultation inclusive of a webinar and survey.

41. From March to June 2025, in accordance with the process outlined by the Bureau, the draft Strategic Framework 2025-2030 was subjected to a series of consultations. These included two brainstorming sessions commencing in March with nominated experts by the Chairs and Presidents of the regional committees of the Committee of Experts. In April, the draft Strategic Framework was sent for another round of consultations with Member States by the Chairs and Presidents of the regional committees and their respective secretariats to ensure a broad outreach and rich feedback on the draft. In June, the draft Strategic Framework was sent to all delegations of the Committee of Experts with a survey to facilitate feedback and suggestions for refinements to the Framework. Finally, to ensure the abundance of opportunities for feedback, the Bureau also organized an [online webinar](#) in the lead up, or so-called ‘digital road’, to this fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

42. The final UN-GGIM Strategic framework 2025-2030, [Annexed](#) to this report, outlines the vision, mission and strategic objectives for the Committee of Experts. The Framework also captures the latest global frameworks and development agendas, and the relationship between national priorities and the value and benefits of geospatial information that can be provided for society. The Strategic Framework 2025-2030 also incorporates the overall recent context of ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#), the overall architecture of UN-GGIM, including the role of the United Nations global geospatial information centres of excellence, regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks, Secretariat and main working streams of the Committee of Experts. The Strategic Framework 2025-2030 continues to be a dynamic strategic and communication tool that will evolve over time, dependant of changes in global agendas, emerging trends, emerging global challenges and decisions of the Committee of Experts. Importantly, the Strategic Framework 2025-2030 will also assist in guiding and propelling the Committee in the next, post-2030, sustainable development agenda.

## **United Nations global geospatial centres and their coordination and governance arrangements**

43. The Committee of Experts focuses on the strengthening and enhancing of geospatial information management capacities and utilization in Member States, especially in developing countries. ECOSOC resolution [2022/24](#) recognized the sustained efforts of the Committee of Experts to establish the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China, and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, each of which will, in an open, inclusive, participatory and transparent manner, provide opportunities to develop and expand global geospatial capacity, competence and capability, and to strengthen geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries.

44. In June 2023, a formal offer from the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through its General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information (GEOSA), to host and establish a United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was made to the United Nations. In making decision [13/101\(e\)](#) at its thirteenth session, the Committee of Experts welcomed and supported the commitment from Saudi Arabia to host and establish the Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The required UN administrative processes are presently being finalized with Saudi Arabia for the establishment of the Centre in Riyadh.

45. The global geospatial centres of excellence, as project offices managed by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), provide critical assets and resources for enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements and the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts. Each centre contributes to the operational focus of the Committee as aligned with their respective mandates, substantive focus and expertise. Collectively, the centres are an inherent part of the overarching strategy of the Committee, including its initiatives, global geospatial frameworks, norms, principles and guides, to enhance effective geospatial information management across the world.

46. The substantive focuses for each of the global geospatial centres are:

- (a) United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence ([UN-GGCE](#))  
(Bonn, Germany)

Recognizing the importance of the global geodesy supply chain, assist Member States and geodetic organizations to coordinate and collaborate to implement [A/RES/69/266](#) and to sustain, enhance, access and utilize an accurate, accessible and sustainable Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF) to support science, society and global development.

- (b) United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre ([UN-GGKIC](#)) (Deqing, China)

Develop and promote the required knowledge, innovation, and leadership to strengthen the adoption of geospatial information to support the implementation of national development priorities and the SDGs, leveraging the UN-IGIF, and where Member States will have the ability to integrate and deliver national geospatial information policy, systems, services and capabilities into national government development policies, strategies, and arrangements.

(c) Proposed United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

Support Member States and stakeholders in enhancing global geospatial information management with the aim to progress towards a future geospatial ecosystem where the global geospatial information community and stakeholders actively engage and contribute sustainable real-world solutions to humanity's many challenges, leveraging high-quality, timely and reliable location-based information and impactful geospatial analytics including advancements in geospatial technologies and artificial intelligence systems towards new geospatial approaches and capabilities.

47. As noted in paragraph 37, the Committee of Experts requested the Secretariat to focus on strengthening effective global coordination and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres. Given the current resource constraints and staffing in the Secretariat, the development of coherent, cohesive and concerted coordination and governance arrangements was not prioritized. Nevertheless, the Secretariat undertook several activities to advance practical solutions for a better coordination and governance, including the preparation of shared resources and documentation such as calendars, exchanging workplans, definition of focal points, activities forecast and the organization of global team meetings between the United Nations global geospatial centres, the Global Geospatial Information Section and the Secretariat. The coordination of the participation and attendance at key events, such as the Expanded Bureau in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and the fifteenth session from the Centres, was also planned and organized through the Secretariat.

48. The operationalization of the United Nations global geospatial centres is detailed in the report on the 'Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements.' The report provides an overview on the responsibilities, advisory committees, current staffing, programme of work outputs and capacity development activities conducted respectively in the implementation of national development priorities and the SDGs, leveraging the UN-IGIF, and strengthening the global geodesy supply chain. The proposed United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence, in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is being established, and a Senior Advisor- Geospatial Information was recruited temporarily, for six months, to provide dedicated support for the establishment of the Centre in Riyadh.

49. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat continued to carry out critical activities at headquarters related to the oversight of the United Nations global geospatial centres of excellence including the coordination with relevant programme management offices, participation in the recruitment, facilitating provision of service request, and the development of guidance and guidelines related to the management of United Nations global geospatial centres. Further activities and events conducted in close coordination with the United Nations global geospatial centres and the Secretariat are described in the global programme of national capacity development.

### **Global programme of national capacity development**

50. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat continued to implement activities related to shaping a global programme of national capacity development including organizing and participating in UN-IGIF workshops, meetings of the IAC, contributing to regional committees' proceedings and online seminars and related activities.

51. During the 2023-2024 period, the Secretariat and the SDG Data Alliance supported a series of regional capacity development and knowledge transfer workshops on the UN-IGIF in South Africa (August 2023), Ethiopia (October 2023), Indonesia (November 2023), and in [Mexico](#) (January 2024). During the intersessional period, the Secretariat, in close collaboration with the UN-GGKIC, the SDG Data Alliance and the regional committees, continued to organize workshops on the UN-IGIF including for SIDS Caribbean countries, held in [Antigua and Barbuda](#) (October 2024), and for SIDS Pacific in [Fiji](#) (November 2024), and in Southern Africa in [Mozambique](#) (March 2025). Other workshops are being planned for the next intersessional period to ensure the sustained adoption of the UN-IGIF by Member States.

52. The regional committees are pivotal bodies within the Committee's architecture as they directly interface with Member States. The annual plenary sessions of regional committees are critical as they allow to capture regional challenges and raise awareness on the guidance of the Committee of Experts. Regional plenary sessions are particularly important to broaden the reach of the work of the Committee to all Member States in respective regions as some countries are able to attend more easily regional sessions given the proximity and given topics may be closely related to specific regional challenges. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat assisted the regional committees of Africa, Arab States, and the Americas, and the UN global geospatial centres attended to the regional committees of Europe and Asia and the Pacific. Regional committee meetings are key fixation points for a global capacity development programme, including for ensuring the sustained adoption of UN-IGIF, as the attendance can ensure broader outreach and shared knowledge with regional constituents. The regional committee meetings are valuable fixation points for delivering in-depth workshops and conducting capacity development activities on the substantive focus of the centres, effectively delivering the guidance, norms and standards of the Committee of Experts. The next intersessional period will provide opportunities to explore the synergies and benefits of conducting regional workshops on substantive topics of the UN global geospatial centres.

53. Leveraging voluntary contributions, trust funds and support of the UN-GGKIC, and in line with decision 14/101 (f) related to the recommendation for a "dedicated and easily accessible web presence for the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre on the website of the Committee of Experts, alongside the links to the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework," the Secretariat is leading the design and migration of a coordinated and centralized website which will enable to facilitate the access to shared knowledge, reference documents, resources and good practices of the Committee of Experts. The refurbished and migrated website of the Committee of Experts inclusive of the UN-GGKIC, UNGGCE and UN-IGIF resources is planned to be available by the end of 2025. The Secretariat is also preparing the digital and interactive publication of key resource documents of the Committee such as UN-IGIF suite of documents, or the Future geospatial information ecosystem.

54. The Secretariat is cognisant of the need to further scope and organize a holistic, cohesive and coherent global programme of national capacity development and has started to prepare a draft plan that will be consulted with the Bureau and its Expanded Bureau during the intersessional period after the fifteenth session and available at the sixteenth session.

## V. Global events and advocacy

55. At its fourteenth session in 2024, the Committee of Experts referenced the critical importance to focus on communicating, promoting, advocating, and raising

awareness of the merits, benefits, and potential of geospatial information across multiple thematic areas of the Committee's work, including geodesy, climate resilience, land administration, and the marine environment. The revised UN-GGIM Strategic Framework 2025-2030 further emphasizes the need for strategic engagement, communication and awareness across sectors, and to foster understanding and organizational value.

### **Seventh High-level Forum**

56. At its thirteenth session in August 2023, the Committee of Experts, in making decision [13/101](#), welcomed the offer of the Government of México, through its National Institute of Statistics and Geography, to host the [Seventh High-level Forum](#) in Mexico City in October 2024, and confirmed the support of the Committee of Experts in the development and implementation of the substantive programme for the Forum. In making decision [14/101](#), the Committee expressed its appreciation to Mexico for the opportunity to convene, as a global community, the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management in Mexico City.

57. From 8 - 10 October 2024, the Committee of Experts successfully convened the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management with the theme "Accelerating Implementation: Achieving Resilience" in México City. The Forum brought together 237 participants from 47 countries, the United Nations, other international organizations and the private sector. This seventh edition of the High-level Forum continued UN-GGIM's regular high-level, multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information management, which aimed to promote comprehensive dialogue among Member States, and between Member States and relevant international organizations, UN system entities, and stakeholders. The programme included key topics such as accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Beyond, including through the implementation of the UN-IGIF, climate risk, capacity development, emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, and partnerships to improve climate resilience, and building a sustainable future.

58. Key messages from the Seventh High-level Forum included the importance of sustained capacity development, youth engagement, academia and integrating geospatial education, and political leadership engagement. Participants and speakers highlighted the critical role of global frameworks such as the UN-IGIF and further advocated the necessary shift in implementing and encouraging local action and an ecosystem approach to implementation. The role of the private sector in championing innovation and the necessity for public private partnerships was recognized. The Forum also focused on the dual governance roles of artificial intelligence (AI), stressing the need for high-quality data and legal alignment. Gender equality, diversity and inclusive participation were celebrated as transformative forces for the future.

### **ECOSOC Coordination Segment**

59. ECOSOC's Coordination Segment, held on 6-7 February 2025 at the United Nations headquarters, addressed the main annual theme of the 2025 session of ECOSOC 'Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs for leaving no one behind' while also contributing to the in-depth reviews of the UN High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) for SDG 3 (good health and well-being), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 14 (life below water), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals). The 2025 Coordination Segment plays a crucial role in aligning the work of the ECOSOC system with the urgency to expedite the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and serves as a key platform for the Council to provide forward-looking policy guidance and direction to the work of its subsidiary bodies and the UN system entities.

60. The Bureau contributed video recordings including in the panel on 'Conversation with Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions and Chairs

of Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies on Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals including by leveraging the outcomes of the Summit of the Future' in which the Co-Chair from Belgium noted that "The Committee of Experts is committed to improving the availability of, and access to, geospatial information to address global challenges. Understanding precedes action, and geospatial information provides the critical knowledge needed to determine where to act... our community is committed to work with everyone to advancing national public digital infrastructure for our goals and the benefits of *people, places, and planet*".

61. The Bureau also contributed to the panel on 'Harnessing data, science, technology and innovation to advance digital progress' where the Co-Chair from Cote d'Ivoire highlighted that "by strengthening geospatial information policies and capacities, we are democratizing access to data and knowledge that enables governments to drive planning and manage resources effectively" further noting that "these efforts are essential to reducing the 'digital divide'".

### **World Geospatial Information Congress**

62. The first United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress ([UNWGIC](#)) was successfully held in November 2018 in Deqing, China, in collaboration with the Government of China through the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Zhejiang Provincial Government. The second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress ([2UNWGIC](#)) was successfully held in October 2022 in Hyderabad, India, in collaboration with the Government of India, specifically its Ministry of Science and Technology.

63. The Congresses are recognized to have an immense value to enhancing common understanding, developing geospatial capacity, accelerating innovation within governments and institutions, and raising awareness on the benefits of global geospatial information to realize national development priorities and accelerate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

64. In making decision [14/101](#), the Committee requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to initiate preparations for the third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, to be convened after the sixteenth session of the Committee of Experts in 2026, and to report back to the Committee at its fifteenth session. Following the decision of the Bureau and its Expanded Bureau, at its meeting held in Jeddah in February 2025, the Secretariat initiated the preparations for the third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress.

65. In February 2025, the Secretariat initiated an open call for Member States to express interest in organizing and hosting the Third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress as a high-level, multi-stakeholder discussion on global geospatial information with a view to promoting a comprehensive dialogue with all relevant actors and bodies. Responses to the call included the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and South Africa, both offering interest to host the Congress respectively in Riyadh and Cape Town.

66. In April 2025, prospective Member States were requested to prepare a detailed proposal and bid for hosting the next Congress, inclusive of details on expected impact, logistical arrangements, media coverage, and sustainability of commitment. Owing to a variety of administrative challenges and the short timeline, at the set date for receiving the complete bids, only one was received. The call to host the Third World Geospatial Information Congress is therefore awarded to Saudi Arabia through the General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information (GEOSA), which serves as Saudi Arabia's national mapping authority, and to be held in Riyadh in late 2026.

## World Geospatial Day

67. Communicating awareness and understanding of the value and benefits of geospatial information has been a challenging proposition for the Committee of Experts since its establishment. These challenges continue to resonate across the United Nations system, Member States, industry, academia, and the general community today. In the 21st century, integrated geospatial information management is crucial for addressing global challenges, supporting more resilient societies, driving dynamic digital economies, and connecting people, planet and prosperity. As observed in the UN-IGIF Overarching Strategy ‘Case for Change’, geospatial information is a major contributor to socio-economic transformation in many countries. Yet, there is still a considerable lack of awareness and understanding of the vital and integrative role of geospatial information and related enabling architectures in contributing to national development. This lack of awareness is particularly common at the policy and decision-making levels in developing countries.

68. Therefore, at its May 2025 meeting the Bureau considered a proposal submitted by Fiji to establish a ‘Global Geospatial Information Day’ as a dedicated international day in the global United Nations calendar to elevate the awareness and understanding of geospatial information and technologies across all sectors and walks of life. The adoption of such an international day would be through a UN General Assembly resolution, in a similar way to resolution [A/RES/69/266](#) entitled ‘A global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development’, also submitted by Fiji in February 2015.

69. The Bureau agreed that the purpose of a dedicated international geospatial day is to highlight and raise awareness of the pressing need to advance geospatial information as a transformative digital technology, as per the motivation of the UN-IGIF, so that all governments and economies can generate political understanding, industry momentum, and broad public awareness, while bridging the digital divide.

70. The Bureau unanimously supported the proposal and agreed it should be brought to the attention of the Committee of Experts for consideration at this fifteenth session. A background document attached to this present report provides further detail on the proposal, inclusive of rationale, options and modalities, and the formulation of initial concepts to facilitate the drafting and submission of a resolution to the General Assembly to seek support and commitment at the highest level. Key points the Committee may wish to note include the following:

- Existing Designated Days: The UN General Assembly has designated specific international days and weeks as occasions to mark events or topics in order to promote, through awareness and action, the objectives of the Organization. These have been proclaimed through the adoption of resolutions by the General Assembly proposed by one or more Member States. The list of international days and weeks currently observed by the United Nations is available here: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/list-days-weeks>.
- Alignment with the United Nations: This initiative is strongly underpinned by the principles and objectives outlined in key United Nations resolutions, which underscore the critical and vital role of geospatial information management in addressing global challenges and promoting resilient and sustainable national development. The establishment of a World Geospatial Day will directly contribute to the goals and objectives outlined in these resolutions and will provide a global platform for taking specific actions on an annual basis.

- Determining a Title: The terminology used by the United Nations is usually ‘international’ or ‘world’ day and is typically observed annually. Therefore, the Committee of Experts may wish to consider the title ‘World Geospatial Day’ as a day that encapsulates the entire ‘geospatial’ ecosystem across government and society.
- Determining a Day: Several options exist, but ensuring the date is clear and annual will be a requirement. The date could be aligned with the annual sessions of UN-GGIM, United Nations science week concurrent to ‘GIS day’ in November or align with the UN World Geospatial Congress week. The date could also be aligned with ‘quiet’ periods in the existing designated days, for example, January and February have fewer observed days, and 22–28 February is completely clear, and 6 months separated from UN-GGIM sessions in August.

71. The Bureau seeks the views and support of the Committee of Experts with a view to endorsing the proposal for a consensus-based draft resolution being prepared, under the guidance of the Bureau, for submission to the UN General Assembly at an appropriate time.

## **VI. Working Group on Data Governance of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development**

72. In September 2024, as part of its Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution [A/RES/79/1](#)) Member States requested the Commission on Science and Technology for Development ([CSTD](#)) to establish a dedicated working group to engage in a comprehensive and inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue on data governance at all levels as relevant for development. The working group is requested to report on its progress to the General Assembly, by no later than the eighty-first session (2026), including follow-up recommendations towards equitable and interoperable data governance arrangements, which may include:

- Fundamental principles of data governance at all levels as relevant for development.
- Proposals to support interoperability between national, regional and international data systems.
- Considerations of sharing the benefits of data.
- Options to facilitate safe, secure and trusted data flows, including cross-border data flows as relevant for development (all SDGs).

73. The Statistical Commission, along with a number of other intergovernmental bodies, is an [observer](#) of this group. In this context, the Statistical Commission established its own working group on data governance to complement the multi-stakeholder dialogue taking place within the CSTD working group on data governance at all levels, while avoiding unnecessary duplication. The Statistical Commission working group on data governance already started to compile a [compendium](#) of relevant documents in this context.

74. As part of the group appointed by the Statistical Commission, the co-Chair of the Committee of Experts from the United States of America has been appointed to the working group of the Statistical Commission to follow the proceedings and advancements of the dialogue of the CSTD working group on data governance. The Co-Chair will engage and report to the Committee of Experts on the progress as necessary to seek further guidance in engaging the Committee of Experts with the CSTD working group on data governance.

## VII. Points for discussion

75. The Committee of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the present report and express its views on the efforts of the Bureau, the Expanded Bureau and the Secretariat in implementing strategic and practical actions to strengthen and enhance global geospatial information arrangements, and the Committee's operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, in accordance with ECOSOC resolution 2022/24;
- (b) Take note of the present situation related to the recruitment of geospatial positions, in particular for the seven new positions of the Secretariat of the Committee of Experts and express its views on the impact to the programme of work of the Committee on strengthening and enhancing global geospatial information arrangements;
- (c) Endorse the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework 2025-2030 as annexed to the present report and which provides the required strategic direction to guide the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, while acknowledging the need for its continued adjustments to adapt to the changing landscape;
- (d) Note with appreciation the successful convening of the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management held in México City in October 2024;
- (e) Note with appreciation the offer from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host and convene the Third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC), to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in late 2026;
- (f) Express its views on the proposal to establish a 'world geospatial day' to raise awareness of the pressing need to advance geospatial information for social, economic, and environmental benefits, and endorse the intent to develop a consensus-based draft resolution, under the guidance of the Bureau, for its submission to the United Nations General Assembly at an appropriate time;
- (g) Take note of the contribution of the translation task team regarding the availability of the UN-IGIF suite of documents, and express its views on the formalization of a translation task team to further support the translation of critical reference documents of the Committee of Experts;
- (h) Take note of and express its views on the various in-kind contributions and partnerships established, including the secondment provided by the United Kingdom, and the contribution by Eurostat; and
- (i) Express its views on means to overcome the lack of sustainable resources and extrabudgetary contributions to the Secretariat for the organization of the annual session and expert meetings, including to support the participation of experts, in particular from the most vulnerable countries.

## Annex

# UN-GGIM

## Strategic Framework 2025-2030

<b>AMBITION &amp; FOCUS</b>	<b>VISION</b>	<b>A WORLD WHERE GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION SOLVES LOCAL TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES</b>						
	<b>MISSION</b>	Ensure geospatial leadership, resources and capabilities are coordinated, integrated, sustainable, accessible, and useable by Member States and society to effectively address national priorities, and ensure sustainable development, beyond 2030, leaving no one behind.						
	<b>STRATEGIC GOALS &amp; OBJECTIVES</b>	Leading global geospatial information management policies, frameworks & arrangements.	Fostering effective partnerships & collaborations for Member States and the global geospatial community.	Enhancing the global availability, accessibility & application of geospatial data to bridge the geospatial digital divide.	Accelerating the use, integration, & implementation of geospatial data, standards, current and emerging technologies, and methods.	Implementing United Nations geospatial mandates in the context of current and future development agendas.	Strengthening the Committee's global architecture & global geospatial cooperation.	
	<b>TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD: THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</b>							
	<b>GLOBAL POLICY AGENDAS</b>	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 - 2030	Paris Agreement on Climate Change	Sevilla Commitment on Financing for Development	New Urban Agenda	Our Ocean, Our Future: Call for Action	ABAS: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity for SIDS	Pact for the Future
<b>DRIVERS &amp; PRIORITIES</b>	<b>GLOBAL TO NATIONAL DRIVERS</b>	Sustainable Development Economic Growth Social Wellbeing Environmental Protection Transboundary Collaboration						
		Resilience Energy Prosperity Employment Governance Security Education Health Climate Land Oceans and Water						
		Innovation Digital Infrastructure Finance Mobility Equity Inclusion Nature Ecosystems						
	<b>GLOBAL TO NAT. GEOSPATIAL PRIORITIES</b>	Guidance Policy Governance Capacity Communication						
		Digital Ecosystems Integration Knowledge Technology Solutions						
		Demographics	Land Administration	Geodesy	Data	Earth observations	Marine information	Resilience & Risk

# UN-GGIM

## Strategic Framework 2025-2030

OPERATING PRINCIPLES		Global Thought Leadership	Strategic Engagement & Communication Across Sectors	Digital Transformation & Safeguarding	Guidance & Good Governance	Data-Driven Decision-Making	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	Accessibility, Interoperability & Transparency	Collaborative Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships	Capacity Development & Knowledge-Sharing
PRINCIPLES & BENEFITS	DIRECT NATIONAL BENEFITS & EFFICIENCIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Societal value:</b> Leadership to enhance and sustain value of geospatial information and knowledge for social, economic and environmental benefits</li> <li><b>Bridging the geospatial digital divide:</b> Empower digital transformation, reducing inequalities in geospatial access and use</li> <li><b>Authoritative and reliable data:</b> High-quality, managed and current geospatial data available at scale for decision-making</li> <li><b>Enhanced return on investment:</b> Coordinated use and reuse of data and technologies for increased return on investments</li> <li><b>Stronger evidence-based policies:</b> Reliable integrated data and systems to enhance science- and data-driven policy, decisions &amp; implementation</li> <li><b>Efficient and accountable governments:</b> Open, responsive, coordinated and enhanced capacity in governments and institutions</li> <li><b>Empowered workforce and innovation:</b> Strengthened skills, diversity, and innovation in human capital, jobs and entrepreneurship</li> <li><b>Improved stakeholder engagement:</b> Greater communication and awareness foster understanding and organizational value</li> <li><b>Integrated knowledge sharing:</b> Strategic data integration and knowledge exchange support government and resilient societies</li> <li><b>Strengthened regional and cross-border cooperation:</b> Enhanced collaboration for shared goals and sustainable development</li> </ul>								
DELIVERABLES	WORK STREAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage the leadership, commitment and resources in geospatial information of Member States, regional, thematic networks and others</li> <li>Strengthen the contribution and role of geospatial information towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and other global agendas</li> <li>Enhance the coordination, coherence, financing and capacities of global-to-local geospatial information management arrangements</li> <li>Improve geospatial governance and guidance, aligning national and global frameworks and good practices</li> <li>Guide the transparent, diverse, equitable and inclusive availability, access and use of geospatial information management for society</li> <li>Oversee the strategic orientation and guide the activities of the global geospatial centres of excellence</li> <li>Foster direction and readiness to utilize emerging technologies towards determining the future geospatial information ecosystem</li> <li>Provide strategic leadership towards the adoption and implementation of integrated geospatial information management and frameworks</li> <li>Lead the coordination and collaboration to enhance and strengthen the global geodetic reference frame and geodesy supply chain</li> <li>Promote the use of geospatial information data, methods, tools and services for climate, environment and resilience</li> <li>Integrate geospatial and statistical information through implementation and operationalization of related frameworks</li> <li>Advance the role of integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management</li> <li>Guide and encourage the availability, accessibility and integration of marine geospatial information</li> <li>Address policy and legal issues in geospatial information management including related to emerging technological advancements</li> <li>Demonstrate the benefits of implementing and adopting geospatial standards for the global geospatial community</li> <li>Strengthen synergies and partnerships particularly with other intergovernmental processes, international organizations related to science, technology, innovation, geographical names, statistics, data to maximize the impact of geospatial information in all its forms</li> </ul>								

# Economic and Social Council

07 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 4 of the provisional agenda\*

### Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda

## Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary of the report

The present paper contains the report jointly prepared by the regional committees of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa, the Americas, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its thirteenth session, held from 2 to 4 August 2023, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 13/102, in which it congratulated the five regional committees on their work and achievements during the intersessional period, including convening their annual plenary meetings between 2022 and 2023. The Committee recognized the efforts of the regional committees to strengthen engagement and alignment among the five regions. The Committee also recognized the active commitment of the regional committees and the regional commissions, with the inputs of relevant stakeholders from the four thematic networks, to continue to support Member States by providing forums for their representatives to meet, discuss and collaborate on the implementation of the global frameworks of the Committee, and encouraged Member States to continue contributing to, and taking advantage of, the possibilities offered by the Committee to discuss, coordinate and improve the availability and use of geospatial information, including Earth observations, across all regions. The Committee further encouraged Member State representatives in the regions and Chairs and/or representatives of regional committees to attend and actively contribute to those plenary meetings.

In the report, the regional committees, following decision 13/102, in which the Committee of Experts recognized the efforts of the regional committees to strengthen engagement and alignment among the five regions, inform the Committee of their meeting on the margins of the thirteenth session of the Committee and their decision to hold a meeting of Presidents and Chairs of the five regional committees. That meeting was held on 7 November 2023 in Bali, Indonesia, during the twelfth plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific. At the meeting, participants agreed that: (a) the regional committees shall meet, in person, at least twice a year, with one meeting held at the annual session of the Committee each August at United Nations Headquarters, and the other meeting to be hosted by a regional committee, on a rotational basis, during its annual plenary

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.

meeting; and (b) the regional committees shall coordinate the preparation of their joint report to the Committee under agenda item 4. In this regard, the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific was nominated to coordinate the preparation of the joint report to the Committee at its fourteenth session. Thereafter, this task will be done by another regional committee on a rotational basis.

The joint report of the regional committees is divided into six sections: (a) introduction; (b) intersessional activities and achievements of the regional committees; (c) plenary meetings of the regional committees; (d) interregional partnerships and collaborations; (e) concluding remarks; and (f) points for discussion.

In the first section, information is provided to the Committee of Experts on the objectives, organizational structures, and administrative arrangements of each of the five regional committees. In its second section, the report contains information on the respective intersessional activities and main achievements of the regional committees, covering the main substantive areas addressed by the committees' working groups, including capacity-developing initiatives and actions taken to support Member States. The proposed dates of each regional committee's next plenary meeting are highlighted in the report.

The third section of the report features the main decisions adopted at the plenary meetings of the five regional committees. In addition, the report provides information to the Committee of Experts on the actions taken to ensure that their programmes of work are in alignment with the global development agendas; the global geospatial information agenda and frameworks, in particular, the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework; the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework; and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report provides an examination of some major challenges faced by the regional committees and the strategies and approaches adopted to address them, including planned activities.

The report, in its fourth section, highlights the contributions of the regional committees to the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the Subcommittee on Geodesy, the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and other regional meetings and activities. The report also highlights the upcoming in-person interregional committee meeting, which will be hosted by the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas on the margins of its eleventh plenary meeting, and the seventh High-level Forum on United Nation Global Geospatial Information Management, to be convened in October 2024 in Mexico City.

The fifth section of the report includes a reiteration of the commitment of the regional committees and their continued support to ensure that their work programmes are in alignment with the work of the Committee of Experts and any future substantive activities aimed at advancing the global geospatial information agenda.

The report concludes with a set of points for discussion, in which the Committee of Experts is invited to note and express its views on the joint report prepared by the five regional committees. The regional committees, in the report, request the Committee to take note of the dates of their next plenary meetings, and to encourage Member State representatives to attend these regional plenary meetings and to continue contributing to advancing the global geospatial information agenda and the programme of work of the Committee.

## I. Introduction

1. Each regional committee under the Committee of Experts plays a vital role in liaising with the Secretariat on topics of interest and major developments between sessions of the Committee of Experts, facilitating regional discussion and progress, and formally feeding into the work of the Committee of Experts. All five regional committees have strong and streamlined arrangements that bring important national perspectives to the global level and disseminate the outcomes and benefits of the global activities to Member States in each region. The regional committees have pivotal functions within the Committee's architecture, as they directly interface with Member States, and supports the understanding of geospatial information management needs and support the implementation of fit-for-purpose solutions.

2. During this intersessional period, the regional committees continued to implement their regional work programmes and contributed to the global activities of the Committee of Experts. Regional committees continued to prioritize developing capacities and capabilities, strengthening coordination and coherence in geospatial collaborative activities across regional committees, and alignment with the global work programme of the Committee of Experts. Regional committees also continued to prioritize the adoption and effective implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), with emphasis on the preparation of Country-level Action Plans.

3. The present report highlights the main achievements of the five regional committees, including their plenary meetings, capacity development initiatives, and actions taken to support Member States during the intersessional period. The Committee is invited to take note of this report and its supporting background documents, and points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 38.

### Objectives

4. In aligning with the global agenda, the objectives of each regional committee vary depending on their specific capacities, challenges, and regional contexts and are summarized as follows:

<i>Regional Committee</i>	<i>Objectives</i>
Africa	The main objective of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa ( <b>UN-GGIM: Africa</b> ) is to examine the policies, measures and steps that African countries could use or take to strengthen, sustain or amplify: (a) the legal and regulatory frameworks required to guide the efforts of its members to achieve a better coordination mechanism for cooperative geospatial information management at the national level; (b) the technological and innovation infrastructure with the necessary tools, applications and solutions to source, capture, curate and build purpose-oriented datasets and spatially-enabled services for informed decision-making; (c) the holistic and long-term transformative development of capacity in Africa, with spatially-aware citizens who are empowered with the essential technological skills and ability to participate and contribute critically to the digital transformation and an information society; and (d) the mechanism for partnership and collaboration within the geospatial information community worldwide.

Americas	The Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas ( <b>UN-GGIM: Americas</b> ) determines the relevant regional issues for the management of geospatial information, and takes the necessary measures to maximize the economic, social, and environmental benefits. The foregoing is based on the knowledge and exchange of experiences and technologies by the Member States, which allows for the sustainable and equitable implementation of the Integrated Framework for Geospatial Information in the Americas and other national initiatives, in addition to contributions to the debates in UN-GGIM.
Arab States	The Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States ( <b>UN-GGIM: Arab States</b> ) plays its role as the formal Arab chapter of the UN-GGIM initiative with the core objective of coordinating, facilitating, and enhancing the regional cooperation in the realm of geospatial information management as well as cooperating with other regional and international entities to promote best practices in geospatial information management across the region.
Asia and the Pacific	The Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific ( <b>UN-GGIM-AP</b> ) aims to promote the use of geospatial information for identifying problems and finding solutions, so that the economic, social and environmental benefits of geospatial information will be maximized in Asia and the Pacific region.
Europe	The aim of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe ( <b>UN-GGIM: Europe</b> ) is to contribute to the more effective management and availability of geospatial information in Europe and ensuring that the work of the Regional Committee is aligned with the global programme of work of the Committee of Experts. The new UN-GGIM Europe Strategy 2025-2030 outlines the mission of UN-GGIM: Europe, which is to maximize the use of geospatial information in Europe for a safer and more sustainable world.

### **Organizational structure**

5. In aligning with the global agenda, the objectives of each regional committee vary depending on their specific capacities, challenges, and regional contexts. They are summarized as follows:

#### **Executive Bureau of UN-GGIM: Africa**

Chair: South Africa  
 First Vice-Chair: Cameroon  
 Second Vice-Chair: Morocco  
 First Rapporteur: Uganda  
 Second Rapporteur: Burkina Faso  
 Secretariat: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa  
 Website: <https://ggim.un.org/UN-GGIM-Africa/>

#### **Board of Directors of UN-GGIM: Americas**

Chair: Chile  
 Vice-Chair: Brazil  
 Executive Secretary: Chile  
 Vocals: Mexico (North America), Panama (Central America),  
                  Jamaica (Caribbean) and Argentina (South America)  
 Technical Secretary: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean  
 Website: <http://www.un-ggim-americas.org/>

### **Board of Directors of UN-GGIM: Americas**

Chair: Chile  
 Vice-Chair: Brazil  
 Executive Secretary: Chile  
 Vocals: Mexico (North America), Panama (Central America),  
                  Jamaica (Caribbean) and Argentina (South America)  
 Technical Secretary: Economic Commission for Latin America and the  
 Caribbean  
 Website: <http://www.un-ggim-americas.org/>

### **Executive Body of UN-GGIM: Arab States**

Chair: Saudi Arabia  
 Vice-Chair: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia  
 Executive Secretary: Saudi Arabia  
 Website: <https://www.un-ggim-as.org/>

### **Executive Board of UN-GGIM: AP**

Chair: Indonesia  
 Vice-Chair: India, Japan and Singapore  
 Board Members: Australia, China, Fiji, the Islamic Republic of Iran,  
                  Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, the Republic of Korea (the),  
                  and the Russian Federation (the).  
 Secretariat: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia  
                  and the Pacific  
 Website: <https://un-ggim-ap.org/>

### **Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe**

Chairs: The Netherlands  
 Board Members: Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Slovenia, Poland,  
                  Serbia, and United Kingdom  
 Secretariat: EuroGeographics, through a service-level agreement with  
                  The Netherlands (represented by Kadaster)  
 Website: <https://un-ggim-europe.org/>

### **Administrative arrangements**

6. There were very few changes in administrative arrangements across the regional committees during the intersessional period. Existing administrative practices remained in place, with executive board member changes as per term limits as stated in their statutes. The following board changes were made.

- (a) UN-GGIM: Africa agreed to extend the current structure of its Executive Bureau — consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chairs, and Rapporteurs — until 2025 in order to ensure continuity. Additionally, representatives from Uganda and Burkina Faso were appointed as Rapporteurs to strengthen accountability and enhance regional reporting.
- (b) UN-GGIM: Americas, no change to report.
- (c) UN-GGIM: Arab States elected a new executive committee during their plenary meeting in Doha in February 2024.
- (d) UN-GGIM: Asia and the Pacific acknowledged that the Executive Board elected during the previous term had undergone changes in its composition. New country representatives from India, Australia, Japan, and Iran had been appointed, resulting in adjustments to the respective Vice President and Executive Board member positions. The Regional Committee also decided to rename the Working Group on Cadastre and Land Management as the Working Group on Integrated

Geospatial Information for Effective Land Administration, in order to better align with the evolving UN-GGIM agenda. It was further noted that the election of the new Executive Board for the 2025-2028 term will be held at the fourteenth Plenary Meeting, scheduled for 26 September 2025.

- (e) UN-GGIM: Europe, at its twelfth Plenary Meeting on 24-25 June 2025, UN-GGIM: Europe elected three new Executive Committee members.

## II. Intersessional Activities and Achievements of the Regional Committees

7. The work programmes of regional committees are executed through working groups (WG's). Regional committees support their Member States through the webinars and workshops organized, the development of manuals and toolkits, and other capacity development efforts. The work areas addressed by each regional committee can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1: Work areas of regional committees.**

<i>Priority Work Item / Working Group</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Americas</i>	<i>Arab States</i>	<i>Asia Pacific</i>	<i>Europe</i>
1. Data Integration/ Integration of statistical and geospatial data	X	X		X	X
2. Fundamental geospatial data themes and standards					X
3. Disasters		X		X	
4. Integrated Geospatial Information Framework	X	X	X	X	X
5. Global geodetic reference frame	X	X	X	X	X
6. Cadastre and land management	X	X		X	
7. Institutional arrangements and policy and legal framework					
8. Sustainable development goals				X	X
9. Data strategy and policy					X
10. Policy, Strategy, Capacities and Capabilities Development					
11. Geospatial Governance			X		

8. The work programmes of the regional committees remained consistent within the intersessional period:

- (a) UN-GGIM: Africa's work programme is structured to promote the adoption of geospatial standards, support the integration of geospatial and statistical data, strengthen the development and implementation of integrated geospatial frameworks and enhance the use of spatial information for sustainable development and decision-making across Africa. Four Executive Working Groups have been established to steer the Regional Committee's work on the following thematic areas: geodesy, integration of statistical and geospatial information, the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), and land administration and management;

- (b) UN-GGIM: Americas continued the implementation of its Strategic vision and 2021–2025 Work Plan, ensuring that its activities are aligned with the global frameworks established by the Committee of Experts. The regional committee's efforts are carried out through the ongoing work of its five established working groups, four regional vocals, active engagement of the regional academic and private sector networks and the support of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC);
- (c) UN-GGIM: Arab States' three working groups continued to work together to implement and enhance their strategic goals and work plans;
- (d) UN-GGIM-AP continued with the implementation of its 2022 to 2025 work plan and the six priority areas of work. The regional committee also continued its commitments to further advance international and regional agendas in support of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development, the UN-IGIF, the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) and the Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA); and
- (e) UN-GGIM Europe continued with the implementation of their 2022 to 2025 work plan and the key priority areas of work, which are aligned with the global programme of the Committee of Experts and the areas of relevance to Europe. The Regional Committee adopted a new UN-GGIM: Europe Strategy at its twelfth plenary in June 2025.

#### **Intersessional Activities and Achievements of the UN-GGIM: Africa**

9. The Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa), with the support of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), continued to advance the continent's geospatial information agenda by fostering policy development, technical capacity, and international cooperation. The Regional Committee's work programme is structured to promote the adoption of geospatial standards, support the integration of geospatial and statistical data, and enhance the use of spatial information for sustainable development and decision-making across Africa.

- (a) UN-GGIM: Africa provided technical support to member States, advanced holistic geospatial strategies, and encouraged partnerships to leverage data, expertise, and funding. Progress has been made in the development of Country-level Action Plans leveraging the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), notably in Cameroon, Mali, and Mozambique, though many countries remain in the early stages of needs assessment and situational analysis. Expert consultations and capacity development workshops were organized to enhance geospatial management capabilities and promote the integration of geospatial and statistical information, particularly for census and SDG monitoring.
- (b) Further, UN-GGIM: Africa has developed a compendium of climate change data sources and initiated studies on urban spatial frameworks to guide sustainable urbanization in Africa. These initiatives aim to provide evidence-based tools for policymakers, urban planners, and stakeholders, supporting resilient and inclusive urban development across the continent.

<i><b>Working Group</b></i>	<i><b>Activities and Achievements</b></i>
Integrated Geospatial Information Framework	<p>UN-GGIM: Africa endorsed the establishment of a Working Group on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF). The primary objective of the Working Group is to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the UN-IGIF across Member States. The resolution adopted by UN-GGIM: Africa mandated the Executive Bureau to oversee the allocation of Member States to the Working Group and to facilitate the nomination of its Chair. Following consultations with member states, South Africa was appointed as the Convenor and Chair, with technical and secretarial support provided by AFRIGIST. Voting members of the Working Group include Cameroon, Burundi, Morocco, Burkina Faso, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Observer members include Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, and the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD).</p> <p>In March 2025, an Expert Consultation on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) for Southern Africa was held in Maputo, Mozambique, with support from the UN Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre of Excellence. The meeting convened several Member States at different stages of UN-IGIF implementation, fostering regional collaboration and knowledge exchange.</p> <p>First-time participants—including Burundi, Comoros, Lesotho, Malawi, and Zimbabwe—shared their initial experiences, highlighting both the challenges faced and innovative approaches adopted to advance national implementation. Meanwhile, countries such as Cameroon, Eswatini, Mozambique, and South Africa presented updates on the development of their Country-level Action Plans.</p> <p>UN-GGIM: Africa also contributed to the First UN-GGIM Interregional Webinar on the UN-IGIF, offering regional perspectives and drawing on lessons from global implementation efforts.</p> <p>Looking ahead, planned activities include continued support to Member States in addressing key implementation challenges, as well as the convening of a regional UN-IGIF workshop in Ghana, to be held alongside the 11th Session of UN-GGIM: Africa.</p>
Integrated of Statistical and Geospatial Information	<p>UN-GGIM: Africa approved the establishment of a Working Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information. The primary objective of the Working Group is to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) among Member States. Following consultations on the proposed structure, Cameroon was appointed as the Convener and Chair, with technical and secretarial support provided by AFRIGIST. Voting members of the Working Group include Comoros, Algeria [to be confirmed], Mozambique, Nigeria, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Observer members include Burkina Faso, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa,</p>

	<p>and the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD).</p> <p>In 2025, Cameroon led pilot initiatives on smart census techniques, integrating innovative geospatial approaches and the use of geospatial layers for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) reporting, showcasing national leadership in the modernization of statistical operations.</p> <p>Significant progress was made in advancing the African Geospatial Statistical Framework (AGSF), which supported the harmonization of workflows between National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and National Mapping Agencies (NMAs), promoting greater interoperability and data integration across institutions.</p> <p>Additionally, a draft model legislation was prepared with the aim of standardizing the roles and responsibilities of spatial and statistical authorities, contributing to improved governance and regulatory alignment in the production and use of geospatial and statistical data across African countries.</p>
African Geodetic Reference Frame	<p>UN-GGIM: Africa approved the establishment of a Working Group on the African Geodetic Reference Frame. The primary objectives of the Working Group are to coordinate, support, and monitor the implementation of the geodetic reference frame across Member States. Following consultations on the proposed structure, Côte d'Ivoire was appointed as the Convener, with technical and secretarial support provided by the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD). Voting members of the Working Group include Cameroon, Madagascar, Tunisia, South Africa, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Observer members include Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria, Uganda, AFRIGIST, and Trimble.</p> <p>In 2025, African experts actively contributed to global geodetic efforts by participating in the Joint UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy 5th Plenary and the 3rd Meeting of the UN-GGCE International Advisory Committee, held from 10 to 14 March at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany.</p> <p>As part of regional capacity-building efforts, a Capacity Development Workshop for Africa on Transitioning to a Modern Geospatial Reference System was successfully held in Nairobi in May 2025, co-hosted with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE).</p> <p>In addition, requests from Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Togo to upgrade and strengthen their geodetic infrastructure and develop national expertise in the use of modern geodetic techniques were acknowledged, with the expectation that the UN-GGCE will provide support and follow-up.</p> <p>Furthermore, a significant milestone was achieved with the launch of a CORS network pilot in Senegal, implemented in collaboration with Japan, marking a concrete step towards enhancing geodetic capabilities in the region.</p>

<p><b>Land Administration and Management</b></p>	<p>UN-GGIM: Africa approved the establishment of a Working Group on Land Administration and Management. The primary objectives of the Working Group are to coordinate, support, and monitor the implementation of the Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) by Member States. Following consultations on the proposed structure, Morocco was appointed as the Convener and Chair, with technical and secretarial support provided by the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD). Voting members of the Working Group include Congo [to be confirmed], Uganda, Eswatini, Ghana, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Observer members include Burkina Faso, South Africa, and AFRIGIS.</p>
<p><b>Integration of Geospatial and Statistical Information</b></p>	<p>In 2025, Cameroon led pilot initiatives on smart census techniques, integrating innovative geospatial approaches and the use of geospatial layers for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) reporting, showcasing national leadership in the modernization of statistical operations.</p> <p>Significant progress was made in advancing the African Geospatial Statistical Framework (AGSF), which supported the harmonization of workflows between National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and National Mapping Agencies (NMAs), promoting greater interoperability and data integration across institutions.</p> <p>Additionally, a draft model legislation was prepared with the aim of standardizing the roles and responsibilities of spatial and statistical authorities, contributing to improved governance and regulatory alignment in the production and use of geospatial and statistical data across African countries.</p>
<p>(c)</p>	<p>UN-GGIM: Africa continued to strengthen geospatial information management in the continent focusing on robust governance frameworks, consensus building, capacity development, technological innovation, and strategic partnerships to harness geospatial data for sustainable development and regional integration. The regional committee carried out and participated in the various activities during the reporting period.</p>
<p>(d)</p>	<p>Organization of a workshop on the integration of geography and statistics. The workshop allowed to gain an invaluable understanding of the principal issues, potential solutions and the way forward concerning efforts to integrate geography and statistics, and allowed to note the good progress that had been made in that regard. Participants examined a next-generation smart census, the role of geospatial data in addressing statistical challenges, and a federated system for tracking progress towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.</p>
<p>(e)</p>	<p>Advance the production and use of disaster-related statistics for risk-informed development. UN-GGIM: Africa is building a Compendium of Disaster-related Indicators with the aim to significantly enhance the availability and usability of disaster related statistics in Africa, promoting informed decision-making for better disaster risk management, climate resilience and sustainable development across the continent. When completed, the compendium will be a vital tool for providing a standardized set of indicators, ensuring consistency in data collection, reporting, and comparison across regions.</p>

- (f) Support to the implementation of the African Union Space strategy. The Regional Committee continues to play a pivotal role in facilitating consensus among stakeholders by sharing strategic insights and experiences that highlighted shared objectives and challenges in the African space sector. The Regional Committee's active engagement contributes to strengthening alignment among participants, enhancing mutual understanding, and supporting efforts toward more coordinated regional approaches in advancing space-related initiatives across the continent.
- (g) Educational programs remain essential for enhancing geospatial professional qualifications and cultivating a skilled workforce to advance geospatial technologies across Africa. UN-GGIM: Africa continuously collaborates with the regional centers of excellence, notably the African Regional Institute for Geospatial Information Science and Technology (AFRGIST) and the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD), to develop best practices aligned with regional needs. These efforts promote the integration of geospatial science and technology into institutional governance and management, addressing emerging challenges and opportunities continent-wide.

#### **Intersessional Activities and Achievements of the UN-GGIM: Americas**

10. UN-GGIM: Americas continued to implement its Work Plan 2021-2025. Objectives include supporting the implementation of global frameworks at the national level, monitoring national geospatial information management processes, strengthening capacities in key areas, increasing information repositories through geospatial knowledge management, and promoting the adoption of standards at the national level. These objectives are pursued through the coordinated efforts of its five working groups and with the support of its Executive and Technical Secretariat, the latter hosted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Some of the main activities and achievements are described below.

<b><i>Working Group</i></b>	<b><i>Activities and Achievements</i></b>
Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (WG ISGI)	<p>The Working Group has continued to strengthen the Statistical-Geospatial Framework for the Americas (MEGA), conceived as a common framework for regional integration. In this context, the adoption of the principles of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) has been promoted within the geospatial and statistical community of the region. As part of these efforts, a regional virtual workshop on GSGF Principle 5 (“Accessible and Usable Geospatially Enabled Statistics”) was held in May 2025, with the participation of 128 individuals and noteworthy presentations from representatives of Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic, as well as from the United Nations Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information.</p> <p>Additionally, with technical support from ECLAC, a protocol was designed to enable the automated updating of MEGA’s geographic levels, accompanied by a regional survey on the availability of geographic data services linked to census databases. The results of this survey contributed to the design of an interoperable system aligned with international standards, which will facilitate access to and collaborative management of geospatial data in the region, while promoting its integration with statistical data through the CEPALSTAT platform.</p>

	<p>Furthermore, in accordance with Principle 3 of the GSGF—related to the use of common geographies for the dissemination of statistics—a pilot proposal was developed for new levels of geographic disaggregation, considering official territorial boundaries or statistical geographies and population size criteria. This proposal draws on experiences such as the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) and the GEOSTAT initiative, developed by Eurostat. These technical tests are expected to serve as a basis for defining common specifications that will enable the expansion of the model throughout the region, promoting the standardization and comparability of geospatial and statistical data, and supporting more precise, inclusive, and evidence-based decision-making.</p>
Disasters	<p>The Working Group has carried out various activities aimed at strengthening geospatial disaster management in the region. The identification of national focal points responsible for emergency management in the Member States was completed, and progress was made in validating the information contained in the Disaster Events GeoHub<sup>1</sup>, a regional platform that enables the visualization of natural events that have occurred over the past ten years. Additionally, the process of disseminating and validating the “Catalogue of Natural and Anthropogenic Hazard Objects for Disaster Management” (version 1.0), available in Spanish, English, and Portuguese, was initiated and implemented. This catalogue aims to establish a standardized reference for the region. Finally, the Group supported the organization of the regional virtual workshop “Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management,” which featured representatives from six countries and over 200 participants. A follow-up in-person workshop is scheduled for management.</p>
Geodesy	<p>The Working Group has made significant progress in consolidating an integrated regional geodetic framework, in alignment with the Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF). Key achievements include the incorporation of Jamaica into SIRGAS, expanding Caribbean integration, and institutional strengthening in Costa Rica and Bolivia through the establishment of new GNSS Processing Centers. Capacity-building and technical cooperation initiatives were also developed, such as the Third SIRGAS Real-Time School and the SIRGAS 2024 Symposium, which brought together over 400 specialists. Educational activities included the Virtual School on Geodynamic and Atmospheric Monitoring, and a new school on advanced geodetic data processing is scheduled for July 2025. Collaboration with the UN-GGCE and the Subcommittee on Geodesy was also reinforced through the active participation of the SIRGAS Chair in international bodies. Finally, in partnership with IPGH and ECLAC, actions are being taken to safeguard the valuable historical archive of GNSS data from the region, ensuring its preservation as a scientific asset for the geospatial community.</p>

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.geoportaligm.gob.ec/html\\_hub\\_eventos\\_américa/](https://www.geoportaligm.gob.ec/html_hub_eventos_américa/).

<p><b>United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework</b></p>	<p>The Working Group has promoted actions to enhance the understanding and implementation of the UN-IGIF in the region. As part of its awareness and capacity-building efforts, the group organized virtual discussions focused on the UN-IGIF's strategic pathways, highlighting replicable national experiences and good practices. Specifically, two discussions were held: the first in November 2024 on Strategic Pathway 4: Data, and the second in June 2025 on Strategic Pathway 6: Standards.</p> <p>In addition, the group has developed regional communication tools such as informational bulletins aimed at disseminating progress, resources, and events related to the UN-IGIF. The first bulletin was published in May 2025 in Spanish, English, and Portuguese, with support from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) and the Academic Network for the Americas. These actions have significantly contributed to strengthening institutional capacities and enhancing regional coordination around the implementation of the UN-IGIF.</p>
<p><b>Land Administration</b></p>	<p>The Working Group has focused its efforts on promoting the Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) approach in the region. Among its main achievements is the implementation of a diagnostic survey on the current state of land administration in 21 member countries, the results of which were consolidated into a publicly available technical report.</p> <p>The group has also expanded country participation and organized sessions for the exchange of national experiences, featuring presentations from countries across the Americas.</p> <p>In the area of international cooperation, links have been established with the Ibero-American Permanent Committee on Cadastre (CPCI), the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), and the EuroSDR network, with whom experiences and documents have been shared to support the development of tools such as regional surveys aligned with FELA. The Working Group has also contributed to organizing a global webinar on land administration, held in July 2025.</p>
<p><b>Secretariats</b></p>	<p>The Executive Secretariat of UN-GGIM: Americas coordinates the Regional Committee, fostering connections and collaboration among Member States and with other regional organizations. It provides support to the working groups, vocals, and thematic networks in carrying out the activities outlined in the annual Work Plan. Additionally, it develops content for the official website and social media channels. The Executive Secretariat has also worked closely with Member States to update and maintain the content of the SDI Americas platform<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>Moreover, the Secretariat supported the organization of the Eleventh Session of UN-GGIM: Americas and contributed to the implementation of the Interregional Work Plan of the UN-GGIM Regional Committees.</p> <p>The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), serving as the Technical Secretariat of</p>

<sup>2</sup> [https://geo.cepal.org/ide\\_americas/](https://geo.cepal.org/ide_americas/).

	<p>UN-GGIM: Americas, collaborates with the Executive Secretariat to achieve the objectives and actions of the regional annual Work Plan. The Technical Secretariat provides both technological and human resources for the maintenance of the UN-GGIM: Americas website and the SDI Americas platform.</p> <p>Furthermore, ECLAC has provided interpretation services for webinars organized by the Working Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (ISGI), and has offered financial support to facilitate the participation of Member States in the annual sessions of the Regional Committee.</p>
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11. UN-GGIM: Americas continued to make steady progress in the implementation of its Work Plan and in strengthening geospatial governance in the region. Through the coordinated work of its subregional spokespersons, working groups, and thematic networks, the Regional Committee achieved tangible advances in the adoption and implementation of global strategic frameworks promoted by UN-GGIM, with particular emphasis on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF).

12. Effective coordination among Member States and regional partners enabled the development of national workshops, technical meetings, training courses, and subregional gatherings, contributing to the strengthening of institutional capacities, promoting data interoperability, encouraging the use of open-source tools, and consolidating national geospatial initiatives.

13. Sustained collaboration with key organizations such as the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), ECLAC, and other international entities has been essential for financing and implementing these strategic actions, amplifying their impact across the region.

14. UN-GGIM: Americas strengthened its communication and participation mechanisms by updating Member States' focal points and ensuring that its content and official events are available in both Spanish and English. Additionally, extra efforts have been made to incorporate Portuguese, with the aim of fostering broader and more inclusive participation across the region.

15. In line with its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, gender equality, innovation, and inclusion, UN-GGIM: Americas promoted new initiatives aimed at raising visibility of women's participation in the geospatial field and exploring emerging technological opportunities such as geospatial artificial intelligence (GeoAI). These efforts included the establishment of a Community of Practice on GeoAI and dedicated dialogue spaces that enrich the regional agenda.

16. Furthermore, the Member States of UN-GGIM: Americas will continue to actively participate in the global groups and initiatives of the Committee of Experts related to geodesy, the UN-IGIF, land administration, disaster management, marine geospatial information, and the integration of statistical and geospatial information. The region will also continue to contribute to the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre through the International Advisory Committee and to the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence.

#### **Intersessional Activities and Achievements of the UN-GGIM: Arab States**

17. During the intersessional period of 2024-2025, the UN-GGIM: Arab States activities focus on regional cooperation and good practices in geospatial information management to support national development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The key objectives are to coordinate regional efforts, enhance collaboration with international entities, and promote best practices in geospatial data use for sustainable development. Key activities included the 12th Plenary Meeting of the UN-

GGIM: Arab States was held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The meeting aimed to follow up on the committee's work, review the experiences of Arab countries in managing geospatial information, and establish the executive plans for the working groups.

18. Eighty-five participants from twelve Arab countries attended the meeting, along with the Secretariat of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, representatives from regional committees (Africa, Americas, Asia and Pacific and Europe), geospatial information experts, experts on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the Statistical Center for the Gulf Cooperation Council States, and several international consultants and experts. The meeting was accompanied by a gathering of the High-Level Group on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the meeting of the Bureau and its expanded bureau of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

19. The meeting concluded with support for the working groups in preparing their executive plans and approval of the future directions of the UN-GGIM: Arab States, including attracting global geospatial organizations and companies as observer members, rationalizing expenses for committee meetings, ensuring the participation of official geospatial entities from their countries, and emphasizing the integration of the committee's work with international efforts at the United Nations.

#### **Intersessional Activities and Achievements of the UN-GGIM-AP**

20. The work program of the Regional Committee of UN-GGIM-AP was supported by four working groups and the Secretariat. The Secretariat, UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), provided coordination and collaboration with the Regional Committee, and also supported the preparation of publications and the organization of activities. A summary of activities and achievements of the four working groups and the UN-GGIM AP Secretariat is as follows.

<i><b>Working Group</b></i>	<i><b>Activities and Achievements</b></i>
Geodetic Reference Framework	<p>This Working Group aims to develop a regional geodetic reference frame and related geodetic capacity in the region and has four main activities in the term 2022-2025: (1) the Asia-Pacific Reference Frame (APREF) project; (2) the Asia Pacific Regional Geodetic Project (APRGP); (3) support to transition to modernized national height systems; and (4) the Asia-Pacific Geodetic Capacity Building (APGCB) project.</p> <p>APREF welcomes new GNSS CORS stations from the member countries and continues providing and improving access to the International Terrestrial Reference Frame (ITRF) through continuous and campaign GNSS observations and analysis. The WG was also actively involved in the initiatives of the UN-GGCE in order to support a sustainable Global Geodesy Supply Chain, and the WG chair and vice chairs participated in the UN-GGCE meetings to further enhance the network between geodetic experts in the region and the global community. Together with the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), the WG organized geodetic capacity development events, specifically Capacity Development Workshop on Sustainable Operation of GNSS CORS Network during the period of the thirteenth Plenary meeting of the UN-GGIM-AP in November 2024, and FIG Technical Seminar Reference Frame in Practice during the period of the FIG Working</p>

	Week in April 2025.
Integrated Geospatial Information for Effective Land Administration	<p>The Working Group aims to identify and determine the key regional issues for the management of land and cadastre, and take necessary measures to secure the social, economic and environmental benefits. The working group focuses on advocating the importance and pertinence of land and its administration and management at the global, regional and national levels for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>The WG held a Regional Seminar on Effective Land Administration &amp; Management during the period of the thirteenth Plenary meeting of the UN-GGIM-AP on 26 November 2024. The seminar highlighted recent advances in land administration and cadastral systems across Member States—sharing both successes and challenges—to provide practical insights for countries at all stages of modernizing their land administration frameworks.</p>
Integrated Geospatial Information Framework	<p>The Working Group held a Regional Seminar on Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) during the period of the thirteenth Plenary meeting of the UN-GGIM-AP on 27 November 2024. The seminar promoted geospatial data integration for sustainable development, focusing on awareness, best practices, and implementation challenges. Discussions covered global progress, funding strategies, case studies, governance models, and SDG alignment.</p>
Secretariat	<p>The UN-GGIM-AP Secretariat, ESCAP's third compendium in the “Geospatial Practices for Sustainable Development” series—Geospatial Practices for Sustainable Development in East and Northeast Asia 2024: A Compendium—was officially published on the ESCAP website in October 2024. It brings together over 100 country and subregion level case studies across six thematic areas—Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience; Natural Resource Management; Connectivity; Social Development; Energy; and Climate Change—to showcase how satellite imagery, GIS, AI and related tools are being used to modernize national operations, bridge development gaps and strengthen resilience in East and Northeast Asia.</p> <p>The UN-GGIM-AP Secretariat remains committed to sustaining and enhancing the regional geospatial network to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It consistently maintains and updates the UN-GGIM-AP website—ensuring seamless links to other Regional Committee and UN-GGIM portals—and actively shares information on free online geospatial courses, webinars, e-Learning programme, virtual training, and funded scholarships.</p> <p>In addition, the Secretariat has facilitated the roll-out of key regional surveys—including the UNGEGN/UN-GGIM collaborative project questionnaire, a survey on integrating land, marine, and cadastral domains via geospatial technologies, and an assessment of National Geospatial Information Management (NGIM) adoption among Small Island Developing States (SIDS)—to foster stronger collaboration, guide capacity building, and inform policy across Asia and the Pacific. In addition, the secretariat is devoted to the UN-GGIM-AP network maintenance and information sharing to foster stronger ties and</p>

	collaborations in the region for better achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The secretariat is also committed to providing information on free and online geospatial information related courses and webinars, GSGF e-Learning courses, virtual training programmes, and funded scholarship programs.
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21. Financial and budgetary constraints remain ongoing challenges in the region. The thirteenth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM-AP identified priorities including strengthening geospatial capacity in developing countries and Pacific SIDS, accelerating UN-IGIF implementation, supporting land administration through FELA, enhancing cross-regional collaboration, promoting real-time data sharing for disaster management and climate resilience, and engaging youth through the Young Geospatial Leaders Network. Tailored support for Pacific SIDS and the potential establishment of a Geospatial Information Service Centre were also noted. Member State contributions and regional forums remain essential for institutional strengthening.

22. At the fourteenth Plenary Meeting in September 2025, Member States will elect a new Executive Board and consider restructuring the Working Groups to better align with current and future priorities.

### **Intersessional Activities and Achievements of the UN-GGIM: Europe**

23. At the twelfth plenary, the regional committee considered the progress of the UN-GGIM: Europe Work Plan 2022 – 2025 which had been agreed by the Regional Committee at its eighth plenary session as meeting the strategic needs and requirements of Europe within the global programme of the Committee of Experts. This work plan focused on the five key priority areas and an overview of their activities is outlined in the table below. At its twelfth plenary a revised UN-GGIM: Europe Strategy 2025 – 2030 was adopted by the Regional Committee, providing the vision and direction of UN-GGIM: Europe for the next 4 – 5 years.

24. At the Expanded Bureau Meeting in February 2025, UN-GGIM: Europe volunteered to support the UN-GGIM Secretariat to progress the Strategic Framework 2025-2030. The regional committees have come together to provide a task group supporting the development and refresh of the Strategic Framework.

25. All these lines of work have been active during the intersessional period, an overview of the progress and activities is as follows.

<b><i>Working Group</i></b>	<b><i>Activities and Achievements</i></b>
Data Integration	<p>Over the intersessional period, the Line of Work (LoW) Data Integration focused on reviewing previous recommendations from the groups outputs and reports since 2014 to identify barriers to communication and to simplify messaging for political decision-makers. A report, <i>Relevance of Data Integration Line of Work</i><sup>3</sup>, has been published and presented at the GISCO meeting in March 2025.</p> <p>The group on Data Integration also explored possible case studies and themes for future work in anticipation of the</p>

<sup>3</sup> [https://un-ggim-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/2025-03-17\\_UN-GGIM-Europe\\_Relevance-of-DI-Line-of-Work\\_SummaryPaper\\_v1.0.pdf](https://un-ggim-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/2025-03-17_UN-GGIM-Europe_Relevance-of-DI-Line-of-Work_SummaryPaper_v1.0.pdf).

	development of the new UN-GGIM: Europe work plan.
Sustainable Development Goals	<p>This working group hosted three webinars on three different indicators: 6.6.1 – Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time; 15.3.1 – Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area; and 11.7.1 – Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities.</p> <p>The webinars had brought together contributions and the participation of several national, European and global institutions and of some custodian agencies, including public institutions, the private sector and academia.</p>
Integrated Geospatial Information Framework	<p>The UN-GGIM: Europe Working Group is focusing on four main deliverables: expert contributions, avoiding duplication, sharing knowledge, and promoting regional successes. The group contributed 11 regional priorities to the Fifth HLG-IGIF meeting in February 2025, which helped shape the global discussion of 83 priorities that were later prioritized to 36 key items. Following the global UN-IGIF Capacity Development Questionnaire results, the Working Group is developing a regional questionnaire to better understand lower uptake rates in Europe and align future activities with regional needs. The group is also creating a Sustainable Financing Podcast series and actively participating in interregional collaboration, including contributing to webinars organized by other regional committees to promote coordinated UN-IGIF implementation.</p>
Data Strategy and Policy	<p>The main aim of this working group is to understand relevant policy and data strategies regarding the management and use of geospatial data and how these are used in addressing the challenges of a green, sustainable, and digital Europe, and to understand the linkages of European policy with UN-GGIM frameworks such as the UN-IGIF. Following the June 2024 European Parliamentary elections that launched a new European Commission cycle emphasizing data and digitalization, the working group has focused on analytical work during the inter-plenary session and aims to complete a report by November 2025.</p>
Geodetic Reference Frame Europe	<p>Geodetic Reference Frames - Europe (GRF Europe) has continued to mature as a regional platform for dialogue and coordination on geodetic reference frame topics. The group has strategically positioned itself as a platform for policy, coordination, and user-focused dialogue while actively contributing to international initiatives including the UN-GGCE capacity development workshop in February 2025 and supporting global geodesy implementation efforts. GRF Europe has strengthened engagement with multiple European organizations including EUREF, EuroSDR, EUPOS, and CRAF, while developing a European contact point register to improve regional coordination and delivered technical contributions such as a report to EUROCONTROL on geodetic reference frame interoperability. The community has been actively involved in awareness-raising efforts, organized well-attended webinars discussing UN-GGCE findings, and participated in strategic planning processes including</p>

	reviewing their work plan and Terms of Reference to align with the changing global landscape.
Secretariat	<p>Over the intersessional period UN-GGIM: Europe worked on reviewing its strategy which was adopted at the eighth plenary meeting. The revised UN-GGIM: Europe Strategy 2025- 2030 has been updated taking into consideration the direction of the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030 being drafted, the responses of a regional consultation of the UN-GGIM: Europe Strategy and the views of the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe. The revision has not changed key elements of the previous strategy, but is a refresh, to ensure that the vision and direction of UN-GGIM: Europe for the next 4 – 5 years is in alignment with the regional context and landscape. The UN-GGIM: Europe Strategy 2025- 2030 was adopted at the twelfth Plenary Meeting.</p> <p>The next step following the adoption of the UN-GGIM: Europe Strategy 2025- 2030 will be a revision of the work plan to implement this new strategy. This will be developed in consultation with our working groups, lines of work and interested members in the coming months, to be presented to the Regional Committee at the Thirteenth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe in 2026.</p> <p>UN-GGIM: Europe continues to align its work with the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, while also committing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- work with the other four UN-GGIM Regional Committees to continue cross and inter-regional cooperation and collaboration and to implement the inter-regional work plan;</li> <li>- supporting and engaging with the three UN-GGIM Global Centres of Excellence and advocated for the community to participate in the IACs of the Centres to provide collective guidance and ensure impactful, active collaboration and participation;</li> <li>- committing to ensuring that Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are included across the broad programme of work of the committee.</li> </ul>

### III. Plenary Meetings of the Regional Committees

26. The annual meetings of the regional committees provide a forum for Member States and other relevant geospatial stakeholders to share and exchange knowledge, technologies and best practices, network, and gain updates on the activities of their regional working groups. This section of the report features the main decisions adopted at the plenary meetings of the five regional committees, which informs the Committee of the actions taken to ensure that their work programmes are aligned with the global agendas, in particular, the implementation of UN-IGIF, GSGF and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report also examines some major challenges faced by the regional committees and the strategies and approaches adopted to address them.

27. As is required by statute and rules of procedure, all regional committees convened their annual meeting during the intersessional period. The Regional

Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe, during the intersessional period, held two plenary meetings. Table 2 shows plenary meetings/sessions held by the regional committees during the intersessional period.

**Table 2: Plenary meetings of regional committees during the intersessional period 2024-2025**

<i>Regional Committee</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Mode and Host</i>
Africa	10 <sup>th</sup> Session	28 October to 1 November 2024	In person in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in conjunction with the 9 <sup>th</sup> session of the Statistical Commission for Africa.
Americas	11 <sup>th</sup> Session	25-26 September and 7 October 2024	Virtual Session (25-26 September) In person in Mexico City, Mexico. Hosted by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) (7 October).
Asia and the Pacific	13 <sup>th</sup> Plenary	29 November 2024	In person in New Delhi, India, hosted by the Survey of India (SOI) in conjunction with an international conference themed Geo-enabling the Data Economy for Sustainable Development.
Europe	12 <sup>th</sup> Plenary	24-25 June 2025	In person in Brussels, Belgium. Sponsored by Eurostat.
Arab States	12 <sup>th</sup> Plenary	4-6 February 2025	In person, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

28. The number of attendees and Member States that participated in the past two plenaries of each regional committee can be seen in Table 3. It also shows the increased or decreased in the number of attendees and Member States participating. The number of attendees at each annual plenary meeting is important, as the regional committee's governing statutes or rules of procedure generally require a quorum to designate the meeting as valid and official. Please note that a Member State may be a member of more than one regional committee. For example, UN-GGIM: Europe has 16 members who are also members of UN-GGIM: Asia and the Pacific and UN-GGIM: Americas. Therefore, the total number of Member States per region as shown in Table 2 is not based on regional geographical demarcation.

**Table 3: The number of attendees and Member States who participated in plenary meetings of regional committees.**

<i>Regional Committee</i>	<i>Total Member States</i>	<i>Intersessional Period 2023-2024 Plenary</i>		<i>Intersessional Period 2024-2025 Plenary</i>		<i>Change in No. Attendees and Member States</i>	
		<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Member States</i>	<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Member States</i>	<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Member States</i>
Africa	54	80	25	100	28	+20	+3
Americas	36	115	22	116	27	+1	+5
Asia Pacific	56	80	19	110	29	+30	+10
Arab States	22	65	14	85	12	+20	-2
Europe	56	48	18	60	23	+12	+5

**Decisions of the regional plenary meetings on the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF)**

29. Decisions of the regional committees on their contribution to support the implementation of the UN-IGIF are as follows.

<i>Regional Committee</i>	<i>Main Decisions</i>
Africa	<p>UN-GGIM: Africa encouraged the secretariat and Member States to: (1) design solutions that began with clear, realistic short-term objectives and grew incrementally, in accordance with political and market needs, to ensure flexibility and scalability in the implementation of the Framework; (2) prioritize end-user needs by providing products and services that would meet the expectations of government entities, the private sector and the general public; (3) foster ongoing stakeholder engagement, including periodic consultations with the main user groups and stakeholders to gather input and refine framework solutions, ensuring alignment with evolving requirements.</p> <p>UN-GGIM: Africa further requested the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre should: (4) Organize subregional capacity-building workshops to enhance national geospatial information arrangements in collaboration with partners, including the secretariat of the Committee of Experts, the SDG Data Alliance and others; and (5) provide technical and financial support to countries that have expressed a need for assistance in initiating the development of country-level action plans of the Framework, including Burkina Faso, the Congo, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali, Nigeria, Togo and the United Republic of Tanzania.</p>
Americas	<p>UN-GGIM: Americas: (1) urged Member States to commit to ongoing training in the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), in order to strengthen technical and geospatial information management capacities in the region; (2) encouraged Member States to continue promoting technical cooperation and the exchange of knowledge on geospatial matters, through existing communication mechanisms, to create synergies that ensure the successful implementation of the UN-IGIF in the region; (3) welcomed the commitment of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) to provide technical support to countries in the implementation of the UN-IGIF, as well as the commitment of academic and private sector networks in supporting these efforts; (4) recognized the importance of the UN-GGIM Global Consultation on the implementation of the UN-IGIF and proposed aligning this activity with the Regional Consultation for the Americas, in order to improve the efficiency and harmonization of both initiatives; (5) appreciated and took note of the recommendations to establish regular monitoring of the nine Strategic Pathways of the UN-IGIF, using defined indicators to measure the effectiveness of its implementation by Member States, and emphasized the importance of disseminating best practices and actions that demonstrate positive progress in the management of geospatial information; and (6) urged Member States to take advantage of in-person forums, such as the meetings of UN-GGIM: Americas, to organize and convene side events and workshops aimed at advancing the implementation of the UN-IGIF and promoting the exchange of good practices.</p>

Arab States	UN-GGIM: Arab States endorsed the strategic plan and term of reference for the UN-IGIF Working Group, chaired by the Kingdom of Bahrain from 2024 to 2028. The goal is to promote the development and strengthening of integrated geospatial information management for UN Member States. Additionally, encourage the use of internationally agreed-upon geospatial frameworks and standards to improve coordination and collaboration between geospatial stakeholders and users.
Asia and the Pacific	UN-GGIM-AP emphasized the potential of establishing a future regional Geospatial Information Service Centre to advance sustainable development, disaster risk management, and informed decision-making. The Committee acknowledged the unique challenges faced by Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including resource constraints and limited access to experienced personnel, in implementing the UN-IGIF and adopting advanced geospatial technologies to meet national demands. UN-GGIM-AP agreed to work in close association with the HLG-IGIF, UN-GGIM Thematic Groups, and other active stakeholders to ensure a coordinated and holistic approach to delivering effective solutions. The Committee also discussed the need for short, medium, and long-term plans and strategies to raise awareness, particularly at the political leadership level, about the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) and its components at both regional and national levels through various means.
Europe	UN-GGIM: Europe agreed that European Members contribute where relevant to the HLG-IGIF and to avoid duplication of effort by making sure that activities at the regional level support the global activities. At the twelfth plenary Members agreed to consider how to grow the number of active participants in the Regional Working Group, to respond to the Regional Survey on awareness and uptake of UN-IGIF, and to provide input and support for the development of an in-person workshop and knowledge share event to maximize awareness and adoption of the UN-IGIF across our region.

**Decisions of the regional plenary meetings on the implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework**

30. Decisions of the regional committees on their contribution to support the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework can be seen as follows.

<i>Regional Committee</i>	<i>Main Decisions</i>
Africa	UN-GGIM: Africa encouraged members (1) explore and implement next-generation smart census methodologies, leveraging geospatial data innovations to address statistical challenges, improve data accuracy and enable more dynamic tracking of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals; and (2) UN-GGIM: Africa further request the Statistics Division of the United Nations and its Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information should develop use cases and publications related to the benefits of integrating geospatial and statistical data to accelerate the attainment

	of the Goals.
Americas	UN-GGIM: Americas (1) appreciated the contributions of Member States in collecting use cases and technical documentation on the implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF), as well as the support of ECLAC in publishing this material; (2) welcomed the efforts of the Regional Working Group, the Global Expert Group, ECLAC, and the Executive Secretariat in organizing three virtual seminars on Principles 2, 3, and 4 of the GSGF; (3) valued the updated administrative level data provided by some countries of the region to the Statistical Geospatial Framework for the Americas (MEGA), and urged other countries in the region to join this initiative to strengthen geographical and statistical comparability; and (4) encouraged Member States to implement lower-level statistical-geospatial units (inspired by the NUTS model), to allow greater disaggregation and consistency of data in MEGA, noting that technical definitions will be developed jointly by the statistical and geospatial communities, with the support of the subregional coordinators.
Asia and the Pacific	UN-GGIM-AP encouraged members: (1) to share address matching techniques, methodologies and technologies, including batch geocoders and national grid systems as one of the main requirements of GSGF; (2) to continue developing and updating geocoded data sets, including point addresses, land parcels and realistic 3-D constructions; and (3) to participate in the global community's discussion organized by the Expert Group of Integration Statistical and Geospatial Information, which can provide implementation strategy and feedback to develop better methods and reduce gaps and harmonize the practices.
Europe	At the twelfth plenary meeting UN-GGIM: Europe noted the progress of the EG-ISGI and the update of the workplan, as well as the two key papers from the Expert Group which will be present as background documents at the fifteenth session. And asked regional members to support the second edition of the GSGF and to express their views on the Expert's Group strategic vision supporting geospatial advocacy within the statistical community and Statistical Commission.

**Decisions of the regional plenary meetings on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

31. Decisions of the regional committees on their contribution to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be seen as follows.

<i>Regional Committee</i>	<i>Main Decisions</i>
Africa	UN-GGIM: Africa encouraged members to establish and promote educational programmes to enhance geospatial professional qualifications, thereby ensuring the development of the skilled workforce needed to advance geospatial technologies and support sustainable development initiatives.  UN-GGIM: Africa further urged development partners and all interested parties to support capacity-building initiatives to train statisticians and geospatial experts in the application of data integration techniques, prioritizing programmes that advance data quality standards to meet decision-making needs in essential areas, including disaster management, public health and climate action.

Arab States	UN-GGIM: Arab States acknowledged the coordination between the General Secretariat of the Arab States and Esri to build an open geospatial data platform for the sustainable development goals for the desiring countries of the Arab States (without financial costs).
Asia and the Pacific	<p>UN-GGIM-AP encouraged members, UN agencies, international and regional organizations, to collaborate to mainstream geospatial information applications in all appropriate aspects of sustainable development as national and regional champions, and in multiple capacities across other relevant forums.</p> <p>Recognizing the growing importance of geospatial technologies and expertise in addressing global and regional challenges, the Committee further emphasized the critical need to engage and nurture the next generation of geospatial professionals to ensure sustained innovation and leadership in the field. Member States, stakeholders, and relevant networks are encouraged to support this initiative by nominating young talents, offering mentorship, and contributing resources to foster a vibrant and sustainable community of future geospatial leaders.</p>
Europe	UN-GGIM: Europe agreed on the importance of showcasing the added value of integrating geospatial data with other data to address SDG indicators, with a focus on common problems and technical and methodological solutions. As well as exploring requirements and practices on the use and integration of Earth Observation data, maintaining a close articulation with the IAEG-SDG WG GI. Asked Members maximize the awareness of SDG indicators calculation in support of the 2030 Agenda as well as to prepare for the post-2030 Agenda.

**Decisions of the regional plenary meetings on the integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management**

32. Decisions of the regional committees on their contribution to support integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management can be seen as follows.

<i>Regional Committee</i>	<i>Main Decisions</i>
America	UN-GGIM: Americas: (1) called for strengthened cooperation between the Regional Working Group on Land Administration and the Global Expert Group on Land Administration and Management, with the aim of harmonizing concepts and guidelines for the implementation of the Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) in the region; (2) proposed holding the first in-person meeting of the Regional Working Group on Land Administration during the Twelfth Plenary Session of UN-GGIM: Americas, to be held in October 2025; and suggested developing and strengthening thematic and systematic partnerships on land administration, in collaboration with the Academic Network of UN-GGIM: Americas, the European Academic Network, and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), in accordance with the 2024–2025 Work Plan of the Regional Working Group.

Europe	At the twelfth plenary UN-GGIM: Europe welcomed a proposal for a global hub regarding land administration for knowledge exchange, capacity building, and technical support that would accelerate implementation of frameworks like the FELA, helping countries systematically manage land rights and advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
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#### **Decisions of the regional plenary meetings on the global geodetic reference frame**

33. Decisions of the regional committees on their contribution to support the global geodetic reference frame can be seen as follows.

<b><i>Regional Committee</i></b>	<b><i>Main Decisions</i></b>
America	UN-GGIM: Americas: (1) urged Member States to make efforts to link and align their national geodetic infrastructures with those proposed by SIRGAS, in accordance with the guidelines of the International Association of Geodesy; (2) also urged Member States to support the training activities offered by SIRGAS, the Academic and Private Sector Networks of the Americas, and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence; (3) committed to intensifying efforts to raise awareness and promote the finalization and implementation of the joint development plan for global geodesy, with particular emphasis on capacity development; (4) invited Caribbean Member States to join SIRGAS in order to strengthen the capacities of the regional geodetic reference system; and (5) suggested that Member States share open geodetic information and support the maintenance of the global supply chain, in line with the recommendations of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence.
Europe	At the twelfth plenary UN-GGIM: Europe noted the current risks to the accuracy and reliability of satellite services and the impacts to critical infrastructure, national economies and national security due to weaknesses in the global geodesy supply chain. Regional members were encouraged to consider discussing the impacts within their Member States including the European Commission and to reach out to the UN-GGCE for assistance with advocacy and raising awareness.

#### **Next Plenary Meeting of the UN-GGIM Regional Committees**

34. The regional committees have identified the need to secure sustainable financing to support the participation of Member States at their annual plenary meetings, particularly for representatives from Small Island Developing States. The proposed annual meetings will be held fully in-person or hybrid, as seen in Table 4.

**Table 4: Proposed annual meetings of regional committees.**

<b><i>Regional Committee</i></b>	<b><i>Date of Upcoming Meeting</i></b>	<b><i>Mode and Host</i></b>
Africa	11th Session, 17-21 November 2025	In-person in Accra, Ghana, in conjunction with the AfricaGIS Conference 2025.

Americas	12th Session, 3-7 November 2025	In person in Santiago de Chile, at headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC.
Arab States	13 <sup>th</sup> Plenary, 3-4 February 2025	In person in Tunis, Tunisia.
Asia and the Pacific	14 <sup>th</sup> Plenary, 25-26 September 2025	In person in Ilsan, Republic of Korea, hosted by the National Geographic Information Institute, Republic of Korea.
Europe	13 <sup>th</sup> Plenary, June 2026	In person, back to back with the Conference of European Statisticians, date and venue tbc.

#### **IV. Interregional Partnerships, Collaborations and Joint Activities**

35. In recent years, an increasing amount of support for the Regional Committees is observed. The activities and work of the Regional Committees is increasingly aligned with the overall programme of work, goals and objectives of the Committee of Experts. The commitment of the Chairs and Presidents of the Regional Committees to attend and contribute to other Regional Plenary meetings is a clear demonstration of the willingness of the regional committees to work closely together. The attendance of regional committees to meetings outside their region provides an opportunity for sharing of ideas, good practices, approaches and implementation that enable the Regional Committees to understand each other's priorities. By association, the exchanges and attendance at meetings in other regions allow for peer-to-peer discussions and knowledge exchanges at the level of the Secretariats of the regional committees. The ability to exchange allows external perspectives to be used as a sounding board and to help improve the delivery of global and regional objectives. The good practices and advances in regions can then be propagated more easily between regions, these mutually beneficial exchanges also foster collaboration and a desire to work together. The following are some highlighted interregional activities.

- (a) All regional committees were invited to attend other regional committees' plenary meetings, and this was implemented during the Eleventh Session of UN-GGIM: Americas, the Thirteenth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM-AP, the Twelfth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States and the Twelfth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe. During these meetings, the representatives of each Regional Committee shared its region's activities, progress, and challenges.
- (b) The UN-GGIM: Arab States and UN-GGIM-AP are committed to developing a shared understanding and solutions addressing regional challenges. The collaboration aims to utilize the regional solution to effectively address the unique challenges of the two regions. A work plan covering four areas of collaboration has been developed and the first scope of collaboration was prepared during the Eleventh Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States.
- (c) To synchronize all regional activities and agendas, and to share modalities and resources, all websites of regional committees provide links to other regional committees.
- (d) All regional committees have been actively engaged in programme of work of the Committee of Experts, including the Subcommittee on

Geodesy, the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and activities of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN- GGCE), United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC) and other global activities of the Committee of Experts.

- (e) At the margins of the Eleventh Plenary of UN-GGIM: Americas and the Seventh UN-GGIM High Level Forum, an interregional meeting was held with the participation of the UN-GGIM Secretariat, the Co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts, and the Chairs and Presidents of the Regional Committees. During the meeting, participants provided feedback on the Seventh High Level Forum, shared proposals on joint activities for collaboration between regional committees and devised strategies to implement the joint project agreed between UNGEGN and UN-GGIM. Following that meeting, a proposal for an interregional workplan was elaborated and approved, focusing on holding dialogues and exchange of experiences and challenges of using global frameworks.
- (f) As part of the preparatory activities for the fifteenth session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), and in the context of the Interregional Work Plan, the Regional Committees organized interregional dialogues particularly two which focused on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) and the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework. These activities provided a space to share regional perspectives and implementation experiences from Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, the Arab States, and Europe. The roundtable discussions between Chairs, Presidents and representatives of the five Regional Committees, highlighted ongoing collaboration, progress, and future priorities.

## V. Conclusion

36. The report presented the ongoing activities of the regional committees, who confirmed their commitment to ensure alignment and continued support to advance the work of the Committee of Experts. The following are some of the key priorities shared:

- (a) To continue to develop awareness and capacities of their Member States, to strengthen the management of geospatial information through the implementation of the Committee's global geospatial frameworks, norms, principles and guide, to remain fit for purpose and to leave no one behind.
- (b) To advocate to continue providing technical, human, and financial support and also contribute to the discussions and use the platforms and opportunities provided through the United Nations to improve the availability and use of geospatial information.
- (c) To remain focused on regional priorities and strengthen regional capacities through inter-agency and international cooperation, making use of technology and innovation.
- (d) To recognize the value of collaboration and partnerships in advancing regional and global work programmes and will continue to build relations and share knowledge, experiences, tools and technical experience among the five regional committees.

37. The annual reports of the regional committees are provided as background documents to this present report.

## VI. Points for Discussion

38. The Committee of Experts is invited to:
- (a) Take note of the present report and the reports of the regional committees provided as background documents, and of the coordination by the UN-GGIM: Americas in supporting regional and global geospatial information management activities and in facilitating the preparation of these reports;
  - (b) Take note of and express its views on the initiative to develop series of online interregional dialogue seminars as part of the preparatory activities leading to the annual sessions of the Committee of Experts on relevant agenda items, frameworks and other topics of relevance including on technological advances in the field of geospatial information management.
  - (c) Express its views to further encourage all regional committees to actively contribute to the work of the Committee of Experts, and provide guidance on the potential synergies, avoiding duplication and alignment with the priorities and programme of work of the Committee for the benefit of all Member States.
  - (d) Take note of the proposed dates of the upcoming plenary meetings for all five regional committees, encourage Member States representatives to attend to regional plenary meetings;
  - (e) Take note of the collaborative activities of the five regional committees and their bilateral collaborations and provide guidance to encourage all regional committees to further strengthen their interregional and/or bilateral collaboration to develop synergistic relationships and share knowledge, tools and experience towards strengthening geospatial programmes and advancing the integration of geospatial and statistical information;
  - (f) Express its views and provide guidance on the role of regional committees, with the support of the United Nations Global Geospatial Centres of Excellence, to identify and collate good practices and knowledge related to the successful implementation of geospatial strategies and innovation to be shared with Member States, in particular developing countries; and

# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*

### Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda

## Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary of the report

The present paper contains the report of the contributions of the four United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda, for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/103](#), in which it expressed appreciation for the continuing and valuable contributions of the thematic networks to the Committee's programme of work, including their effective representation, research, education, capacity-development activities and collaborative initiatives with the five regional committees, functional groups and United Nations global geospatial centres in advancing their workplans and in implementing the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. The Committee also expressed appreciation for the cooperation and synergies between thematic networks and Member States through open communication so as to ensure that their contributions were effective and aligned with the Committee's priorities for the benefit of Member States and contributing to their sustainable development. The Committee welcomed the support offered, including by the United Nations Geospatial Network to strengthen their contribution through the implementation of the One United Nations Geospatial Situation Room to bring coherence on data governance and federated data services and to provide use cases to support capacity-development activities for Member States. The Committee acknowledged the work being done in researching and exploring the use and benefits of artificial intelligence, Earth observations and other innovative technologies.

In the report, the Academic Network provides an update on its continuing efforts to develop capacity- and education-related activities within the context of the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, especially in supporting the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. The report provides information on the active involvement of the Academic Network in organizing, with all the thematic networks during the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts, a joint side event on geospatial data, analytics and geospatial artificial intelligence: accelerating the Sustainable Development Goals and making an impact on national priorities and its participation in other events, such as the fifth plenary meeting of the High-level

\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the meeting of the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts and the twelfth plenary meeting of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Regional Committee for the Arab States. The newly elected Executive Committee initiated discussions with the Co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts on possible opportunities to work together in pursuit of strengthening geospatial information management around the globe by leveraging the strength of the Network. It is noted in the report that the Network began to explore collaboration with the United Nations global geospatial centres, such as the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre. It is also noted in the report that, since the Network's most recent update on its membership, in which it reported having 70 members, 6 new members have joined the Network, with 7 additional membership applications pending review and approval. The report concludes with a discussion of the continued efforts of the Network in strategic planning and actions for: (a) working closely with all functional groups of the Committee of Experts; (b) developing capacities and training programmes to support the programme of work of the Committee of Experts; and (c) collaborating with academic communities to develop capacities and educational programmes that are more closely related to the programme of work of the Committee of Experts and in close cooperation with the established United Nations global geospatial centres.

In the report, the Geospatial Societies network provides information on its principal activities and contributions. During the intersessional period, the Geospatial Societies network reaffirmed its position as a valued partner in geospatial artificial intelligence and in the geospatial ecosystem and its engagement with the broader agenda of the Committee of Experts. The Geospatial Societies network actively participated in major events, including the eleventh plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe, the thirteenth plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific, the twelfth plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States and the fifth plenary meeting of the High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, as well as proceedings on the future geospatial information ecosystem. A significant development is the new terms of reference for the Geospatial Societies network, which realigned its purpose to support the broader programme of work of the Committee of Experts. In the report, geospatial societies, such as the International Cartographic Association, the International Federation of Surveyors, the International Society for Digital Earth, the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, the International Geographical Union and other societies, note that congresses, annual conferences and events provide platforms through which to further discuss and promote the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals to their respective networks. It is also noted in the report that the International Science Council GeoUnions group and the Committee on Data for Science and Technology offer webinars related to geospatial artificial intelligence.

The report provides an update by the Private Sector Network on its activities and contributions during the intersessional period. In the report, the Private Sector Network reaffirms its position as a valued partner in the global geospatial ecosystem by advancing capacity development, engaging in regional initiatives and integrating private sector perspectives into the broader programme of work of the Committee of Experts. The Private Sector Network actively participated in major events, including the eleventh annual meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe, the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, the thirteenth Regional

Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific meeting, the twelfth Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States plenary and the fifth High - level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and contributed to the Framework's new "Sustainable funding guide", as well as to proceedings on the future geospatial information ecosystem. A significant development is the addition of 25 new member companies, underscoring the growing recognition of the value of the private sector. The Private Sector Network appeared on social media to enhance its outreach and visibility. The Network supported emerging talent by sponsoring student participation in the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Mexico. Regionally, the Network deepened its collaboration in Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, the Arab States and Africa. The report provides details of the contribution of the Network to strategic documents and its participation in shaping the future geospatial information ecosystem, with a continued focus on innovation, climate change and sustainability.

The report also provides information on the activities of the United Nations Geospatial Network and its continued efforts to strengthen the coherence and coordination of global geospatial information management across the 42 agencies funds and programmes of the United Nations system. The Geospatial Network made progress on implementation of its updated strategy for the period 2020–2025, entitled "Blueprint: geospatial for a better world – transforming the lives of people, places and planet", and the proposal for the upcoming five-year strategic document for the period 2025–2030, both of which are aligned with accelerating the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are informed by the frameworks, norms, principles and guides developed and adopted by the Committee of Experts. The report includes details of the Network's current priorities, namely: (a) to obtain sustainable sources of funding; (b) to increase communication on and awareness of the relevance of geospatial information through events and seminars; and (c) to work towards the availability and accessibility of coordinated geospatial information through the One United Nations Geospatial Situation Room, effectively delivering, collectively, one map of integrated geospatial data services, available at onemap.un.org, for easy access to these resources. The report also contains information on other priorities, including organization of the upcoming activities of the United Nations Geospatial Network towards implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework to strengthen national geospatial capacities, especially in developing countries and the most vulnerable communities, and strengthening geospatial data management, innovation, foresight and science to build a United Nations system that can better support Member States in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The One United Nations Geospatial Situation Room is recognized as an important resource for geospatial enablement of the United Nations data platform in the overall context of the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere. The report provides information on the continued efforts of the Network in terms of communication and outreach, including its participation in the Geospatial World Forum and collaboration with other networks of the Committee of Experts.

## I. Introduction

1. At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/103](#), in which it expressed its appreciation for the continuing and valuable contributions of the thematic networks to its programme of work, including their effective representation, research, education, capacity-development activities and collaborative initiatives with the five regional committees, functional groups and United Nations global geospatial centres in advancing their workplans and in implementing the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF). The Committee appreciated the cooperation and synergies between thematic networks and Member States and stressed its importance to advance the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, and requested the thematic networks to maintain open communication, to coordinate and avoid duplication of efforts so as to ensure that their contributions are effective and aligned with the Committee's priorities for the benefit of Member States and contributing to their sustainable development;
2. During the intersessional period, collectively and individually, the thematic networks have continued their work, including to deepen the collaboration within and between their networks, and to contribute to the programme of work of the Committee of Experts. This present report summarizes the main activities and achievements of the four thematic networks of the Committee of Experts during the intersessional period. The detailed reports of each of the four thematic networks are provided as background documents for this present report. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 27.

## II. Thematic networks of the Committee of Experts

### UN-GGIM Geospatial Societies

3. The UN-GGIM Geospatial Societies is a coalition of eleven international organizations, involved in the coordination, development, management, standardization or regulation of geospatial information and technologies and related matters. As detailed on its [website](#), the Geospatial Societies' member organizations include: [Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society](#) (IEEE-GRSS), [International Association of Geodesy](#) (IAG), [International Cartographic Association](#) (ICA), [International Federation of Surveyors](#) (FIG), [International Geographical Union](#) (IGU), [International Map Industry Association](#) (IMIA), [International Science Council](#) (ISC) CODATA, [International Society for Digital Earth](#) (ISDE), [International Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing](#) (ISPRS), [International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics](#) (IUGG), [Open Source Geospatial Foundation](#) (OSGEO). During the intersessional period, the Geospatial Societies made significant progress in revising its Terms of Reference, aligning its purpose more closely with the broader agenda of the Committee of Experts.

4. The UN-GGIM Geospatial Societies have been involved or contributed to the operationalization of the United Nations Global Centres of Excellence including:

- (a) The UN Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE) with the involvement of IAG, FIG and IUGG
- (b) The UN Global Geospatial Innovation and Knowledge Centre (UN-GGKIC) with the involvement of ICA, FIG, and ISPRS; and
- (c) The upcoming establishment of the UN Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence (UN-GGECE) with the potential involvement if ICA, IGU, and ISDE.

5. The UN-GGIM Geospatial Societies participated in several events and expert meetings in support of the programme of work of the Committee, including:

- (a) The seventh High-Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, in Mexico City, Mexico (October 2024) with attendance by FIG, ICA, ISDE, IGU;
- (b) The fifth plenary meeting of the HLG-IGIF and meeting of the Bureau and its Expanded Bureau, 2 - 4 February 2025 with attendance by ICA, IGU, ISDE. During the fifth plenary meeting of the HLG-IGIF, the Geospatial Societies committed to actively contributing to the implementation of the UN-IGIF, emphasizing the importance of coordinating the involvement of various societies to leverage their expertise in support of the UN-IGIF initiatives; and
- (c) UN-GGIM regional meetings 2024-2025: Asia-Pacific (IGU, ICA, ISPRS), Americas (ICA, ISPRS, Open Source Geospatial Foundation (OSGeo), Arab States (ICA, ISPRS), Europe (ICA, ISDE), Africa (ISPRS).

6. The Geospatial Societies provided support to several functional groups of the Committee of Experts and others:

- (a) High-Level Group on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (HLG-IGIF);
- (b) Working Group on Geospatial Information (WGGI) under the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs); and,
- (c) Subcommittee on Geodesy, Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management, Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management, and Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information; and
- (d) Toponymy (not by the Committee of Experts).

7. In the intersessional period, the Geospatial Societies launched a survey on the main training centres of the world on Geo-AI in Spring 2024, the results of which were put on a platform with an interactive map that will be regularly updated.

8. Members of the Geospatial Societies affiliated with the International Science Council (ISC) GeoUnions, either independently or in collaboration, organized the following webinar series to exchange information, establish coordination structures, and highlight their activities within the context of the programme of work of the Committee of Experts. The Geospatial Societies aims to further promote and make the webinar available through the Geospatial Societies website in the coming years:

- (a) ISC GeoUnions [Distinguish lecture series](#)
- (b) ISDE Lectures on “[Digital Earth](#)”
- (c) Joint webinar of ICA, IMIA, and others on “[Trust in Mapping](#)”
- (d) ISPRS Student Consortium [webinar series](#)
- (e) ISC CODATA podcast on “[Open Geo AI](#)”

#### **UN-GGIM Academic Network**

9. During the intersessional period, the Academic Network’s membership has reached seventy-six institutions. The details of the members are available on the [Academic Network website](#). Since September 2024, the Academic Network has admitted six new members, and eight new members requests are pending. The Network’s members are regularly promoting the Network and its activities via the events advertised on the [Network’s website](#).

10. The composition of the new elected Academic Network's Executive Committee, Advisory Board, and representatives to the Regional Committees are detailed on the [Network's website](#). During this intersessional period, the Network focused on: 1) developing capacity building and education activities within the context of the Committee of Experts, especially supporting the implementation of the UN-IGIF and SDGs, and 2) organizing in-person and virtual seminars and workshops to engage its members. Regular board meetings were held to discuss and plan its activities.

11. The Network was actively involved in organizing the joint side event on "Geospatial Data Analytics and GeoAI Accelerating the SDGs and Impacting National Priorities" with all thematic networks during the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts. The Academic Network also participated in other important events such as the fifth plenary meeting of the HLG-IGIF, the Expanded Bureau meeting, and the 12th Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM Arab States in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In addition, the Academic Network:

- (a) Organized an online members' meeting to solicit their ideas or suggestions on how to better support UN-GGIM's mission (November 2024)
- (b) Organized the UN-GGIM Panel at the ISPRS TC IV mid-term symposium, in Fremantle, Australia (October 2024)
- (c) Participated in the United Nations Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Week 2024, in Deqing, China (October 2024)

12. While the focus area for the Academic Network in 2023-2024 was on GeoAI, the newly elected Executive Committee appreciated its discussion with Co-chairs of the Committee of Experts and others on possible opportunities to work together in pursuit of strengthening geospatial information management around the globe leveraging the strength of the Network. The Network has also already started exploring collaborations with the UN Global Geospatial Centres of Excellence, such as with the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGIKC). The Network will further its effort to:

- (a) Encourage all member states to expand education and capacity building opportunities in support of the strategic goals of the Committee of Experts, in particular fostering scholarship opportunities for women and underrepresented groups in collaboration with the professional societies and the thematic networks of the Committee;
- (b) Welcome the progress achieved by the UN Centres of Excellence, which fosters academic collaboration and excellence, and recommend Member States to consider and to support the establishment of geospatial excellence programs;
- (c) Note with concern the identified knowledge gaps which currently hinder the successful implementation of the Committee of Experts goals in respect to the UN-IGIF and SDGs, and consider beneficial the establishment of specifically tailored educational and training programs to address these knowledge gaps, and
- (d) Consider the establishment of a centre of excellence which could be tasked with such roles as promoting trustworthiness in geospatial data, its processing, and map production.

13. The Network will continue to encourage and engage more members and young professionals (including students) to support its strategic plans.

### **UN-GGIM Private Sector Network**

14. During this period, the Private Sector Network maintained robust engagement with global, regional, and thematic initiatives aligned with the Committee's objectives. The Network continued to advance innovation, climate resilience, and sustainability within the global geospatial ecosystem, reinforcing its role as a key contributor to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

15. The Private Sector Network contributed substantively to several activities of the Committee of Experts, including working groups, webinars, and documentation efforts. It supported the development of strategic documents such as the Future Geospatial Information Ecosystem and actively contributed to Working Group 4 on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF). The Network's technical and policy-oriented input provided valuable private sector perspectives to the evolving geospatial governance landscape.

16. A notable development during the reporting period was the addition of 25 new private sector members to the Private Sector Network, reflecting increased recognition of the value of private sector expertise in geospatial initiatives. The launch of Private Sector Network's social media presence marked a further step in enhancing communication, outreach, and visibility within the global community. The Network also strengthened its organizational footprint through the establishment of sub-regional leadership structures in the Americas and a regional Private Sector Network committee in Asia-Pacific.

17. The Private Sector Network's regional engagements included participation in key plenary meetings of the five UN-GGIM regional committees: Asia-Pacific (New Delhi), Americas (Mexico City), Europe (Belgium), Africa (Addis Ababa), and the Arab States (Jeddah). Activities spanned high-level forums, thematic workshops, and regional planning sessions. In the Americas, Private Sector Network supported the CARIGEO initiative through a national UN-IGIF workshop in Trinidad and Tobago and a disaster risk webinar on Hurricane Beryl, in collaboration with the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. The Private Sector Network also co-organized the event "Industry and Academia Bridge the Gap" with the Academic Network of the Americas and contributed to establishing the GeoAI Community of Practice.

18. The Private Sector Network reaffirmed its ongoing commitment to the mandate of the Committee of Experts and to fostering inclusive, innovative, and impactful geospatial solutions. Through expanding membership, strategic regional structures, and continued knowledge exchange, the Private Sector Network remains a dedicated partner in strengthening the global geospatial ecosystem and supporting Member States in achieving sustainable development goals.

### **United Nations Geospatial Network**

19. The UN Geospatial Network currently comprises forty-two UN system entities as members. Official representatives were renewed at the beginning of 2025 through the formal communication within the UN system. In accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Geospatial Network (see Annex of [E/C.20/2023/7/Add.1](#)), a new Steering Group was appointed by consensus during its virtual meeting in June 2025, as follows:

- (a) Chair: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO);
- (b) Vice-Chairs: World Bank Groups (WB) and World Health Organization (WHO); and
- (c) Steering Group members: International Organization for Migration (IOM); International Telecommunication Union (ITU); Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); United Nations

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); and the secretariat of the Committee of Experts.

20. The Network continued to implement its strategy document “[Blueprint: Geospatial for a better world – transforming the lives of People, Places and Planet](#)” (2020 to 2025), guided by the frameworks, norms, practices, and standards developed by the Committee of Experts. The Network initiated the development of the new strategic orientations and design of its next five years strategy document “Blueprint Strategy to 2030: Geospatial for People, Places and Planet” (2025 to 2030), presented as a background document to the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

21. The UN Geospatial Network advanced the availability and accessibility of coordinated geospatial information services, systems, and activities across UN entities, through the One United Nations Geospatial Situation Room, leveraging the standardized One Map web service, outlined in its [2024 concept document](#). The Network continued consultations on the One UN Geospatial Situation Room and launched the domain [onemap.un.org](http://onemap.un.org), implemented to facilitate resource access. In accordance with decision 14/103 (d) of the Committee of Experts regarding “use cases to support capacity development activities for Member States”, the Network members featured SDG Story Maps related to geospatial activities supporting sustainable development. The One UN Geospatial Situation Room was recognized as a primary geospatial resource for the UN Data platform in the overall context of the UN Secretary General’s Data Strategy.

22. During the inter-sessional period, the UN Geospatial Network continued raising communication and awareness on the use and relevance of geospatial information within the United Nations system and beyond, through participation in, contributions to, and organization of various events, including:

- (a) UN Geospatial Network plenary and strategic meeting, in Madrid, Spain (March 2025)
- (b) Geospatial World Forum 2025, in Madrid, Spain (March 2025)
- (c) AI for Good 2025 Summit, in Geneva, Switzerland (July 2025)

23. The Network launched the “GeoCommunities” initiative to strengthen UN-wide dialogue and coordination on key areas of geospatial activities. The Network established nine priority themes, including capacity development, centralized infrastructure, risk analysis, GeoAI, SDGs, etc... Through this initiative the UN Geospatial Network also aims to expand its structure and foster closer collaboration with interested Member States.

24. The UN Geospatial Network continued its “[GeoTalks](#)” series to promote knowledge sharing and raise awareness of the importance and relevance of geography, data, technology, and innovation for Member States and the United Nations for better decision-making.

25. The UN Geospatial Network continued to investigate sustainable funding sources, including from the private sector, to support the development of the One UN Geospatial Situation Room, as well as the implementation of the UN-IGIF, particularly in developing countries. The funds would enhance the coordination of national geospatial capacity development activities conducted by the United Nations and address priorities for the development of the One UN Geospatial Situation Room.

26. Finally, relevant United Nations system entities engage and contribute to the work of the international standards development organization related to geodesy, land cover and land use, land and sea boundaries, postal addresses, land administrative domain model and others. The UN Geospatial Network also actively

engages with other thematic networks of the Committee of Experts to support the mandates and operations of its member entities.

### **III. Points for Discussion**

**27. The Committee of Experts is invited to:**

- (a) Take note of and express its views on the contributions to the global geospatial information agenda by its four thematic networks; and**
- (b) Express its views and provide guidance on the need to work collaboratively across the thematic networks, avoiding duplication and ensuring alignment with the priorities and programme of work of the Committee for the benefit of all Member States.**

# Economic and Social Council

03 July 2025

## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6– 8 August 2025

Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

The future geospatial information ecosystem

## The future geospatial information ecosystem

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary of the report

The present paper contains the report of the Bureau of the Committee of Experts and the writing team on the future geospatial information ecosystem that was convened by the Bureau for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/104](#), in which it welcomed efforts aimed at continuing to discuss and explore the future geospatial information ecosystem to assist Member States and their national geospatial information agencies in their thinking on how the global geospatial information community should be prepared to adapt to the rapidly changing geospatial information management landscape and its operating environment. The Committee also encouraged the Bureau and its writing team to consider the constantly evolving nature of the concept and scope of the future geospatial information ecosystem, to avoid a static definition and to focus on the understanding, purpose and use of geospatial information within the broader future digital ecosystem.

The Committee of Experts noted that new and emerging technologies and the growth and breadth of the data and digital ecosystems, of which geospatial information and services are a part, provided further opportunities to use geospatial information to address the complexities of national priorities, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the post-2030 global development agenda and bridging the geospatial digital divide; and that a particular focus on trustworthiness within geospatial information management should be considered, and that the future geospatial information ecosystem should take advantage of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, with an emphasis on diversity, equality and inclusion as well as embracing innovative approaches, systems and technologies, including artificial intelligence and machine learning for societal benefits. Also at its fourteenth session, the Committee acknowledged the proposed principles and fundamental elements contained in the report and agreed to carry out further activities towards presenting a concept on the future geospatial information ecosystem with its scope, fundamental elements, principles and role within the broader digital ecosystem at the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

In the report, the Secretariat and the Bureau present the intersessional activities of the writing team on the future geospatial information ecosystem on the development of a position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem.

\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

According to the report, the writing team met at least monthly to advance the position paper and to conduct a series of activities aimed at exploring the latest trends, rapid technological changes, actors, cross-sector developments and new policies affecting both the wider digital ecosystem and the role of geospatial community within it. In its activities, the team sought to maximize inputs and views on the future geospatial information ecosystem and beyond in the broader digital ecosystem, including through a global webinar that brought together a wide range of actors, a global survey inclusive of communities beyond the geospatial community and a global consultation to include diverse perspectives on the future geospatial information ecosystem.

The report of the writing team is accompanied by a background report in which the team presents a proposed position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem. In the paper, the team acknowledges the inherent evolving nature of the future geospatial information ecosystem, includes information on drivers, principles and fundamental elements of the future geospatial information ecosystem, building on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and embraces diversity, equity and inclusion, while providing future-looking considerations on the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

The report also contains details on perspectives and options for the Committee of Experts to consider regarding the need for and relevance of continuously exploring trends, innovative approaches, systems and technologies in the rapidly evolving digital landscape and regarding the need for and relevance of preparing the geospatial community and national geospatial information agencies to contribute to and shape the future geospatial information ecosystem within the broader digital ecosystem.

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## I. Introduction

1. In 2021, at its eleventh session, the Committee of Experts added the agenda item on Determining the Future Geospatial Information Ecosystem to the provisional agenda for its upcoming twelfth session following the considerations on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework related to the importance of the interlinkages of the Framework with other emerging trends, shifts in the geospatial landscape and complementary initiatives that would ultimately extend the Framework's relevance in the future geospatial information ecosystem. The complexity of the future geospatial information ecosystem and its far reaching implications in the wider digital ecosystem were highlighted in a background paper entitled [Towards a sustainable geospatial ecosystem beyond spatial data infrastructures](#).

2. In 2022, the agenda item on Determining the future geospatial information ecosystem was accompanied by two background documents entitled [Future Geospatial Information Ecosystem: From SDI to SoS and on to the Geoverse](#) and the [Future National Geospatial Information Ecosystem](#) as an exploration of the geospatial landscape and to assist Member States and national geospatial information agencies in their thinking on future geospatial environments in which technological developments will play a crucial role. In making decision 12/102, the Committee of Expert acknowledged “that determining the future geospatial information ecosystem was a timely and strategically important topic to consider [...] and to understand how the future ecosystem would link to the work already carried out by the Committee, including the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework”. It further noted that a “continuing discussion on ‘geospatial information ecosystem’ was necessary for the global community, with the aim of explaining and expanding the role of geospatial information in technological advancements and society in general”.

3. In 2023, in making decision [13/10](#), the Committee “agreed that the definition and development of future geospatial ecosystems was an opportune activity to undertake but that it required further scoping and consensus to identify and describe what the foundations of future geospatial ecosystems would encompass within the purview of the Committee [...]” and further supported the proposals “to entrust the Bureau, supported by a writing team, with developing a position paper on determining the scope and an outline on the fundamental elements and principles of the future geospatial information ecosystem for the consideration of the Committee of Experts at its fourteenth session, and welcomed the multiple offers by Member States to support the Bureau.”

4. In 2024, in making [14/104](#), the Committee “encouraged the Bureau and its writing team to consider the purpose and actors as the main drivers of the future geospatial information ecosystem, to undertake broad global consultation to maximize inputs and views from the Committee of Experts and relevant stakeholders, to include diverse perspectives and positions of a future geospatial information ecosystem within the broader digital ecosystem, and to embrace the understanding of a future geospatial information ecosystem as a journey rather than a deliverable”. The Committee of Experts further “acknowledged the proposed principles and fundamental elements contained in the report ([E/C.20/2024/8/Add.1](#)) prepared by the Bureau and its writing team as an initial step for conceptualizing the future geospatial information ecosystem, and agreed to carry out further activities towards presenting a concept on the future geospatial information ecosystem with its scope, fundamental elements, principles and role within the broader digital ecosystem at the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.”

5. The Committee of Experts noted on repeated occasions the critical importance and impact of new and emerging technologies, the growth and breadth

of the data, and the ever-increasing interconnectedness of solutions and digital ecosystems. These rapid changes in the digital infrastructures and ecosystems provide both challenges and opportunities for geospatial information to contribute to solving the complexities of national priorities, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the post-2030 global development agenda, and bridging the geospatial digital divide. As such, considering the “direction of travel” of the geospatial information ecosystems and its role is critical. The Committee recalled in its recent years’ decision the paramount role it should play in shaping the future digital ecosystem and contributing to it. The Bureau and the writing team, cognizant of this imperative need for foresight, conducted activities to conclude the preparation of a position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem. The position paper is not an end point as it acknowledges the future geospatial information ecosystem is a “moving target” that represents a journey that would require continued adaptations and require the constant incorporation of new ideas, purposes, technologies and collaboration to adapt to a rapidly evolving wider digital ecosystem.

## **II. Organization of work**

6. During the intersessional period, the Bureau and the Secretariat convened a series of meetings at least on a monthly basis to discuss further the concept and elements of the future geospatial information ecosystem within the wider digital ecosystem. The team also organized the work towards the delivery of the paper for determining and positioning the future geospatial information ecosystem. The Bureau and its writing team, in accordance with the guidance of the Committee of experts, discussed activities to undertake engagement activities and consultations to maximize inputs and views from the geospatial community and a wide range of stakeholders and to include diverse perspectives and outlooks on the future geospatial information ecosystem within the wider digital ecosystem.

7. To further advance the concept and elements of the future geospatial information ecosystem, the Bureau and the writing team developed and implemented a 25-week structured work programme aimed at continuing to define the principles, goals and foundational elements of the ecosystem within the wider digital ecosystem. The programme included the organisation of a technical workshop to elaborate key priorities and build upon the previously discussed principles and foundational elements, the preparation and hosting of a global online seminar in collaboration with a broad range of partners to solicit inputs and share perspectives, the design and implementation of a global survey to assess developments across the wider digital ecosystem, and the drafting of the outline of the position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem.

8. During the discussions of the workshop, the Bureau and its writing team built on the initial work on principles and fundamental elements of the future geospatial information ecosystem and further discussed overall policy context, such as the [Pact for the Future](#) and its accompanying [Global Digital Compact](#), the future agendas, the variety of actors participating to the wider digital ecosystem, and emerging technologies and trends impacting the rapidly evolving geospatial landscape. The workshop was instrumental in setting the activities of the 25-week programme including timeline and milestones for the webinar, the survey and the drafting of the position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem.

## **III. Global webinars**

9. In accordance with its findings presented in the report of 2024 ([E/C.20/2024/8/Add.1](#)), the Bureau and its writing team recommended to foster dialogue on the future digital and geospatial information ecosystem. The active participation of various actors from government, private sector, academia, the civil

society, was considered key to considering the needs and perspectives of the wider community on the future geospatial information ecosystem. To deepen the conversation and engage with a broader group of stakeholders rather than the geospatial community alone, the team decided to hold a global online webinar to understand the ramifications, complexities, multifaceted aspects, and interconnected elements of the future geospatial information ecosystem, and beyond the wider digital ecosystem. The writing team decided to conduct a global webinar on the theme “[Exploring the wider digital ecosystem](#)” to engage a broad range of stakeholders and explore policies, diversity of actors, technology trends and innovation in the digital ecosystem with the aim to define further the role of the geospatial information ecosystem within it. The theme was purposely broad and not specific to geospatial information expertise to ensure a wider engagement of communities beyond the geospatial.

10. The webinars aimed:

- (a) to foster global dialogue and stakeholder engagement with international experts, national offices, technology specialists, private sector, academia, legal and policy professionals and other stakeholders to engage in discussions on trends, challenges, and opportunities related to the digital ecosystem and transformation;
- (b) to explore future trends for addressing global challenges and in particular consider how digital transformation, including geospatial information, can address national priorities, accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and contribute to shape the post-2030 global development agenda; and
- (c) to inform future strategies by gathering key insights, guidance, and recommendations emerging from the seminar to design approaches, orientations, principles and priorities to enhance digital transformation and contribute to global data governance.

11. By conducting the webinars and considering these objectives, the writing team sought to advance perspectives and insights in the development of a transformative, sustainable, inclusive, purpose-driven and forward-looking digital ecosystem that effectively addresses global challenges and opportunities.

12. The webinars led by Canada on 18 and 19 March 2025 to maximize outreach across time zones, were successful in bringing over 250 participants worldwide with interventions from thought leaders, policymakers, innovators, professors, geospatial professionals and private sector experts from around the world. The webinar explored a variety of topics in the digital ecosystem. The first webinar on 18 March 2025 provided insights on the direction of the digital ecosystem including on: expanding global collaboration and strengthening partnerships among governments, private sector actors, academia, and civil society; addressing the data and digital divide and promoting equitable access to geospatial data for all Member States and communities; driving innovation and technologies (GeoAI, digital twins, blockchain, and space-based technologies to enhance geospatial capabilities); investing in geospatial infrastructure; advancing policy and good governance; and enhancing education and capacity development. The second webinar on 19 March 2025 was organized and structured around the strategic pathways of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, key recommendations and recommendations included to consider geospatial information as a critical digital foundation and infrastructure that must address priorities and enable smarter decisions across sectors (such as health, agriculture, education, environment, resilience or disaster management); to develop collaboration in the ecosystem to leverage a variety of actors and expertise; to ensure legal and governance framework and safeguards are present to ensure a healthy digital ecosystem; and to ensure everyone, everywhere can reap the benefits of the digital world.

13. Therefore, from the webinar, the writing team considered that the future geospatial information ecosystem was driven by three fundamental changes. The three fundamental shifts included that the wider digital ecosystem was to be purpose-driven, its design and evolution needed to be centred around the urgent need to solve global challenges, people-centred to address the imperative to ensure equitable access to knowledge to everyone, everywhere, and finally partnership-oriented to engage and co-design with a wide range of actors across countries and sectors, fostering digital cooperation and bridging the geospatial digital divide.

#### **IV. Survey of the wider digital ecosystem**

14. Following the global online webinar, the Bureau and its writing team continued to unfold their 25-week programme and turned to the organization of a survey on mapping the wider digital ecosystem, as a means to further scope and understand the ramifications and role of the future geospatial information within it. Similar to the global webinars, the survey did not focus only on geospatial information management but also covered policy, technology, data, infrastructure, and solution considerations. The survey, led by Saudi Arabia, was designed as a 20-question survey in April 2025, and was subsequently rolled out between 13 May to 13 June 2025 reaching both the geospatial community, digital community, international organizations as well as participants who attended the global online webinar, inviting them to also forward the survey to relevant partners.

15. The survey sought to gather diverse perspectives on the strategic priorities, challenges, governance frameworks, and emerging technologies shaping the future digital ecosystem. The survey was also designed to ensure that responses would directly contribute to strategic foresight efforts on positioning and shaping the future digital ecosystem by Member States, international organizations, industry stakeholders, academia, and civil society.

16. The result reached near to 250 respondents from across the world. The survey successfully reached its goal of providing a variety of perspectives from different expertise including a strong perspective from Member States as 41% of the responses came from public agencies, 23% from academia and research institutions, 18% from the private sector including technology companies, 12% from civil society or non-governmental organizations, and 6% from multilateral international agencies or United Nations entities. Over 70% of the responses originated from the Global South, with 38% from Africa, 21% from Asia Pacific, and 13% from Latin America and the Caribbean.

17. The survey provided perspective and key findings on challenges towards a purpose-driven, people-centred, and partnership-oriented future geospatial information ecosystem. The key challenges identified were: siloed systems, with the fragmentation of institutional architectures across agencies which delays decisions and blocks innovation; missing legal guardrails, with too often no clarity on who owns what data—or who's accountable for misuse; systems without skills, as the technology is available but major capacities and systems far behind; gaps in governance, where human rights principles need to be integrated into the design of the future (geospatial) digital ecosystem, with safeguards for inclusion, protection and multilateralism; delivery of services, rather than conceptual frameworks that fail to translate into operational action and tools; interoperability, beyond technical interoperability, legal and institutional operability must prevail; regional priorities and inequalities prevail in the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with over of 25% raising ethical concerns on its usage; accessibility to technology; and finally, legal enforcement for data remains a contentious or unfamiliar concept in non-governmental domains.

18. The survey also identified a wide array of critical priorities for investing in a digital ecosystem that is not only technologically advanced, but also inclusive,

ethical, and sustainable. Key focus areas included building robust digital infrastructure, fostering digital skills across all segments of society, establishing strong governance frameworks, promoting open standards, driving innovation, ensuring equitable access, and embedding environmental sustainability into digital developments. These priorities are considered elements that contribute to create a future-ready ecosystem that benefits all communities and the government.

19. Regarding the financial mechanisms, the survey noted that government investment still plays the most significant role, followed by private investment, though this perspective may be weakened by the fact that survey respondents were predominantly from government agencies (41%). Other important financial mechanisms included data cooperatives, support from financial institutions, philanthropy and foundations, subscription fees and licensing models, and the tokenization of data and services. Additionally, there are emerging and alternative approaches being explored to further enhance the ecosystem

20. Finally, the survey indicated that ensuring equitable access and participation in the global digital ecosystem demanded more than just infrastructure, as it requires an intentional, multi-dimensional strategy that bridges connectivity gaps, promotes digital literacy, fosters inclusive governance, and empowers marginalized communities. The survey highlighted that key priorities include expanding affordable digital infrastructure, ensuring access to devices and connectivity, and building local capacity through education and skills development. Also, considerations included that policies must provide safeguards to privacy, promote open data, and reflect diverse voices. Further, the survey highlighted that platforms should be user-centric, accessible in multiple languages, and culturally relevant. Public-private partnerships, global cooperation, and open standards were deemed critical to enable equitable participation for all. Ultimately, the survey provided a conceptual view of a fair, responsible, and inclusive digital ecosystem built on trusted, transparent, and accessible data that caters to addressing societal priorities, ensuring shared benefits, enabling transformation, and growing inclusive approaches.

## V. Position paper

21. To prepare the position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem the writing team leveraged the papers and various background documents presented at the eleventh and twelfth sessions on the future geospatial information ecosystem, as well as the policy papers presented in 2020, 2015 and 2020 on [Future Trends](#) by the United Kingdom.

22. The drafting and writing of the position paper, led by South Africa, also leveraged the previous work of the team on the future geospatial information ecosystem previously undertaken regarding strategic drivers as presented in its report of 2023 ([E/C.20/2023/8/Add.1](#)), and scope, principles and fundamental elements of the future geospatial information ecosystem as presented in its report of 2024 ([E/C.20/2024/8/Add.1](#)). A draft outline was prepared from May to June 2025 that incorporated these foundational pieces of work and considered the additional perspectives and insights gathered during this intersessional period through the global online webinars and the global survey. These findings were used to refine principles, elements and considered activities to design, shape and advance the role of geospatial information within the broader digital ecosystem.

23. The position paper was structured using the strategic pathways of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, recognizing its essential role in developing, enhancing and advocating for the efficient production and effective utilization of geospatial information. Finally, the position paper also incorporated an emphasis on diversity, equality and inclusion as well as embracing

innovative approaches, systems and technologies, including artificial intelligence and machine learning for societal benefits.

24. The delivery of the work program culminating in the position paper entitled “Positioning future geospatial information ecosystem” concludes the work and deliverables of the Bureau and its writing team on the future geospatial information ecosystem and the tasks set out in accordance with decision [13/10](#), [14/104](#) of the Committee of Experts and its Terms of Reference.

25. In finalizing the position paper on the future geospatial information ecosystem, and in presenting the documents to the Committee of Experts, the Bureau and the writing team consider these actions completed. The position paper offers insights into the rapidly evolving digital landscape, actors, dynamics, and emerging technologies to further this, it provides some considerations on how to advance, shape and continue to position the future geospatial information ecosystem within the broader digital ecosystem.

## VI. Next steps

26. In delivering the position paper entitled “Positioning future geospatial information ecosystem”, the Bureau and its writing team outline critical next steps for the Committee of Experts to consider towards further advancing and shaping the future geospatial information ecosystem, including:

- (a) Ongoing foresight and future-looking journey: Ensure foresight and future-facing activities are part of the Committee of Expert forward-looking agenda and journey, enabling Member States to remain at forefront of digital transformation, remain nimble in a rapidly evolving and disruptive digital landscape, and continue to be agile in adapting the role of geospatial information management within it.
- (b) Deepen engagement and dialogue: Continue fostering inclusive discussions among Member States, regional committees, functional groups, and actors and in the wider digital ecosystem, to test and evolve its perspectives, strategic imperatives, principles, and foundational elements to continuously and advantageously position the future geospatial information ecosystem.
- (c) Align with broader global digital agendas: Position the future geospatial information ecosystem as a key enabler of broader international initiatives, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Digital Compact, data strategies, post-2030 agenda, and future global agendas.
- (d) Enhance cross-sector collaboration: Promote broader engagement with digital economy sectors, smart infrastructure initiatives, emerging technology communities and civil society actors to ensure an integrated approach.
- (e) Pilot innovative approaches: Encourage pilot projects that apply future-oriented practices, such as machine-readable SDIs, tokenization, decentralized funding models, AI-driven data ecosystems and participatory, rights-based governance models that prioritize transparency, accountability and public trust.
- (f) Strengthen capacity and knowledge sharing: Establish platforms for Member States to share lessons learned, good practice and innovation experiences, particularly emphasizing support for developing countries.

- (g) Develop priority use cases: Identify and promote use cases that demonstrate how the future geospatial information ecosystem can deliver real-time knowledge, support decision-making, and address pressing public policy, and environmental and societal challenges.
27. Any combination of these proposed activities would contribute to continuous positioning towards the future geospatial information ecosystem and for the Committee to continue to take an active role in shaping and engaging with a broad community to ensure it remains current and in-sync with a variety of actors, policies, and data, and to foster partnerships across sectors, expertise and technologies. The Bureau and its writing team recognize the relevance of continuing the journey and to conduct future-facing activities with the intent of helping national geospatial information agencies, in their thinking and as essential actors in the geospatial ecosystem to assure the global geospatial information community grows its influence, continuously adapts to, and derives benefit from the rapidly changing global digital information ecosystem and its operating environment.

## VII. Points for discussion

28. **The Committee of Experts is invited to:**
- (a) Take note of the present report and express its views and perspectives on how the global geospatial information community should prepare and adapt to the rapidly changing digital and geospatial landscape and its operating environment;
  - (b) Take note of the efforts from the bureau and the writing team to explore and position the future geospatial information ecosystem as a continuous journey, and to engage stakeholder within the wider digital ecosystem;
  - (c) Take note of the position paper delivered by the Bureau and its writing team and as express its views on the successful completion of the tasks set for the writing team and its delivery with the position paper on “Positioning the future geospatial information ecosystem” according to decision 13/10, 14/104 of the Committee of Experts, and its Terms of Reference and provide guidance and concurrence regarding the cessation of its activities having successfully achieved its objectives;
  - (d) Take note of the proposed next steps and considered activities for continuing the journey of positioning and shaping the future geospatial information ecosystem and to remain nimble to rapidly evolving digital landscape and agile in adapting the role of geospatial information management within it; and
  - (e) Express its views on the need to continue proposed activities and next steps under the future geospatial information ecosystem agenda item.

# Economic and Social Council

15 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 7 of the provisional agenda\*

United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework

## United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report of the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (HLG-IGIF) for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/105](#), in which it commended the High-level Group for its continuing efforts to improve the visibility and advance the role, relevance and uptake of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework with its strategic leadership, focused activities, effective coordination and oversight, and engagements with regional committees and United Nations global geospatial centres.

The Committee of Experts expressed appreciation for the preparation of a sustainable funding guide and other guides and tools, and encouraged the continual development and updates of these practical guides, resource materials and references and their translation in support of efforts to operationalize the Framework at the country level. The Committee acknowledged the urgent need to refine and finalize the remaining Framework implementation guide suite of documents and to digitally publish those documents and resource materials supporting the preparation of country-level action plans. It requested the Secretariat to prioritize those tasks after the fourteenth session, and further acknowledged the need to mobilize the necessary resources, volunteered and extrabudgetary, to support and sustain those efforts.

The Committee of Experts also requested the High-level Group to consider sharing the results of its global survey with regional committees and relevant implementation partners to optimize the utility of this global survey, and in that regard urged regional committees and relevant implementation partners to coordinate their activities with the High-level Group, ensuring synergy and avoiding duplication. The Committee reaffirmed that the Framework was a key umbrella for the many activities under the purview of the Committee of Experts, reiterated the importance of coordination, coherence and alignment in the work, efforts and activities of regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and the High-level Group, and reiterated the importance of implementing the Framework together for the benefit of all.

In the report, the High-level Group presents its recent meetings and activities, and the progress it has made in implementing its workplan and three priority goals: (a) enhancing communication; (b) strengthening capacity development; and (c) mobilizing

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

sustainable funding. It contains a description of the way in which momentum was sustained through a combination of in-person and virtual meetings, including two in-person plenary meetings, which provided opportunities for in-depth discussion and strategic alignment, as well as monthly virtual leadership team meetings and biannual expanded leadership team meetings focused on monitoring progress, addressing challenges and adapting approaches in real time. This consistent and deliberate engagement contributed to meaningful progress across all areas of the workplan.

The report contains details of the outcomes of the fifth plenary meeting of the High-level Group, held in February 2025 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In preparation for the meeting, key stakeholders – including the work groups, the chairs of the regional committees, the SDG Data Alliance, the Secretariat and the Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre – were invited to submit details of their priority activities and associated needs for 2025, which were synthesized into a comprehensive table that served as the foundation for the plenary discussions. Participants used a project management matrix with the labels “responsible”, “accountable”, “contributor” and “informed” to clarify roles and responsibilities. Many priorities were assigned to the Centre, in accordance with its workplan, while overall accountability remained with the High-level Group, with a view to ensuring strong leadership and oversight. To maintain alignment and foster continuous communication, the High-level Group invited the Centre to participate in its monthly virtual leadership team meetings. Stakeholders committed to helping to advance these activities, reinforcing a collaborative approach.

In the report, the High-level Group highlights activities related to communication and engagement, including its participation in forums, events and targeted meetings aimed at promoting the Framework, building knowledge and awareness and sharing best practices and strategies to encourage country-level implementation. Reference materials are provided as background documents to the report, in order to enhance understanding and facilitate stakeholder engagement. These include a brochure for decision makers and a quick reference guide to the Framework. Several country-level action plans have also been added to the website as references so that Member States and stakeholders can learn from real-world examples, further strengthening implementation efforts.

As noted in the report, significant progress has been made in relation to capacity development. Advances have been made with respect to refining, finalizing and translating the suite of documents on the Framework, including the implementation guide, incorporating feedback from the global consultation process, and with respect to the publication of resource materials to support the development of country-level action plans. The report contains a description of plans to finalize the remaining appendices and resource materials, to increase accessibility and promote broader adoption by translating the implementation guide into multiple languages and to maintain the Framework as a dynamic, living tool.

In the sustainable funding guide provided as a background document to the report, comprehensive guidance is offered on identifying and evaluating sustainable financing options for the implementation of the Framework. The guide, developed through in-depth reviews of existing funding studies and literature and through consultations with Member States, donors, the private sector and the World Bank, contains information on practical tools and insights to help Member States to identify potential funding sources, conduct a cost-benefit analysis and articulate compelling value propositions for investment to enhance nationally integrated geospatial information management.

In addition, a background document on the global survey report on the use and implementation of the Framework, which contains details of survey findings and information on implementation materials shared by Member States, is to be made publicly available through the website of the Framework, to support knowledge exchange. The raw data from the survey was also shared with the regional committees

and the Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre to support more tailored regional and subregional planning and analysis. In the report, the High-level Group outlines plans for a coordinated approach that is to be used for future assessments, as agreed upon at the fifth plenary meeting, and emphasizes the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Framework.

The High-level Group continues its efforts to advance the relevance, utility and impact of the Framework through its strategic plan and workplan. By working across regions, functional groups, thematic networks, centres of excellence and partner organizations, it continues to foster collaboration, reduce duplication and maximize synergies, and it invites all stakeholders to join this collective effort to ensure that geospatial information management is embedded at the core of national priorities and decision-making, in order to drive development, innovation and informed policymaking.

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## I. Introduction

1. Since its establishment in 2021, the High-Level Group on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (HLG-IGIF) has played a pivotal role in advancing the global implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF). In an era marked by intensifying global challenges and rapid technological change, the Framework offers a transformative blueprint for Member States to develop, integrate, strengthen, and maximize geospatial information management.
2. Established to provide strategic leadership, coordination, and oversight, the HLG-IGIF has played a pivotal role in advancing the Framework at national, regional, and global levels. The Group's efforts have been guided by three strategic goals: enhancing communication, strengthening capacity development, and mobilizing sustainable funding. These goals have shaped its work to increase awareness, build institutional and technical capacity, and identify the resources and partnerships necessary to ensure long-term success.
3. In accordance with decision 14/105 adopted by the Committee of Experts at its fourteenth session, the HLG-IGIF has taken significant steps during the intersessional period to strengthen coordination and align priorities among stakeholders, particularly with the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC), which has become more fully operational and staffed during this intersessional period.
4. The present report provides an overview of the High-level Group meetings, activities, and engagements, along with a progress update on advancing its work plan. The report provides updates to the Committee of Experts on the achievements of the work groups, including the development of new tools and resources, as well as the updating and translation of the UN-IGIF documents. The report also highlights ongoing efforts to align priorities, coordinate activities across stakeholders and partners, and foster collective action to advance the use and implementation of the Framework for the benefit of all.
5. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the activities, progress, and role of the HLG-IGIF and to comment on the points for discussion and decision that are provided in paragraph 62.

## II. Meetings of the HLG-IGIF

6. At its fourth plenary meeting, held on 5-6 August 2024 on the margins of the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts, the HLG-IGIF engaged with the regional committees, thematic networks, and the UN-GGKIC, while also highlighting Member State experiences implementing the UN-IGIF. The High-level Group received a briefing from the Head of the UN-GGKIC, who presented the Centre's vision, mission, strategic priorities, and goals, as detailed in its Strategic Plan, which was endorsed by the International Advisory Committee. A draft work plan was also shared. Participants welcomed the Centre's progress toward becoming fully operational and emphasized the importance of strong collaboration with the HLG-IGIF. While some participants raised concerns about potential overlap in activities between the UN-GGKIC, the HLG-IGIF, regional committees, and other stakeholders, the High-level Group reaffirmed the value of coordinated efforts and expressed its support for continued collaboration with the Head of Centre as the UN-GGKIC expands its operations and becomes fully staffed.
7. The High-level Group received updates from each of the regional committees on progress advancing the UN-IGIF within their respective regions. Member States, including Indonesia, South Africa, and Cameroon also shared their national efforts to implement the Framework. This session provided a valuable forum for showcasing ongoing implementation activities, exchanging good practices, and discussing common

challenges. The session also supported capacity development among Member States in the early stages of developing their country-level action plans. Member States presented a range of use cases, including an example from Indonesia on using the UN-IGIF to support climate action, delivered by the Vice Minister of Forestry. High-level Group members welcomed these insights and expressed interest in receiving continued updates from Member States as their implementation efforts progress, particularly from Member States which provided a presentation.

8. The HLG-IGIF reviewed and approved its revised strategic plan, which had been updated earlier in the year to streamline efforts, reduce duplication, and align with current priorities. The HLG-IGIF also received progress updates from the Co-Leads of the three work groups, Communication, Capacity Development, and Sustainable Funding, on their efforts to advance the strategic goals. Significant progress was reported across several key initiatives, with many activities nearing completion. The Capacity Development Work Group highlighted ongoing efforts to finalize the Global Survey Report on the Use and Implementation of the UN-IGIF, scheduled for release in early 2025. The Communications Work Group presented the final draft of the UN-IGIF Decision Maker Brochure for review and feedback, with plans to incorporate suggested revisions and finalize the brochure by the fifth plenary meeting. The Sustainable Funding Work Group shared the final draft of the Sustainable Funding Guide and accompanying flyer, both of which were expected to be launched in the fall of 2024.

9. The Co-Leads also presented updates to the HLG-IGIF Work Plan, aligned with the priorities established earlier in 2024 and the newly adopted HLG-IGIF Strategic Plan. However, in the absence of a finalized UN-GGKIC Work Plan at that time, the HLG-IGIF approved the proposed work plan with the understanding that it would need to be revisited. The Group emphasized the importance of reviewing the work plan in the near future to ensure alignment across all stakeholder groups, maximizing synergies, and avoiding duplication of effort.

10. Additional outcomes from the fourth plenary meeting included agreement from the Secretariat to post translated UN-IGIF documents to the website immediately, accompanied by a disclaimer indicating that they are undergoing final review. This approach was agreed upon to ensure timely access to critical materials while the formal review process is still underway. The group also requested the Secretariat to share the raw data from the Global Survey on the Use and Implementation of the UN-IGIF with regional committees and the UN-GGKIC, supporting coordinated planning and helping to avoid duplication of efforts. Participants emphasized the urgency to finalizing the three remaining chapters of the UN-IGIF Implementation Guide and called for the development of a centralized website to ensure that all UN-IGIF resources are easily accessible to Member States. The Secretariat committed to prioritizing these efforts. Finally, the High-level Group agreed to convene its fifth plenary meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in early 2025.

11. At its fifth plenary meeting, held on 2–3 February 2025 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, the High-level Group received updates on key deliverables from the HLG-IGIF work groups. The Capacity Development Work Group presented the final Global Survey Report on the Use and Implementation of the UN-IGIF, highlighting key findings and insights. The Communications Work Group introduced the final UN-IGIF Decision-Maker Brochure, designed to help Member States effectively communicate the value and importance of the Framework. The Sustainable Funding Work Group delivered the final Sustainable Funding Guide and flyer, along with updates to the Geospatial Value Study Inventory (GeoVSI). These deliverables marked the culmination of months of sustained, collaborative effort. The work groups, and their many partners, were commended for their dedication and significant contributions to advancing the goals of the UN-IGIF.

12. While the work group updates marked important milestones, the primary focus of the meeting was to align priorities across key stakeholders and establish clear roles and responsibilities for advancing priority activities. Stakeholders actively engaged in

advancing the UN-IGIF, including the three HLG-IGIF work groups, five regional committees, the UN-GGKIC, SDG Data Alliance, and the Secretariat. The stakeholders were invited ahead of the meeting to submit and rank their priority activities related to UN-IGIF for 2025. During the plenary, each stakeholder group presented and discussed their submissions. In total, eleven stakeholder groups presented 83 priority activities along with corresponding needs, providing a comprehensive foundation for coordinated planning and collaboration.

13. The 83 priority activities submitted by the stakeholders were reviewed in advance by the HLG-IGIF support team, who identified significant overlap and common themes. These were consolidated in a matrix of 33 distinct activities, which were further streamlined to 26 during the meeting. Several key priorities emerged as widely shared across stakeholder groups, underscoring the need to focus collective efforts on the most impactful. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of advancing a core set of activities that received strong support from multiple stakeholders. The highest-ranked priorities identified by Member States included:

- (a) Develop communication strategies, materials, and use cases to raise awareness and sustain the adoption of the UN-IGIF and post the materials to a centralized and accessible website.
- (b) Update, refine, translate, and improve the UN-IGIF suite of documents – noting the need to transition from finalization of the initial documents to prioritizing needed enhancements.
- (c) Provide robust support for the country-level action plan development process and Member State implementation – including for those Member States previously supported by the SDG Data Alliance.
- (d) Conduct workshops to build capacity and strengthen implementation and use.

14. To ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities across stakeholders, the Co-Chairs led the group through a line-by-line review of the 26 activities, applying a standard project management framework (known as RACI, Responsible, Accountable, Contributor, and Informed) to guide role assignments. Under this framework, the following roles were defined:

- (a) Responsible: Performs the required work to deliver the activity.
- (b) Accountable: Ensures the activity is successfully completed.
- (c) Contributor: Provides support and input to the activity.
- (d) Informed: Remains updated on the activity's progress.

15. Meeting participants reviewed and evaluated the 26 priority activities in detail. Following the discussion, the group reached consensus and endorsed the following outcomes:

- (a) The HLG-IGIF would be accountable for all 26 priority activities.
- (b) The UN-GGKIC would take responsibility for 14 of the 26 activities that were consistent with its strategic plan and work plan.
- (c) The UN-GGIM Secretariat accepted responsibility for four of the activities,
- (d) The HLG-IGIF maintained responsibility for seven activities.
- (e) UN-GGIM: Americas assumed responsibility for one activity.
- (f) A vast number of stakeholders, including HLG-IGIF work groups, regional committees, and thematic networks agreed to be contributors to many of the activities.

(g) All the stakeholders are to be kept informed of progress on the priority activities.

16. The High-level Group emphasized the critical importance of strong communication and coordination among all stakeholders. This includes maintaining consistent, two-way engagement with contributors and providing timely updates to all parties. Stakeholders stressed the necessity of clear and detailed documentation, especially for activities transitioning from the HLG-IGIF to the UN-GGKIC or Secretariat, to ensure continuity, clarity of purpose, status, and next steps. The Group also called for regular progress reports from those responsible and agreed that each responsible party would deliver a comprehensive update at the sixth plenary meeting scheduled for August 2025. Recognizing the substantial responsibilities undertaken by the UN-GGKIC, the High-level Group invited its participation in the monthly HLG-IGIF Leadership Team meetings to strengthen collaboration and facilitate timely updates on implementation progress.

17. In addition to its plenary meetings, the HLG-IGIF holds regular monthly virtual leadership team meetings, bringing together the Co-Chairs, Secretariat, work group Co-Leads, and the UN-GGKIC. These meetings serve as a platform to report progress to the Co-Chairs, enhance coordination, and minimize duplication of efforts across the work groups. They have proven highly effective in facilitating the timely exchange of important information and are essential for monitoring progress against work plan milestones.

18. The HLG-IGIF also convened expanded leadership meetings, which included chairs and presidents of the regional committees. On 5 November 2024, the expanded leadership team met to share updates and progress from the regional committees, UN-GGKIC, and the HLG work groups. During this meeting, participants discussed preparations for the upcoming fifth plenary meeting and agreed that each stakeholder group would submit their 2025 UN-IGIF priority activities in advance and present them during the meeting to help guide discussions on aligning priorities and defining clear roles and responsibilities. A second expanded leadership meeting was held on 6 May 2025. This session focused on updates from the regional committee chairs, progress reports from responsible parties identified during the fifth plenary, gathering input for this report, and planning for the sixth plenary meeting which will take place during the Fifteenth Session of the Committee of Experts.

19. The HLG-IGIF work groups also convene monthly meetings to advance the tasks and activities outlined in the work plan. These meetings serve as a platform to review progress, assign responsibilities, and address any questions or challenges that arise. The work group Co-Leads then provide progress updates during the monthly leadership team meetings, ensuring ongoing visibility, effective monitoring of developments, and timely resolution of issues or challenges.

### **III. Events and engagements**

20. The HLG-IGIF and its work groups have participated in a wide range of webinars, workshops, conferences, and events to promote and advance the UN-IGIF. On the margins of the fourteenth session, several HLG-IGIF members took part in a forum on Integrated Geospatial Information Management, “Integrated Geospatial Information Management to 2030 and Beyond.” During the forum, the HLG-IGIF Co-Chair moderated a panel of geospatial experts who reflected on the Committee’s evolution, highlighting key milestones, addressing major challenges, and outlining future priorities aimed at leveraging integrated geospatial information for a better tomorrow. The Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations also contributed valuable insights, emphasizing strategies for engaging senior leadership and overcoming barriers to securing high-level political support for integrated geospatial initiatives.

21. The seventh High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Mexico City from 8-10 October 2024, centered on the theme “Accelerating Implementation; Achieving Resilience.” The HLG-IGIF Co-Chair led a featured session titled “Accelerating implementation with the UN Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.” An all-female panel representing the United States, South Africa, Indonesia, and the Caribbean shared compelling case studies highlighting the application of the UN-IGIF. Attendees expressed strong interest in continued engagement with the panelists and recommended that these examples be captured as formal written case studies or developed into interactive StoryMaps for broader dissemination.

22. The HLG-IGIF Co-Chairs, work group Co-Leads, and HLG-IGIF members have also utilized regional forums, workshops, and side events to provide an overview of the HLG-IGIF’s progress, communicate the importance of the UN-IGIF, and share good practices and lessons learned. These engagements include the Workshop on the UN-IGIF for Southern Africa, the 25th General Assembly of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, as well as participation to regional committee meetings, sessions, and both virtual and in-person workshops and webinars.

23. In preparation for the fifteenth session, the first UN-GGIM Interregional Dialogue was on the topic of ‘Implementing the UN-IGIF’, held online on 11 June 2025, hosted by the UN-GGIM: Americas Regional Committee. This milestone event marked a significant step in fostering cross-regional collaboration to support national implementation of the UN-IGIF, drawing participation from over 100 attendees. Both Co-Chairs of the HLG-IGIF played active roles in the webinar, one providing opening remarks, while the other facilitated a roundtable discussion with regional committee chairs. The discussion focused on shared challenges, respective roles of regional and global actors, and potential mechanisms to structure and strengthen Member States’ implementation efforts. In addition, a work group Co-Lead presented the results of the Global Survey on the Use and Implementation of the UN-IGIF, a key deliverable of the HLG-IGIF. The event highlighted the strong collaboration across regions and between the regional committees and the HLG-IGIF, reinforcing a shared commitment to advancing the Framework globally.

24. At the upcoming fifteenth session, the HLG-IGIF will participate in two Forums to be held on 5 August 2025. The first, a Geospatial Leadership Forum, is hosted with the UN-GGKIC and its International Advisory Committee, the thematic networks, and the HLG-IGIF. The second forum, Integrated Geospatial Information Management for the development agendas is sponsored by the UN-GGKIC, the Expert Group on the SDGs, the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, the thematic networks, and the HLG-IGIF.

#### **IV. Regional committee events, workshops, and webinars**

25. The regional committee chairs play a vital role in the High-level Group, providing strong leadership and representation across all three HLG-IGIF work groups. Their ongoing commitment has been instrumental in maintaining active, well-functioning UN-IGIF work groups throughout all regions. Under their leadership, the regional committees have also established a robust framework for interregional collaboration on the UN-IGIF. Through joint meetings, events, workshops, and webinars, they have worked collectively to share good practices, develop capacity, raise awareness, and promote the use and implementation of the UN-IGIF, particularly during their annual plenary meetings. Further details on regional and interregional collaboration in support of the UN-IGIF can be found in the report on provisional agenda topic 5 - Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda.

## V. Communications Work Group

26. During the intersessional period, the HLG-IGIF Communications Work Group made significant progress advancing key communication initiatives. Following the fifth plenary meeting in Jeddah, responsibility for many communications activities will transition to the UN-GGKIC, with the Communications Work Group continuing as a key contributor. Highlights of current accomplishments and efforts to transition responsibilities are outlined below.

### **Communication materials**

27. The Communications Work Group recognized the importance of engaging across sectors about the positive outcomes and tangible impacts of using and implementing UN-IGIF at the national level. The Communications Work Group launched the UN-IGIF Decision Maker Brochure, designed specifically for engaging senior government officials. The brochure highlights the wide-ranging benefits of implementing the Framework and aims to foster cross-sectoral collaboration and political buy-in. The publication represents a collaborative effort, incorporating input from across the High-level Group, Member States, the private sector network, and the SDG Data Alliance. The Communications Work Group extends special appreciation to colleagues from Esri for their expertise and support in refining the messaging to ensure maximum impact with the target audience. The brochure is included as a background document to the report and is currently with the document translation task team for translation into multiple languages to broaden accessibility and global reach.

28. The Communications Work Group, in collaboration with the Capacity Development Work Group, developed a UN-IGIF Quick Reference Guide in response to Member States' requests for a simplified, accessible overview of the UN-IGIF. This concise guide presents the nine strategic pathways, highlighting key components, recommended tools and actions, as well as potential outcomes and deliverables. It is designed to help stakeholders quickly understand the core benefits of the UN-IGIF, while also making references to the suite of Implementation Guide, for those seeking more comprehensive detail. The Quick Reference Guide serves as a practical tool for stakeholder engagement events, workshops, and meetings, designed to facilitate discussion, encourage active participation, and help secure broad-based buy-in. The Guide will be officially launched at the sixth plenary meeting of the HLG-IGIF and is included as a background document to the report.

29. In response to Member State requests to document the compelling case study shared by Indonesia during the fourteenth session, and further elaborated at the seventh High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, the UN-IGIF Case Study on Climate Action in Indonesia is attached to this report. This case study highlights how the UN-IGIF supports the development and strengthening of geospatial information management and its underlying infrastructure, forming a critical foundation for effective climate action. Moving forward, the Secretariat will take on the role of coordinating the collection, curation and dissemination of UN-IGIF case studies, with the Communications Work Group continuing to serve as a key contributor. Member States are encouraged to contribute additional case studies that demonstrate the practical application of the UN-IGIF across a wide range of domains and share the case studies with the Secretariat. These real-world examples will not only showcase the adaptability and impact of the UN-IGIF in addressing national and global challenges but will also serve as a valuable tool for engaging senior government officials and stakeholders across sectors.

30. Recognizing the value of ongoing stakeholder contributions and commitment, the Communications Work Group developed a customizable Certificate of Appreciation that can be used to formally recognize stakeholders who actively contribute to the advancement of the UN-IGIF. Meaningful stakeholder engagement and partnerships are critical to the successful use and implementation of the UN-IGIF, and this certificate

provides Member States with a professional and practical tool to acknowledge those contributions. Developed at the request of Member States and designed for easy customization with country-specific details, the Certificate of Appreciation helps formally recognize contributions while promoting continued collaboration and long-term support for the UN-IGIF.

31. Plans are currently under discussion to develop a series of sector-specific brochures that illustrate how the UN-IGIF can directly support the mandates of various ministries. These tailored materials are designed to resonate with senior government officials by showcasing practical, sector relevant applications of the UN-IGIF, such as in food security, public health, environmental management, and land administration. Each brochure will feature testimonials from senior officials within relevant UN agencies, such as the Food and Agricultural Organization, the World Health Organization, or the United Nations Environmental Program, helping to reinforce the credibility and relevance of the Framework. This targeted approach aims to bridge the gap between geospatial and sectoral priorities, fostering stronger ministerial engagement and cross-sector collaboration. These plans have been discussed in coordination with the UN-GGKIC, which now has responsibility for the development of communication materials, with the Communications Work Group continuing to serve as a key contributor. Collaboration from the UN Geospatial Network to advance this important initiative is welcome.

32. During this intersessional period, the Communications Work Group collaborated with the Secretariat to explore how best to utilize the section of the UN-GGIM website dedicated to the UN-IGIF. The objective is to communicate and share documents and materials with the widest possible audience in a clear and accessible manner. The envisioned platform will serve as a centralized hub for translated documents, brochures, guides, example materials from Member States, online resources, webinars, and training tools, making it easier to promote and disseminate information to Member States. In response to this request, the Secretariat is working towards enhancing the website and has taken some initial steps to enhance the content, including posting country-level action plans submitted by Member States from UN-GGIM: Europe and UN-GGIM: Asia Pacific. Member States from other regions are encouraged to share their country-level action plans as valuable reference materials for others beginning the process.

33. Following the fifth plenary meeting in Jeddah, it was agreed that several responsibilities previously managed by the Communications Work Group would transition to either the UN-GGKIC or the Secretariat, as the designated responsible leads. To support a smooth transition, the Communications Work Group documented the current status of these activities and held two transition meetings with the UN-GGKIC to coordinate the transfer. While these responsibilities are shifting, the Communications Work Group will continue to serve as a key contributor, ensuring continuity and effective collaboration in advancing the UN-IGIF communications priorities. The Communications Work Group retains direct responsibility for two key activities: the UN-IGIF Regional Collaboration Meetings and Stakeholder Analysis. Updates on progress related to these two activities during the intersessional period are provided in the sections below.

### **UN-IGIF Regional Collaboration**

34. To support the regional UN-IGIF work groups and enhance collaboration across regions, the Communications Work Group convenes quarterly collaboration meetings with the regional UN-IGIF work group leads. Over the intersessional period, four meetings have been held, with all regions now actively represented. These sessions serve as a vital platform for aligning efforts, sharing good practices, strengthening coordination, and exchanging ideas and resources. The meetings have also helped to raise the visibility and impact of regional initiatives, such as webinars organized by UN-GGIM: Americas and UN-GGIM: Europe, which are now being opened to the global community to broaden participation and engagement. The forum has facilitated the

sharing of successful approaches, including regional survey methodologies. Combined with findings from the global survey conducted by the Capacity Development Work Group, these exchanges are enabling regional leads to collect more detailed insights into UN-IGIF use and implementation across their respective regions. These insights are proving instrumental in shaping regional priorities and focus areas. The regional collaboration meetings have become a valuable mechanism for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and strategic alignment. The Communications Work Group remains committed to further strengthening and supporting this forum in the year ahead.

#### **Stakeholder Analysis**

35. To support a more strategic and coordinated approach to future engagement, the Communications Work Group has initiated a stakeholder analysis initiative. While still in the early stages, the stakeholder analysis initiative has already identified key opportunities for engagement—beginning with select UN system entities that can play a strategic role in raising the visibility of the UN-IGIF. The long-term goal is to encourage these entities to incorporate references to geospatial information management and the UN-IGIF into their engagements with Member States, thereby fostering high-level government awareness and support for geospatial initiatives through trusted UN channels that extend beyond the traditional geospatial community. As part of this effort, the Communications Work Group hopes to collaborate with the UN-GGKIC to engage the UN Geospatial Network in the development of sector-specific brochures. These materials aim to build awareness of the UN-IGIF among non-geospatial ministries, supported by testimonials from relevant UN agencies to reinforce their credibility and sectoral relevance.

36. The thematic networks were also identified as a key group with strong potential for deeper collaboration. The HLG-IGIF has already actively cultivated relationships with the Private Sector Network with successful collaborations on the Decision Maker Brochure, the Sustainable Funding Guide, and the Geospatial Value Study Inventory (GeoVSI). The Communications Work Group seeks to build on these successes and strengthen engagement to enhance the visibility, reach, and long-term sustainability of UN-IGIF communication and implementation efforts. The stakeholder analysis initiative is still in its early stages and will be further refined in close coordination with the UN-GGKIC, ensuring a strategic and unified approach to engagement across UN system entities, thematic networks, and other key partners. The Communications Work Group welcomes input from the Committee of Experts on this stakeholder analysis initiative and identification of key partners to target for future engagement.

## **VI. Capacity Development Work Group**

37. During the intersessional period, the HLG-IGIF Capacity Development Work Group, has continued to advance key priorities outlined in the HLG-IGIF Work Plan. The group has focused on four core activities:

- (a) Translation and promotion of all UN-IGIF-related documents.
- (b) Completion of the Global Survey on the Use and Implementation of the UN-IGIF.
- (c) Identification and sharing of materials developed by Member States documenting UN-IGIF use and implementation.
- (d) Development of a knowledge exchange initiative on capacity-building experiences.

38. Following the fifth plenary meeting and the RACI exercise, primary responsibility for document translation remains with the Capacity Development Work Group. Other responsibilities have transitioned to the UN-GGKIC and the Secretariat, with the Capacity Development Work Group continuing to play a key supporting role. Progress

updates on the above activities during the intersessional period are provided in the sections below.

#### **Translation of UN-IGIF Documents**

39. The Capacity Development Work Group continues to collaborate with Member States and the translation teams to improve language accessibility of UN-IGIF materials. As of April 2025, twelve core documents are at various stages of translation. In line with the agreement from the fourth plenary meeting, efforts are underway to publish translated documents currently under Secretariat review, clearly marked as "under review" on the UN-GGIM website to enhance transparency and access. While progress has been made, a number of translated documents remain under review and have yet to be published on the website.

#### **Global Survey on the Use and Implementation of the UN-IGIF**

40. Conducted between late 2023 and early 2024, the Global Survey collected valuable insights from Member States on UN-IGIF awareness, institutional arrangements, implementation strategies, and feedback on related materials. The final 83-page report, completed in October 2024, reflects strong global engagement and a wide range of implementation and use approaches, while also identifying key challenges such as resource limitations and overlapping frameworks. The survey has proven to be a valuable diagnostic tool for understanding the current landscape of UN-IGIF use and implementation, and it is recommended that the survey be repeated on a biennial basis to ensure that insights remain current and relevant. The final report was presented at the fifth plenary meeting of the HLG-IGIF and later summarized during the First Interregional Webinar on the UN-IGIF in June 2025. It is included as a supporting document to this report. Moving forward, the UN-GGKIC has assumed responsibility for ongoing assessment surveys and will collaborate closely with the Capacity Development Work Group and regional committees to maximize efficiencies, reduce duplication, and amplify impact.

#### **Sharing materials from Member States**

41. The Capacity Development Work Group has compiled a list of Member States willing to share UN-IGIF-related materials, including country-level action plans, templates, and presentations. Discussions are ongoing with the Secretariat and Communications Work Group to determine the most effective platform and format for publishing these resources. Following the RACI exercise conducted during the fifth plenary meeting, primary responsibility for this task has transitioned to the Secretariat, with the Capacity Development Work Group continuing to provide support.

#### **Workshop for Trainers: Train the Trainers Program**

42. To support global capacity building efforts, the Capacity Development Work Group developed a concept for a "Workshop for Trainers," designed to map existing training initiatives and foster a collaborative environment among trainers. Target audiences include UN-IGIF work groups, regional committees, and partner organizations such as the UN-GGKIC, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and the World Bank. During the fifth plenary, primary responsibility for this initiative was assigned to the UN-GGKIC, with the Capacity Development Work Group contributing to the development of a broader Train-the-Trainers Program. Initial consultations are currently underway to gather stakeholder input and inform the program's design and implementation.

## **VII. Sustainable Funding Work Group**

#### **Sustainable Funding Guide**

43. During the intersessional period, the Sustainable Funding Work Group—co-led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Mozambique—finalized the Sustainable Funding

Guide, which is provided as a supporting document to this report. This marks the culmination of extensive efforts initiated last year, including a thorough literature review and consultations with Member States, financial institutions, and donor organizations to gather insights on sustainable funding strategies. Led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in collaboration with Member States, the Private Sector Network and the Academic Network, the finalized guide now provides Member States with practical approaches, budget assessment considerations, and economic evaluation tools to support compelling business cases and long-term investment in UN-IGIF implementation.

44. The work group is now planning a global seminar on Sustainable Funding for late 2025 to further disseminate the Guide's insights and foster dialogue on sustainable financing strategies and partnerships. This seminar will convene a diverse group of stakeholders, from government, private sector, academia, and financial institutions, to explore innovative funding models, share practical experiences, and discuss approaches to ensure the long-term, sustainable implementation of the UN-IGIF. The seminar will also highlight the Geospatial Value Study Inventory (GeoVSI), as a valuable tool to demonstrate the return on investment in geospatial initiatives.

45. With the successful launch of the Sustainable Funding Guide, accompanying flyer, and Geospatial Value Study Inventory (GeoVSI), along with the upcoming delivery of the global seminar on Sustainable Funding later in 2025, the Sustainable Funding Work Group will have fulfilled its mandate. Having completed its core deliverables, the group intended to formally conclude its activities and cease its operations. However, during the fifth plenary meeting during the RACI exercise, several Member States emphasized that sustainable finance remains a continued priority. In response, the work group has been tasked with preparing recommendations on how these ongoing priorities can be addressed following its conclusion. These recommendations will be presented at the sixth plenary meeting.

## VIII. UN-GGIM Secretariat

### Responsibilities

46. At the Fifth Plenary Meeting of the HLG-IGIF, the Secretariat assumed responsibility for advancing four key priority activities:

- (a) Finalizing the current UN-IGIF suite of documents based on feedback from the global consultation process, including Parts 1-3, appendices, and the country-level action plan resource materials.
- (b) Ensuring regular updates and strategic enhancements to the UN-IGIF suite of documents.
- (c) Managing the UN-IGIF web presence, including the timely posting and maintenance of materials.
- (d) Collecting, curating, and sharing use cases, case studies, best practices, and lessons learned.

47. These areas remain high priorities for the High-level Group. The Secretariat emphasized the need for ongoing engagement and contributions from HLG-IGIF members to support progress in each area. Ensuring adequate resources for the finalization, translation, digital publication, and continuous improvement of the UN-IGIF suite of documents continues to be a challenge, one that requires sustained attention and collective support.

### Finalization of the UN-IGIF suite of documents

48. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat prioritized the finalization of the UN-IGIF suite of documents, in recognition of the importance Member States have placed on this work. As a result, substantial progress was made, including the completion

and publication of updated Implementation Guide chapters for Strategic Pathways 2 (Policy and Legal), 4 (Data), and 5 (Standards), as well as the publication of additional resource materials to support the development of country-level action plans. These updates reflect extensive input gathered through the global consultation process, ensuring the content captures a wide range of perspectives and needs from the international geospatial community. The finalized chapters and resource materials are now available on the UN-IGIF website.

49. To improve accessibility and support broader global engagement, these documents have been submitted to the document translation task team for translation into multiple languages. The Secretariat continues to facilitate the review, approval, and publication of the translated documents on the UN-IGIF website, ensuring they are available to a diverse international audience.

#### **Website Enhancements**

50. Recognizing the need for a centralized and user-friendly platform to share tools and resource materials, the Secretariat has begun to update and enhance the website. One improvement, made in direct response to Member State requests, was the addition of a new tab related to additional resources of materials related to UN-IGIF. This dedicated space features additional materials associated with the UN-IGIF, and helpful templates and references. The website also includes a tab on country-level action plans as examples of the implementation of UN-IGIF to address national priorities.

### **IX. UN-GGKIC**

51. At the fifth plenary meeting of the HLG-IGIF, the UN-GGKIC assumed responsibility for 14 of the 26 identified priority activities, with the HLG-IGIF remaining accountable and continues to serve as a key contributor for their implementation. These activities reflect critical areas of focus for advancing the UN-IGIF and include:

- (a) Developing a comprehensive communications strategy.
- (b) Creating targeted UN-IGIF communication materials.
- (c) Promoting and raising awareness of the UN-IGIF, including its resources, activities, and events.
- (d) Producing a UN-IGIF Communications Toolkit for use by Member States.
- (e) Implementing geospatial leadership training programs.
- (f) Enhancing the country-level action plan process and resource materials, and providing needed support, including Member States previously support by the SDG Data Alliance.
- (g) Supporting Member States in the implementation of their country-level action plans.
- (h) Organizing capacity development workshops.
- (i) Designing and organization a Train-the-Trainers Program.
- (j) Providing technical assistance to Member States.
- (k) Establishing a knowledge and learning hub.
- (l) Supporting Member States in conducting self-assessments.
- (m) Leading global and regional UN-IGIF surveys.
- (n) Finalizing the UN-GGKIC Work Plan in alignment with Member State priorities.

52. During the plenary meeting, the HLG-IGIF conducted an initial mapping of these priorities against the proposed UN-GGKIC Work Plan to identify any gaps and areas not yet addressed. Since then, the HLG-IGIF has requested that the UN-GGKIC ensure these priority activities are appropriately integrated into their work plan as it is finalized. The UN-GGKIC has made notable progress in several areas, including capacity building workshops and geospatial leadership training. Further details on UN-GGKIC progress can be found in the report on the ‘Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (Away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements’.

53. The UN-GGKIC is now actively participating in the monthly HLG-IGIF Leadership Team meetings and is working closely with partners to advance priority activities. To support continuity and maintain momentum, the UN-GGKIC has designated focal points to collaborate with both the Communications and Capacity Development Work Groups. Several transition meetings have already been held with these groups to align efforts, ensure a smooth handover of responsibilities, and foster continued collaboration in advancing shared work.

## X. SDG Data Alliance

54. From 2022 until the end of 2024, the SDG Data Alliance and its resource team provided direct support to several developing Member States, including training, strategic guidance, and assistance related to the implementation of the UN-IGIF and the development of Country-level Action Plans. However, the donor funds dedicated to these capacity development efforts from the resource team within the Data Alliance were exhausted in December 2024. This required an immediate shift in focus and priorities for the SDG Data Alliance towards the accelerated development and deployment of Data Hubs and Country Map Portfolios for developing countries. In particular, small island developing States (SIDS). The provision of these capabilities will enable countries to access new data sources, innovative technologies, and visualization tools leveraging the Internet and web services, raising the awareness and value of geospatial information arrangements within Member States. While direct assistance by the SDG Data Alliance on the development of Country-level Action Plans has concluded, the Data Alliance remains closely committed and connected to the work of the Secretariat and of the UN-GGKIC to contribute to the implementation and sustained adoption of the UN-IGIF, the updates to the UN-IGIF suite of documents, and the contribution of experts to workshops and expert meetings on the UN-IGIF. The UN-GGKIC is now assuming the responsibility for supporting Member States in the implementation of the UN-IGIF. In this regard, the HLG-IGIF has emphasized

## XI. Opportunities and Next Steps

55. With priority activities established and roles and responsibilities clearly defined, the stakeholders are entering a pivotal phase for action. The HLG-IGIF is committed to strengthening collaboration with the UN-GGKIC, the Secretariat, regional committees, thematic networks, and other strategic stakeholders to advance the priorities identified by Member States. As both an accountable body and active contributor, the HLG-IGIF will help align efforts, foster robust two-way communication, and ensure contributors remain actively engaged and stakeholders are well informed. In close coordination with the UN-GGKIC and the Secretariat, the HLG-IGIF will support a smooth transition of responsibilities by promoting ongoing collaboration, sharing knowledge with focal points, and offering strategic guidance as the UN-GGKIC takes on new priority activities. This collaborative approach will maximize the effective use of resources, minimize duplication of effort, and accelerate the global use and implementation of the UN-IGIF for the benefit of all.

56. With the Implementation Guide chapters now fully updated from the extensive global consultation, and new country-level action plan resources published, momentum

is being built to complete the appendices and finalize additional resource materials. The HLG-IGIF will be turning toward key strategic enhancements to the document suite, focusing on data, innovation, land administration, marine domain, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. While the Secretariat leads the refinements to the UN-IGIF, the HLG-IGIF will remain an active partner, coordinating contributions, sharing expertise, and introducing innovative ideas that foster cohesion, drive progress, and deliver practical value to Member States.

57. In response to feedback from Member States and implementation partners, there is a clear opportunity to leverage new UN-GGKIC resources to strengthen the country-level action plan process, associated materials, and support mechanisms. A key focus will be the establishment of a team of experts to deliver training, build capacity, and offer strategic guidance for the use, development, and implementation of country level action plans. The HLG-IGIF, through its Capacity Development Work Group, will play an important role in this effort, by supporting coordination across experts and trainers, and facilitating the exchange of best practices and lessons learned from those actively engaged in supporting country level implementation.

58. As the global knowledge base surrounding the UN-IGIF continues to grow, there is an increasing need to strengthen communication strategies and develop tailored outreach materials. Sector-specific content, including compelling case studies that illustrate practical applications and tangible benefits of the UN-IGIF, will be essential to deepen understanding, build support, and inspire action. To support this effort, the HLG-IGIF will continue working closely with the UN-GGKIC and Secretariat, contributing ideas, content, and real-world examples from Member States that demonstrate the value and impact of the UN-IGIF across diverse sectors.

59. The HLG-IGIF has made important strides in expanding the range of practical resources and tools available to support UN-IGIF use and implementation. However, ensuring these materials are widely promoted, easily accessible, and effectively utilized remains a priority. Key resources developed by the HLG-IGIF, such as the Sustainable Funding Guide, Decision Maker Brochure, Quick Reference Guide, and case studies, along with valuable documents shared by Member States, including country-level action plans, stakeholder analyses, and communication plans, provide critical support to Member States using and implementing the UN-IGIF. As the Secretariat takes on responsibility for enhancing and maintaining the centralized website, the HLG-IGIF will continue to collaborate closely, offering input to ensure that Member States can access a well-organized, user-friendly platform that facilitates discovery, learning, and the sharing of collective knowledge.

60. The HLG-IGIF's Capacity Development Work Group has made significant progress translating the UN-IGIF suite of documents, thanks to the dedicated efforts of a volunteer team of Member States. This collaborative Translation Task Team has played a pivotal role in making the UN-IGIF more accessible to a broader global audience. This initiative has proven to be a successful model for expanding access and reach, and there is now a valuable opportunity to further scale this work, both broadening the range of translated materials and accelerating their availability. Ensuring timely and inclusive access to UN-IGIF resources will enable all Member States, regardless of language, to fully engage with and benefit from the Framework.

61. Building on the successful collaboration with regional committee chairs and thematic networks presents a valuable opportunity to enhance support for UN-IGIF and expand its global impact. Regional chairs have played a vital role in engaging Member States, strengthening regional UN-IGIF work groups, and facilitating knowledge exchange across regions. This was exemplified most recently during the fifteenth session online event, "Interregional Dialogue on Implementing the UN-IGIF," which highlighted Member State use and implementation efforts. At the same time, engagement with thematic networks, particularly the Private Sector Network, has contributed to the development of key resources such as the Decision Maker Brochure,

Sustainable Funding Guide, and the Geospatial Value Study Inventory (GeoVSI). Looking ahead, the HLG-IGIF will build on this momentum, by deepening these partnerships, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing, and identifying opportunities to co-develop tools and strategies that promote broader adoption, use, and implementation of the UN-IGIF.

## XII. Points for discussion

### 62. The Committee of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the present report and share views on the activities and achievements of the High-level Group, including its strategic leadership, coordination, and oversight role to ensure the sustained adoption and implementation of the Framework
- (b) Encourage Member States to contribute country-level action plans to be made available widely to foster knowledge, good practices and promote shared progress on implementation of the UN-IGIF;
- (c) Take note of the new communications materials, including the case studies developed by the High-level Group, such as provided by Indonesia, and encourage the submission of additional case studies that demonstrate practical applications of the UN-IGIF addressing national priorities across thematic areas;
- (d) Take note of the Sustainable Funding Guide and upcoming global seminar on Sustainable Funding, and offer guidance on how the topic of sustainable funding can be further developed and operationalized to support the implementation of the UN-IGIF;
- (e) Take note of the Global Survey Report on the Use and Implementation of the UN-IGIF, and provide guidance on the desired frequency, scope of future surveys, and how to better align regional and global surveys to reduce duplication and enhance collective impact;
- (f) Provide guidance on how to deepen collaboration with thematic networks and identify additional high-priority stakeholders to support the ongoing stakeholder analysis and engagement initiative;
- (g) Take note of the Sixth Plenary Meeting of the High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework on 4-5 August 2025 in New York, USA.

# Economic and Social Council

08 July 2025

## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6 – 8 August 2025

Item 8 of the provisional agenda\*

**Global geodetic reference frame**

## Global geodetic reference frame

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report prepared by the Subcommittee on Geodesy for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/106](#), in which it welcomed the reports of the Subcommittee on Geodesy and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence and their progress and activities, including their considerable and coordinated efforts to continue to implement General Assembly resolution [69/266](#). The Committee of Experts expressed appreciation for the work of the Centre and the Subcommittee to strengthen evidence, awareness and understanding of the importance of the global geodesy supply chain as a vital foundation for critical national infrastructure and global economy, and encouraged the Subcommittee and the Centre to continue to provide materials that could be used by Member States to influence decision makers.

The Committee of Experts requested the Subcommittee on Geodesy, with the support of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to provide guidance on how to raise awareness and strengthen governance arrangements through the establishment of country-level geodesy working groups, with representatives of Member State defence, policy and science agencies, and partners, to ensure that the risks associated with degradation of the global geodesy supply chain were managed appropriately.

At its fourteenth session, the Committee of Experts also requested the Subcommittee on Geodesy, with the support of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to coordinate implementation of the joint development plan to maximize the collective impact of the activities of Member States and partners, with a particular focus on capacity development, and for the plan to address the issue of the reliability and cybersecurity of the software that enabled operational geodesy. The Committee of Experts further requested the Subcommittee, with the support of the Centre, to investigate opportunities to bring the status of and the need for a more sustainable geodesy supply chain to the attention of the greater United Nations community.

\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

Lastly, the Committee of Experts requested the Subcommittee on Geodesy, with the support of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to provide guidance on integrating geodesy for the cadastral, maritime and terrestrial domains into existing frameworks, such as the Framework for Effective Land Administration, in coordination with the International Hydrographic Organization and geodetic and maritime organizations.

In the report, the Subcommittee on Geodesy provides information on its activities during the intersessional period and on the outcomes of its fifth plenary meeting, hosted by the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, in March 2025. The fifth plenary meeting was attended by Member State representatives of all United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees and participants from international and regional organizations and geodetic research institutions and relevant stakeholders. At the meeting, the activities of the Subcommittee and the Centre were highlighted, in particular the first joint development plan for global geodesy, the multilateral memorandum of understanding, and work towards bilateral and regional memorandums of agreement.

The Subcommittee on Geodesy collaborated with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence to organize regional meetings, prepare regional capacity-development workshops, translate documents, actively encourage the participation of Member States and engage in efforts focused on development of the global geodetic reference frame. Furthermore, the Subcommittee provided advice and support to integrate geodesy into the cadastral, maritime and terrestrial domains through phase 5 (2024) of the Federated Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure initiative of the Open Geospatial Consortium and involvement in the workshop on joining land and sea organized by the Centre in Bogor, Indonesia. In addition, the roles of the Centre and the Subcommittee in working towards improved governance of the global geodesy supply chain were addressed and are summarized in the report.

## I. Introduction

1. Positioning, navigation, timing and geospatial data are part of everyday life. In addition to the traditional survey, mapping and navigation fields, location-based positioning applications are increasingly critical for civil engineering, industrial automation, agriculture, construction, mining, recreation, financial transactions, intelligent transport systems, disaster response and emergency management, environmental studies and scientific research.
2. The Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF) enables accurate and robust alignment of spatial datasets – a key requirement for sustainable development in fields such as land use planning and administration, construction and hazard assessment. The GGRF is also an essential foundation for national height systems, which enable sustainable water management and monitoring of climate change and its impacts, such as sea-level rise, droughts, glacial retreat and ice-sheet melting.
3. The GGRF is fundamental to supporting the collection, integration and utilization of all other geospatial data. It is relied upon for social, environmental and economic initiatives, Earth science, the measuring and monitoring of progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS ([ABAS](#)), and other global, regional and national development agenda and initiatives.
4. Recognizing the growing demand for an accurate and stable GGRF and the importance of international cooperation, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution [69/266](#) in February 2015, entitled ‘A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development’. The resolution reflects that the GGRF is the foundation required for the collection, integration, and utilisation of all geospatial information. Furthermore, it supports precise positioning from Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), which is becoming an important tool for informed decision making, supporting the three pillars of sustainable development – the economy, society, and environment.
5. At its fourteenth session, held in person on 7-9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/106](#), in which it welcomed the reports of the Subcommittee on Geodesy and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence and their progress and activities, including their considerable and coordinated efforts to continue to implement General Assembly resolution [69/266](#) of 26 February 2015.
6. In this report, the Subcommittee provides information on its activities in the intersessional period, including its efforts to continue to implement General Assembly resolution [69/266](#) by strengthening the global geodesy supply chain. The global geodesy supply chain, which underpins the Global Geodetic Reference Frame, includes:
  - (a) ground station observatories owned and operated by mapping agencies, space agencies, universities and research groups, who constantly observe the movement of the Earth and satellites;
  - (b) data centres operated by specialists who quality check, store, and archive the data from observatories and make it available to the global geodesy analysis community; and,
  - (c) analysis, combination and correlation centres and analysts who translate the raw data into geodetic products.
7. It is a global geodesy supply chain because no single country can fulfil all the requirements of accurately and reliably observing and analyzing the Earth and satellites. To measure the continuous changes, with the timeliness and level of precision required to produce the geodetic products, satellites and users' demand,

ground observatories and highly qualified people within governments and universities all around the world are needed.

8. As part of its joint communication strategy, the Subcommittee on Geodesy of the Committee of Experts and UN-GGCE are increasingly using the term global geodesy supply chain rather than Global Geodetic Reference Frame. This is primarily because the term global geodesy supply chain is better defined and emphasizes the practical process and collaboration behind geodetic data, rather than abstract technical or ambiguous terms like the “reference frame”. Importantly, the UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy and UN-GGCE trust that the term global geodesy supply chain highlights the human and operational elements, making it clearer who is involved and what needs support.

9. In this report, the Subcommittee provides information on the outcomes from the fifth plenary meeting of the Subcommittee on Geodesy hosted by the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, from 12 to 14 March 2025.

10. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the activities and next steps of the Subcommittee and the way forward. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 43.

## **II. Tenth Anniversary of the UN-GGRF Resolution**

11. This year (2025) marks the tenth anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/69/266 titled “A global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development”. Through its six operative paragraphs, the resolution aims to strengthen the cooperation to improve and sustain the global geodesy supply chain. In these ten years, the most significant milestone in realising the ambitions of the resolution was the establishment of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE), through the support of Germany in 2023, with the mission to actively contribute to realizing the ambitions of the UN General Assembly resolution. As a result, the work to implement the resolution across all six operative paragraphs has intensified over the last two years.

12. Operative paragraph 1 requested the “Working Group on GGRF” to develop a road map that addressed key elements relating to the development and sustainability of a global geodesy supply chain. This road map was endorsed by the Committee of Experts in 2016, followed by an implementation plan endorsed by the Committee in 2018.

13. Operative paragraph 2 encourages Member States to enhance global cooperation in providing technical assistance, especially in developing countries. There have been continuous activities in this area from before the implementation of the resolution, both by the UN-GGIM regional committees and international organizations like the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG). Since the opening of the UN-GGCE the activity has increased. With the assistance of geodetic experts, the Subcommittee, FIG and IAG, the UN-GGCE has initiated and arranged a series of workshops targeted towards capacity development in all five regions of the Committee.

14. Operative paragraph 3 urges Member States to implement open sharing of geodetic data in order to create more accurate and reliable geodetic products such as reference frames and Earth Orientation Parameters required for satellite operations. While data-sharing can be sensitive depending on the nature of the geodetic data involved, it remains essential for Member States to strengthen their efforts and establish effective mechanisms—working in cooperation with the UN-GGCE and the IAG—to support the enhancement and densification of the global geodesy supply chain.

15. Operative paragraphs 4 and 5 invite Member States to engage in multilateral cooperation and commit to maintain and improve geodetic infrastructure. The geodetic infrastructure refers to Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI), Satellite Laser Ranging (SLR), Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), Doppler Orbitography and Radiopositioning Integrated by Satellite (DORIS) and gravimetric instrumentation. The geodetic infrastructure also includes the systems and human resources required to undertake geodetic observations, analysis and the provision of geodetic products and services ([E/C.20/2016/4/Add.1](#)). To strengthen commitment at the international level, the Working Group on GGRF was elevated to a Subcommittee on Geodesy in 2017. Following this important step, the Subcommittee led efforts to establish the UN-GGCE at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany. The Centre, with the support of the Subcommittee, is significantly contributing to increased multilateral cooperation and commitment.

16. The UN-GGCE is working with Member States to strengthen cooperation and establish bilateral agreements that reaffirm the support of the resolution and express a desire to cooperate and collaborate on mutually beneficial activities towards strengthening the global geodetic supply chain for the benefit of science, society, environment and economy.

17. The resolution invites Member States to commit to improve and maintain national infrastructure. Nonetheless, national agencies are currently struggling to secure funds to maintain and operate geodetic infrastructure and activities. With the support of the UN-GGCE, the work to establish bilateral agreements has started.

18. Since the adoption of the resolution, there are still severe infrastructure gaps especially in the southern hemisphere. Multilateral cooperation and commitment are crucial to change this situation. With the establishment of the UN-GGCE steps have been taken to strengthen the cooperation especially through the establishment of a Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MMOU) between the UN-GGCE and Member States' government departments and agencies, private sector companies and organizations.

19. Operative paragraph 6 invites Member States to develop outreach programmes to make geodesy more visible and understandable. Since the adoption of the resolution the communication and outreach activities have increased. Many Member States and organizations have produced and shared videos, documentaries, newsletters, policy briefs, speeches at conferences and workshops to communicate the importance of geodesy. The targeted communication and outreach activities and materials produced by the UN-GGCE since its opening have made it easier for Member States to communicate the value proposition of the global geodesy supply chain to politicians and decision-makers.

20. The global geodesy supply chain remains vulnerable and needs continuous commitment from Member States. No single country can do this alone, as the global geodesy supply chain depends upon the participation of countries all around the globe. To accelerate the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals and derive societal, environmental and economic benefits, the need to act to strengthen international cooperation and commitment is as imperative now as it was ten years ago.

### **III. Activities of the Subcommittee during the intersessional period**

#### **Fifth Plenary Meeting**

21. The fifth plenary meeting of the Subcommittee on Geodesy was held from 10 to 14 March 2025 at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany, bringing together 54

participants alongside the third meeting of the International Advisory Committee of UN-GGCE. The session opened with an update on Bureau membership, announcing the appointment of Uruguay to replace Argentina. The Subcommittee highlighted its ongoing support for regional meetings, the Joint Development Plan, the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MMOU), and initiatives promoting land-sea geodetic integration.

22. A major topic of discussion was the global shortage of geospatial professionals. Proposed measures to address this included the creation of structured mentoring and internship programmes, strengthened regional collaboration, and the development of targeted training resources.

23. Regional Working Groups and international partners (IGS, ICG, IAG, FIG, and NASA) shared updates on their respective geodetic programmes and collaborations. The meeting also considered the growing role of artificial intelligence in geodesy. Discussions also addressed upcoming reports and regional workshops currently being prepared. Notably, a 10-year anniversary session to commemorate General Assembly resolution 69/266 was proposed for the 15th session of the Committee of Experts, although logistical and financial constraints were noted as potential challenges.

#### **Collaboration activities with the UN-GGCE**

24. The joint session held in March 2025, highlighted the close collaboration between the Subcommittee and the UN-GGCE on advancing the First Joint Development Plan on Global Geodesy, implementing the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MMOU), and supporting global geodetic capacity development.

#### **Working group activities**

25. Members of the working groups on the Global Geodesy Needs Assessment and the State of Geodesy report, substantially contributed to the Global Geodesy Needs Assessment report and the first Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy. The UN-GGCE reports on these activities.

- (a) Capacity and Education Working Group. This Working Group's (WG) primary focus remained on building networks to extend the scope and effectiveness of the outreach, education and capacity building efforts of the UN-GGCE. The International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) Regional Networks are already in place for the Asia-Pacific, Africa and Americas regions. The WG developed the membership in these groups as active participants in regional UN-GGIM Geodetic Reference Frame (GRF) WG's to broaden outreach beyond the usual Member States. Nascent efforts began on engaging with Europe and Arab States regions to revitalize GRF WG's and develop an extended network beyond the core group of Member States. As these contacts are developed into a network, they are connected to the UN-GGCE for a more comprehensive global effort at capacity development. The WG continued to seek organizations that could either provide or provide funding or subject matter expertise to aid the UN-GGCE's effort to build a comprehensive list of assets for global and regional capacity building and education efforts.
- (b) Task Force on Marine-Land-Cadastre Integration. The Subcommittee collaborated with the UN-GGCE to engage with the standards community on integrating geodesy for the cadastral, maritime and terrestrial domains. In particular, the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) led the Federated Marine SDI Phase 5 (2024) Project to codify Best Practices necessary for integrating land and marine data. The focus was in developing a common geospatial ecosystem spanning the

shoreline to provide a common framework for evaluating impacts from a variety of areas including coastal inundation and marine transportation. The addition of a cadastre layer amplified and clarified the specific impacts to coastal communities. During the intersessional period, efforts focused on developing demonstrator projects that brought together marine and terrestrial data in an attempt to find issues at the shoreline from which best practices and standards will be developed. Additionally, the Subcommittee engaged with the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) to further integrate marine and land domains with common standards.

#### **Frequency protection**

26. Members of the Subcommittee worked together with the UN-GGCE, and representatives of the Committee on Radio Astronomy Frequencies (CRAF) of the European Science Foundation and the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) on the crucial matter of securing the operation of geodetic VLBI observations by protection of frequencies in the radio spectrum. VLBI as a unique and fundamental geodetic technique underpins high-accuracy positioning by observing weak cosmic radiation using a global network of radio telescopes. The increasing demand for active use of the radio spectrum by our modern societies, in the relevant VLBI frequency bands and adjacent to them, poses a significant challenge to VLBI observations. Accurate and reliable operation of satellites depends on the knowledge of their position in space, as well as Earth's position. An active emission of radio signals can interfere with VLBI observations, which can impair satellite service operations. The regular VLBI observations are essential for tracking the positions of both satellites and Earth. Efforts are underway to plan towards the establishment of a new agenda item for the World Radiocommunication Conference, in the year 2031 (WRC-31), which could be approved for the WRC-31 agenda, based on the related negotiations, by the upcoming WRC in 2027. The results of this agenda item, represented by necessary provisions for the protection of dedicated spectrum to be used by VLBI observations in the Radio Regulations, will ensure its long-term availability.

#### **Outreach and communication**

27. Together with the UN-GGCE, the Subcommittee has been engaged to bring the need for a more sustainable global geodesy supply chain to the attention of the wider United Nations system and community. The Subcommittee has consulted Permanent Missions to the United Nations to find suitable measures and discussions are ongoing. Further, contact has been established between the UN-GGCE and the Norwegian government, resulting in an invitation to the Head of UN-GGCE to deliver a keynote presentation about the global geodesy supply chain at the United Nations Internet Governance Forum, held in Norway in June 2025.

### **IV. Geodesy groups within UN-GGIM regional committees**

28. During the tenth meeting of the UN-GGIM: Africa, held in Addis Ababa from 28 October to 1 November 2025, the Regional Committee agreed to establish a working group on Geodesy, to ensure proper coordination and collaboration on the realization of the African Regional Reference Frame (AFREF) geodetic infrastructure. This Working Group, led by Côte d'Ivoire, discussed the importance of Member States aligning their national geodetic frames with the Global Geodetic Reference Frame and emphasized the need for a unified vision to prevent divergence. The involvement of civil society and other stakeholders was highlighted, along with the need for financial support and funding.

29. UN-GGIM: Americas: The Geodetic Reference Frame for the Americas (GRFA) Working Group is led by Uruguay. The WG chair is also the president of SIRGAS (Geodetic Reference System for the Americas), which implements the global geodetic supply chain through the efforts of 23 nations in the Americas. In the last year, SIRGAS has made significant progress in integrating Caribbean countries, with the addition of Jamaica, bringing it closer to full implementation of the global geodetic supply chain in the region. During the 2024–2025 period, SIRGAS has developed various education, training, and outreach activities on geodesy at the regional level. Activities included: a school on "Real Time" positioning; the SIRGAS 2024 Symposium that involved over 400 scientific and technological participants – emphasizing the application of the global geodetic supply chain as both the realization of SIRGAS geodetic reference framework and collaborative capabilities; institutional strengthening in Costa Rica and Bolivia where new GNSS Processing Centers were established; collaborating with the UN-GGCE for regional dissemination of geodesy related knowledge; and a virtual school on the Terrestrial Reference Frame covering the most important concepts on the definition, implementation, and maintenance of global, continental, and national reference frames, as well as their importance in various applications. These activities reflect the dual nature of the GRFA and SIRGAS and the ongoing commitment to education, regional cooperation, and strengthening geodetic capacities in the Americas.

30. UN-GGIM: Arab States: The Geodetic Reference Frame Working Group (GRF-WG), chaired by Qatar, is currently engaged in advancing geodetic development across the Arab region through several initiatives. The GRF-WG is preparing a technical reference document articulating the significance of a unified Arab Geodetic Reference Frame (ARABREF), leveraging insights from UN-GGCE publications and regional best practices. It is also assessing geodetic infrastructure and capacity-building needs across Arab countries to identify gaps and inform future initiatives. In response to recommendations from the eleventh UN-GGIM Arab States Committee meeting, held in Doha in February 2024, the group is supporting the implementation of the ARABREF project under the International Association of Geodesy (IAG). An official letter was submitted by the Chair of UN-GGIM:AS, and coordination efforts are ongoing with the IAG, including the preparation of the Terms of Reference and the establishment of a steering committee composed of Arab geodesy experts. At the twelfth UN-GGIM Arab States Committee meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in February 2025, the GRF-WG presented updates on global geodesy efforts, national experiences, and the role of the UN-GGCE. The group now recommends developing an implementation plan aligned with the strategic vision approved in Doha, encouraging countries to nominate national representatives, support IAG registration for ARABREF, and consider signing the MMOU with the UN-GGCE. Saudi Arabia's appointment as Co-Chair of the GRF-WG (2025–2028) aims to ensure leadership continuity. Data-sharing limitations and the need for tailored capacity-building were noted as ongoing challenges requiring collective attention.

31. UN-GGIM: Asia Pacific: The Working Group on Geodetic Reference Framework is collaborating with IAG to develop and maintain the Asia-Pacific Reference Frame, APREF, and ensures stable access to the global geodetic reference frame in the region. The Working Group also conducted an annual GNSS observation campaign, the Asia Pacific Regional Geodetic Project (APRGP) and nine countries in the region contributed to the APRGP to further densify the regional frame. The working group organized several geodesy capacity development events in the region during the intersessional period, including the Workshop on Sustainable Operation of GNSS CORS Network, co-organized by the working group, IAG, FIG and the Survey of India in conjunction with the thirteenth plenary meeting of UN-GGIM Asia Pacific.

32. The Community of Interest on Geodetic Reference Frames: Europe (GRF Europe), established under UN-GGIM: Europe, is the regional working group on geodesy in Europe. As a relatively new group, GRF Europe is still in its development phase but is gaining momentum through the active engagement of Member States. While EUREF, the IAG sub-commission for the regional reference frame, is responsible for the realization of ETRS89, GRF Europe focuses on policy dialogue, awareness and engagement, rather than playing a direct technical role. Since the eleventh UN-GGIM Plenary meeting, GRF Europe has contributed actively to the UN-GGCE capacity development workshop for Europe, participating in presentations and discussions. A webinar titled 'Quo Vadis Geodesy' was organised in which the UN-GGCE's Hidden Risk report and the concept of a European Master of Science in Geodesy were presented. Members of GRF Europe have also played a key role in communicating the relevance of geodesy and promoting awareness on the work of the Committee of Experts, the UN-GGCE and the Subcommittee on Geodesy within European networks. The group has supported EUROCONTROL in the development of the report 'Coordinate Reference Systems: Basic User Guide', which is intended for Air Navigation and Aeronautical Information Service Providers. The group is currently contributing to the update of the UN-GGIM: Europe strategy, with the shared ambition to assume a more active role in supporting the implementation of the Joint Development Plan and helping to coordinate Europe's contribution to the global geodetic effort.

## V. Next steps

33. In the coming intersessional period, the Subcommittee will continue to collaborate with and assist the UN-GGCE, its International Advisory Committee (IAC), partners, and other relevant stakeholders. The Subcommittee will also continue to evaluate its work program to avoid duplication of work. A particular focus will be on actions defined in the Joint Development Plan on Global Geodesy, on improved Governance and establishing Memorandums of Understanding as well as bilateral Memorandums of Agreement. In addition, the Subcommittee will continue to collaborate with the UN-GGCE to raise awareness, including among regulatory spectrum management authorities about the fundamental importance of geodetic VLBI and will advocate for the improved recognition and protection of geodetic VLBI activities.

34. The Working Group on Capacity and Education will continue coordinating efforts regionally with a focus on developing a network between the UN-GGCE and regional partners. The collaboration will continue with the International Federation of Surveyors, the International Association of Geodesy, the UN-GGIM regional committees, the UN-GGIM Academic Network, and other relevant regional organizations. A key focus will be on developing a network between national and regional requirements and those who can meet the requirements while involving the UN-GGCE to ensure continuity of effort globally.

35. The Subcommittee will continue to collaborate with the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management, Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information, Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks, and the UN-GGCE to advance consideration related to the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains and to support and better implementation of the global geodetic supply chain.

36. The Subcommittee intends to establish a Working Group on frequency protection for geodetic VLBI in collaboration with the UN-GGCE. Member state representatives from all 5 UN-GGIM regions should be part of the Working Group, as well as representatives from the UN-GGCE, the International VLBI Service (IVS), the Committee on Radio Astronomy Frequencies (CRAF), the Radio

Astronomy Frequency Committee in the Asia-Pacific region (RAFCAP), and similar Committees in the other Regions.

37. The Subcommittee plans to convene its sixth plenary and in-person meeting in conjunction with the meeting of the IAC of the UN-GGCE during the upcoming intersessional period.

## **VI. Recommendations**

38. The Subcommittee encourages Member States and relevant stakeholders to join and actively support the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MMOU) as a vital instrument for enhancing global geodetic collaboration. The MMOU should be utilized to promote national-level dialogue and increase awareness of the strategic significance of geodesy.

39. Further, Member States are encouraged to establish bilateral agreements to strengthen cooperation in geodesy and support the global geodesy supply chain. Such agreements can facilitate the sharing of expertise, data, and infrastructure, and contribute to the long-term sustainability and resilience of global geodetic systems.

40. Member States are also encouraged to take proactive measures to safeguard geodetic VLBI through appropriate international regulatory frameworks and national policy instruments. In particular, Member States are invited to register geodetic VLBI sites as Earth Stations with the ITU Radiocommunication Sector, in accordance with relevant guidelines. Furthermore, Member States are invited to engage in the relevant regional / interregional discussions and preparations towards a WRC-31 agenda item to ensure the long-term availability of protected spectrum for VLBI operations. Additionally, Member States are urged to establish national frequency protection or coordination zones around geodetic observatories to ensure the continued integrity of VLBI operations.

41. To support the 2030 Agenda, Member States are encouraged to adopt the First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy as a guiding framework to strengthen national geodetic capacity. Developed through global consultation and available in all six UN languages, the Plan outlines key actions to reinforce the global geodesy supply chain. Member States are urged to integrate this into national strategies and capacity development programs.

42. Recognizing that national economies increasingly depend on revenues generated by satellite-based services - services which in turn rely on geodetic capabilities - Member States are encouraged to actively engage in the work of the Subcommittee and the geodesy working groups of the regional committees. Such participation will help strengthen national expertise and capacity in geodesy.

## **VII. Points for discussion**

43. **The Committee of Experts is invited to:**

(a) Take note of the present report, the work undertaken and progress achieved by the Subcommittee on Geodesy, including its substantial efforts to advance the critical understanding, awareness and recognition of geodesy as a vital foundation of the global geospatial and Earth observation infrastructure.

(b) Consider how Member States may establish bilateral or multilateral arrangements to strengthen geodetic cooperation and contribute to the global geodesy supply chain, and provide guidance on practical modalities, key elements for such agreements, and the role of international mechanisms in facilitating these efforts.

- (c) Consider ways to further strengthen international commitment to sustaining and contributing to the global geodesy supply chain, and in this regard, to explore opportunities to enhance political will, secure long-term investment and operational continuity, and promote recognition of geodesy's strategic importance across Member States.
- (d) Consider approaches for engagement in the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) processes to ensure the protection of frequency bands critical to geodetic techniques, including Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI), and to examine strategies to enhance the representation of geodetic interests within the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) framework promoting the recognition of geodesy's critical role in global infrastructure and the participation of its Member States in the regional preparation towards WRC-27/31.
- (e) Provide guidance on options for elevated resource mobilization and enhanced participation to support the ongoing work of the Subcommittee, the geodesy working groups of the regional committees, and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE), and to encourage Member States and relevant stakeholders to actively contribute.
- (f) Take note that the Subcommittee plans to organize its sixth plenary and in-person meeting of the Subcommittee on Geodesy in conjunction with the meeting of the International Advisory Committee of the UN-GGCE during the upcoming intersessional period.

# Economic and Social Council

10 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6– 8 August 2025

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*

**Geospatial information for sustainable development**

## **Geospatial information for sustainable development**

### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### **Summary**

The present paper contains the report jointly prepared by the Secretariat and the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/107](#), in which it welcomed the report jointly prepared by the Secretariat and the working group on geospatial information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, and efforts to ensure that the contributions of the global geospatial information management community are aligned with the needs of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee also reaffirmed that geospatial information was critical for sustainable development and would be for the post-2030 global development agenda, urged the working group to stress and address the importance of integrating all relevant forms of geospatial information, including Earth observations and in situ data, essential to help countries to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda and to leave no one behind, and in that regard to note that many countries still struggled, and needed support, to collect, integrate and apply geospatial information needed for the indicator framework of the 2030 Agenda.

In the report, the Secretariat and the working group provide information on the efforts made to strengthen the use of geospatial information in addressing the needs of the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and other global development agendas. The working group also discusses the outcomes of the fifty-sixth session of the Statistical Commission, including its submission of a background document entitled “Rescuing the SDGs with geospatial information: how geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring, and dissemination of SDG indicators” and the progress made in the implementation of its work plan 2025. The report also includes information on activities aimed at ensuring that the contribution of the global geospatial information community remains aligned with the 2030 Agenda and other global development agendas.

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

## I. Introduction

1. With less than five years remaining to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), progress is threatened by persistent data gaps, structural inequalities, and the compounded effects of global crises—including the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, armed conflicts, and geopolitical tensions. As highlighted in the Secretary-General's 2025 progress report, “progress remains slow and uneven, and signs of transformative global momentum are yet to emerge”.
2. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Committee of Experts has consistently underscored the vital role of geospatial information in advancing sustainable development. Through the efforts of its functional groups—particularly the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators’ Working Group on Geospatial Information, geospatial information has been positioned as a key enabler in the production, monitoring, and dissemination of SDG indicators, especially at subnational and local levels.
3. In response to the urgent need to accelerate SDG progress, the Working Group developed the paper “Rescuing the SDGs with geospatial information: how geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring, and dissemination of SDG indicators”. Launched on the margins of the 56th Session of the Statistical Commission, the paper serves as a core contribution to the 2025 Comprehensive Review of the Global Indicator Framework, advocating for the formal recognition of geospatial information—including Earth observations and in situ data—as a valid and complementary source for SDG monitoring and reporting.
4. At its fourteenth session, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/107, which, *inter alia*, reaffirmed that geospatial information was critical for sustainable development and would be for the post-2030 global development agenda, welcomed the continuing development of a paper entitled “Rescuing the SDGs with geospatial information: how geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring, and dissemination of SDG indicators”, urged the working group to stress and address the importance of integrating all relevant forms of geospatial information, including Earth observations and in-situ data, essential to assist countries to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda and to leave no one behind, and in that regard to note that many countries still struggled, and needed support, to collect, integrate and apply geospatial information needed for the indicator framework of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee also emphasized the importance of cooperation and coordination to ensure that the contribution of geospatial information for sustainable development remains relevant.
5. This report outlines the Working Group’s main activities in 2025, including discussing the outcomes of the 56th session of the Statistical Commission, including its submission of a background document entitled “Rescuing the SDGs with geospatial information: how geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring, and dissemination of SDG indicators” to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the SDG Indicators and the progress made in the implementation of its workplan for 2025. It also highlights the Secretariat’s continued efforts to align the global geospatial community with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other international development frameworks. Points for discussion are found in paragraph 29.

## II. Activities of the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators

### **56th Session of the Statistical Commission**

6. The 56th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission was convened in New York from 4 to 7 March 2025. On 20 February 2025, ahead of the main intergovernmental session, the Working Group convened a virtual side event titled “*Rescuing the SDGs with Geospatial Information*”. The event gathered global experts from National Statistical Offices (NSOs), National Geospatial Information Agencies (NGIAs), custodian agencies, as well as Earth observation and analytics communities, including presenters from the Japanese Space Agency “JAXA”, Digital Earth Africa, Place Foundation, the University of Utrecht, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UNSDSN). The side event featured the official launch of the paper, as a call to action to showcase its ambition to “bridge the geospatial digital divide” in SDG monitoring. Participants emphasized the urgency of integrating location-based data into the core of SDG reporting systems. The ensuing panel discussion highlighted:

- (a) The strategic alignment of the Working Group’s guidance with the theme “Better Data, Better Lives”;
- (b) The need for investment in technical infrastructure and capacity-development to implement geospatial methodologies;
- (c) The value of interactive resources like Storymaps as a means of fostering peer learning and national innovation; and,
- (d) The advocacy for inclusion of geospatial metadata and Earth observation sources in the upcoming 2025 Comprehensive Review of the Global Indicator Framework of the SDGs.

7. In its decision 56/105, the Statistical Commission, *inter alia*, expressed its appreciation for the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group’s Working Group on Geospatial Information, and stressed the need for continued support for countries to develop capacity in those areas and encouraged the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to continue its collaboration with custodian agencies and partners on the implementation of, and capacity-development on, the indicator framework and work on data innovation, data integration and the use of non-traditional data, such as small area estimation, geospatial information and citizen data.

8. In the intersessional period, the Working Group has continued to play a pivotal role in advancing the integration of geospatial information into the SDG indicator framework. Building on the guidance of the Committee of Experts and the outcomes of previous sessions, the Working Group will continue to prioritize strategic actions that emphasize the geographic dimension of sustainable development and reinforce the utility of geospatial information to support national reporting and decision-making processes.

### **Seventh meeting of the Working Group**

9. Hosted by UN-Habitat at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya, the Seventh Meeting of the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the IAEG-SDGs was convened jointly with the eighth Meeting of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information. The meeting convened 30 representatives from 11 Member States (consisting of representatives from both national statistical offices and national geospatial information agencies from Brazil, Finland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America), and two (2) SDG custodian

agencies (UN Environment Programme and UN-Habitat), and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to take stock of its progress against the 2025 work plan.

10. Meeting participants discussed strategies to facilitate collaboration between the Working Group and the Expert Group and identified concrete goals to support the further implementation and operationalization of the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap. In recognition of recent efforts to strengthen interregional dialogue and engagement, plans were drafted to facilitate communication and coordination between relevant working groups within the regional bodies. In this regard, the co-Chair of the Working Group, Ireland, is participating in the Expert Group's Task Team on the Advancement of Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF), leading its sub-task team on Localized geostatistical modelling. This is intended to enhance the production and dissemination of the Sustainable Development Goals, facilitating interactions between the global geospatial and statistical communities. The team is working to develop guidance to support data modelling for small geographic units, highlighting the importance of disaggregating SDG indicators by geographic location. Further information can be found within the report of the Expert Group presented at this session (E/CN.20/2025/12).

#### **Work Plan 2025 and process to develop its Work Plan 2026**

11. Following the adoption of the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap<sup>1</sup> in 2022, the opportunity for geospatial information to support the production, measurement, monitoring, and dissemination of geospatially integrated SDG indicators is stronger than ever. Accordingly, the focus of the Working Group in 2024 was on activities that promote and raise awareness of the transformational opportunity of geospatially enabling the SDGs, anchored by a discussion paper “Rescuing the SDGs with Geospatial Information: How geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring and dissemination of SDG indicators”.

12. Guided by its Work Plan 2025, the Working Group has continued its work to promote the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap through convening events and seminars, redoubling its efforts to collate the many use cases of how geospatially integrated SDG indicators are, or can be produced, monitored, measured, and disseminated to highlight where geospatial information has a direct or significant contribution. Following this fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts, the Working Group will undertake a process of consultation amongst its members and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to develop its annual 2026 Work Plan.

13. A notable highlights of the forthcoming work plan 2026 are proposed to be:

- (a) The consideration of ‘geospatial reporting indicators’. The Working Group has engaged the Open Geospatial Consortium’s nascent Standards Working Group on Geospatial Reporting Indicators<sup>2</sup> as a means of developing recommendations that enhance the role of geography within the global indicator framework of the SDGs. This would also potentially act as a precursor to the elaboration of ‘lessons-learned’ to ensure that future global development agendas include geospatial information as a foundation, and not, perhaps as an afterthought. This would consider characteristics of ‘statistical indicator frameworks’ and ‘geospatial reporting indicators’, with the intent of fostering the development and adoption of open standards-based geospatial indicators for the SDGs; and

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<sup>1</sup> The SDGs Geospatial Roadmap: [English](#) | [French](#) | [Spanish](#)

<sup>2</sup> OGC Geospatial Reporting Indicators Standards Working Group Charter. See:  
<https://portal.ogc.org/files/107038>

- (b) Deepened engagement with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on the gender dimension of the SDG indicators 5.a.1 “(a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure” and 5.a.2 “Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women’s equal rights to land ownership and/or control”. The Working Group, with the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) and FAO have discussed the need to improve the reporting on this indicator and seek to develop concrete guidance on how to improve the indicator methodology, that leads to enhanced reporting and data availability.

14. The Committee of Experts is invited to express its views and contribute to this future Work Plan to ensure that countries have the capabilities and capacities to collect, integrate and apply geospatial information needed for the indicator framework of the 2030 Agenda.

**The paper on ‘Rescuing the SDGs with geospatial information: how geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring, and dissemination of SDG indicators’**

15. The paper “Rescuing the SDGs with geospatial information: how geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring, and dissemination of SDG indicators” was adopted by the Working Group at its seventh meeting in September 2024. This strategic deliverable, which had been under development throughout 2023–2024, was prepared for submission to the IAEG-SDGs in advance of its fifteenth meeting and subsequently presented at the 56th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in early 2025. This is provided as a background document to this report for the Committee of Experts to take note.

16. The paper is positioned as a call to action for the global statistical and geospatial communities. Developed under the leadership of the Working Group, the paper seeks to catalyze urgent progress toward the SDGs by unlocking the transformative potential of geospatial information in sustainable development data ecosystems. It addresses a critical question: how can we better disaggregate, analyze, and apply location-based data to improve SDG monitoring and ensure that no one is left behind? In this regard, the paper offers practical guidance on how SDG indicators can be disaggregated by geographic location, enabling a more inclusive, geospatial information-based approach to development. It highlights the growing demand for geospatial information as a means of identifying geographic disparities, target policies at the local level, and monitor change over time. It also underlines that progress on the SDGs must be informed by where things happen—since development outcomes are inherently related to a place. To operationalize this vision, the paper outlines six strategic recommendations:

- (a) Revise SDG metadata to integrate geospatial methodologies, data sources, and spatial dimensions of indicators.
- (b) Leverage Earth observation and geospatial data to address persistent data gaps and complement traditional statistical sources.
- (c) Enhance indicator production through integrated statistical and geospatial information systems.
- (d) Foster institutional collaboration between national statistical offices (NSOs), geospatial agencies (NGIAs), and other relevant entities.
- (e) Recognize and promote global authoritative geospatial datasets as legitimate inputs to support consistent and scalable reporting.

- a) Strengthen capacity and provide technical guidance to ensure countries—particularly those with limited resources—can adopt and apply geospatial tools effectively

17. The structure of the paper reflects its action-oriented nature. It opens by outlining why geospatial information is critical to rescuing the SDGs, then presents the “what”—a conceptual and practical overview of disaggregating SDG indicators by location—and the “how”, through the six recommendations above. It further explores opportunities and challenges faced by countries, particularly in terms of institutional readiness, technical capacity, and data accessibility. The paper highlights key stakeholders involved in this agenda, including NSOs, NGIAs, custodian agencies, Earth observation communities, and international organizations. The paper also emphasizes the frontiers of SDG data, exploring how new data technologies and global geospatial data sets, including Earth observations (such as satellite imagery), AI-based mapping, and cloud-based analytical platforms, can be leveraged to enable more localized, timely, and disaggregated SDG monitoring. These tools are especially powerful in contexts where traditional data collection is constrained or outdated.

18. Ultimately, the paper aims to influence the statistical community of the further value of geospatial information and urge them to unlock the full value of geospatial information to implement the 2030 Agenda. It calls for the international community to act decisively, through integrated action, innovation, and investment to ensure that geospatial information is recognized not only as a technical layer, but as a foundation for global development.

#### **The Storymap – Consolidating national experiences of good practice in the production, analysis and dissemination of SDG indicators**

19. To bring the strategic vision of the Rescuing the SDGs with Geospatial Information paper into practice and to highlight its ‘shortlist’, the Working Group has consolidated several interactive ‘Storymaps’ that showcase real-world use cases and good practices in the application of geospatial approaches for SDG indicators. The 2025 edition of the Storymap is publicly available online see: <https://Storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a9bfa199b8c14f959b538d9a8898b8eb>.

20. The Storymap assembles diverse national case studies contributed by Member States, custodian agencies, and partners, offering pragmatic examples of geospatial methods applied to indicator production across different SDGs. Featured experiences include:

- SDG 2.4.1 (Sustainable agriculture): Spatial mapping of crop extent and productivity to inform agricultural monitoring in Denmark and Mexico.
- SDG 6.6.1 (Water-related ecosystems): Use of satellite-based waterbody classification and hydrological modelling in Malaysia.
- SDG 11.3.1 (Land use efficiency): Urban growth monitoring and built-up land change analysis in Ireland.
- SDG 15.3.1 (Land degradation neutrality): Tracking land cover change and degradation in Sub-Saharan Africa, with contributions from regional consortia.

21. Each Storymap entry includes a hybrid mix of methodological outlines, data sources (satellite imagery, national surveys, land cover datasets), institutional arrangements, and “lessons learned” that highlight successes, operational challenges, and scale-up potential. The narrative emphasizes how geospatial tools enhance geographic granularity, data timeliness, and policy relevance, allowing countries to address subnational disparities more effectively.

22. The consolidated Storymap is purposefully designed as a dynamic and scalable resource. It invites practitioners to contribute new case studies, fostering a continually expanding repository of knowledge that supports cross-country collaboration and peer learning. Its open and interactive format enhances the visibility of national initiatives and strengthens capacity development across the global geospatial and statistical communities. By synthesizing applied evidence across diverse SDGs and geographic contexts, the Storymap demonstrates the added value of geospatial information in national SDG reporting, promotes South–South cooperation through shared methodologies, and informs the ongoing refinement of the Working Group’s Shortlist of geospatially enabled indicators.

23. Looking ahead, the Working Group will continue to promote the Storymap as part of its 2025 workplan, integrating new case study submissions, refreshing existing entries, and showcasing the resource during key events and capacity development sessions.

#### **Activities in the intersessional period**

24. As part of its efforts to raise awareness and promote the integration of geospatial information into sustainable development frameworks, the Working Group actively participated in key global and regional forums throughout the reporting period. These outreach activities helped amplify the core messages of the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap, global geospatial frameworks like the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) and the GSGF, and raised-awareness on the “Rescuing the SDGs with Geospatial Information” paper. In seeking opportunities to engage a broader community of stakeholders, specific forums targeted included:

- (a) In November 2024, the Working Group participated in the UN World Data Forum held in Medellín, Colombia, where it highlighted the role of geospatial information in enhancing data ecosystems and ensuring that no one and no place is left behind.
- (b) At the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, members of the Working Group engaged with senior representatives from Member States and expert bodies to advance collaboration on the use of location-based data for the SDGs.
- (c) In March 2025, the Working Group contributed to the international webinar “The Nexus between SDGs and Professional Education in the Geospatial World,” co-organized by FIG and the SDG Task Force. The discussion focused on translating global geospatial goals into country-level actions and national capacity development strategies.
- (d) In June 2025, the Working Group has been invited to contribute to the European Space Agency’s Living Planet Symposium (LPS25), which was held in Vienna, Austria. A dedicated Agora session titled “Leveraging Earth Observation Data to Help Rescuing the SDGs” will showcase the Working Group’s work and further highlight the strategic importance of Earth observations and geospatial tools in accelerating SDG implementation.

### **III. Activities of the Secretariat**

25. As denoted in Economic and Social Council resolution 2024/22, all activities of the Secretariat are engaged “for the achievement of its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, to strengthen and ensure its continued effectiveness and benefits to all Member States”. Each agenda item of this present session underscores this point.

In addition to this corpus of work, the Secretariat wishes to highlight the following activities:

- (a) At the request of the Bhutanese Government, the Secretariat is supporting the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in convening a national workshop aimed at strengthens the capability of countries to collect, integrate, process and disseminate data, geospatial information, and statistics to respond to emerging economic, social and environmental data. This includes promoting key resources developed by the Committee of Experts, including the UN-IGIF, the GSGF, and the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap. This builds on past work supporting geostatistical integration at the national level, grounded by the GSGF Self-Assessment Tool, over 2023 and 2024; and,
- (b) As part of the development of the Core Framework on Disaster-related Statistics, the Secretariat is participating in ensuring that global geospatial frameworks are commensurately recognized as part of this process. Furthermore, the Secretariat participates in the organizing group for the forthcoming Fifth Global Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Disaster-related Statistics, which is scheduled to be held virtually from 6 to 8 October 2025.

#### **IV. Summary**

26. Until 2030, the focus must be on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but we must also remain pragmatically realistic about our capacity and capability to realize the vision of this agenda. As previous reports under this agenda item have observed, the nature of our interconnected world emphasizes that sustainable development isn't just for 2030 – it's about preventing cascading systemic collapse. This was underscored in the report under this agenda item in 2023<sup>3</sup>, noting that “countries can benefit from the maturity of the many frameworks and resources that have been developed by the Committee of Experts since the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs were envisaged. These endeavors must be intensified to strengthen local-to-global resilience, uphold the aspirations of the SDGs and bridge the geospatial digital divide”. In this regard, the report emphasized that to “dismantle the barriers and divisions that hinder progress, the keyword is ‘integration’ … It is essential to foster collaborative endeavors that unite communities to avoid fragmentation and break down silos. The maturity of the Committee of Experts’ frameworks, anchored by the UN-IGIF, demonstrates the very means, the ‘what’, countries can use to realize this ambition. The SDGs Geospatial Roadmap communicates the ‘why’. National Geospatial Information Agencies are the ‘how’ that brings everything together”.

27. In this regard, all opportunities to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs must be leveraged. The Working Group is aiming to redouble its efforts to communicate to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the SDG Indicators the message: ‘To accelerate the SDG process, we can leverage the proliferation of geospatial data by integrating it into the development of new indicators and enhancing existing ones’. In this respect, geospatial information provides valuable insights into various aspects of sustainable development, including environmental conservation, urban planning, disaster risk reduction, and social inclusion. By incorporating geospatial indicators into monitoring frameworks, we can capture spatial dimensions of progress and identify areas requiring attention or intervention. This may involve developing indicators that specifically leverage

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<sup>3</sup> E/C.20/2023/11/Add.1. Geospatial information for sustainable development and climate resilience See:  
[https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/13th-Session/documents/E-C.20-2023-11-Add\\_1\\_Sustainable\\_Development\\_and\\_Climate\\_Resilience\\_20Jul2023.pdf](https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/13th-Session/documents/E-C.20-2023-11-Add_1_Sustainable_Development_and_Climate_Resilience_20Jul2023.pdf)

geospatial data, refining existing indicators to include spatial components, or dismissing indicators that are not adequately supported by geospatial information. Additionally, leveraging geospatial data requires developing capacity among stakeholders, promoting data literacy, and fostering collaboration across sectors to ensure its effective utilization in advancing the SDGs.

28. There is now roughly four and a half years until 2030; a little over a decade since 2015. As the co-Chair of the Committee of Experts from Belgium, noted in her contribution to the ECOSOC Coordination Segment<sup>4</sup> “geospatial information is a foundation for evidence-based decisions, by grounding decisions and actions in science and spatially intelligent data... The Committee of Experts is committed to improving the availability of and access to, geospatial information to address global challenges. Understanding precedes action, and geospatial information provides the critical knowledge needed to determine where to act... our community is committed to work with everyone to advancing national public digital infrastructure for our goals and the benefits of *people, places, and planet*”. Time is a precious resource. But, it is one resource we do not have in abundance. If we want to achieve our ambition to leave no one behind, we must accelerate our implementation of the Committee’s frameworks to enable countries to bridge the geospatial digital divide. We cannot afford not to.

## V. Points for Discussion

29. The Committee is invited to:

- (a) Take note of this present report and express its views on the activities and progress of the Working Group and the Secretariat in advancing the role of geospatial information for sustainable development;
- (b) Take note of the paper ‘Rescuing the SDGs: How geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring and dissemination of SDG indicators’ and express its views on the focus and priorities needed to ensure that the contribution of the global geospatial information community to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda remains rigorous and relevant
- (c) Express its views and provide guidance on the development of geospatial reporting indicators for global development agendas

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<sup>4</sup> Conversation with Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions and Chairs of Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies on Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals including by leveraging the outcomes of the Summit of the Future. See: [https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/ECOSOC\\_UNGGIMcoordinationsegment\\_20250201VandenBergheENrev\\_clean.pdf](https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/ECOSOC_UNGGIMcoordinationsegment_20250201VandenBergheENrev_clean.pdf)

# Economic and Social Council

11 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6– 8 August 2025

Item 10 of the provisional agenda\*

**Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience**

### **Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience**

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

##### **Summary**

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the reports prepared by the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management and the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the reports prepared by the working group and the task team and express its views on efforts to strengthen the use of geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience.

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/108](#), in which the Committee welcomed the reports of the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience and the working group on geospatial information and services for disasters, and the efforts made by the task team to further position the Committee to address climate resilience with integrated geospatial information, and by the working group to revitalize its working modalities with renewed membership, revised terms of reference and an updated workplan for the period 2024–2025.

The Committee also recalled earlier consideration on the importance of a “joined-up” approach to addressing climate resilience and disaster risk management, requested the task team and the working group to continue with their current working modalities, planned work and activities for the forthcoming intersessional period and to continue to report under the current agenda item, and decided to rename the working group as the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management, with a renewed focus on access and utilization of integrated geospatial information that supports all aspects of disaster risk management.

Also at its fourteenth session, the Committee requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to holistically consider climate resilience and disaster risk management as part of the development of the strategic framework of the Committee of Experts for the period 2025–2030, considering all current working modalities, planned activities and deliverables of the task team and the working group.

In its report, the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management outlines the progress it made and intersessional activities it carried out,

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

including collaboration on and contributions to the development of a common statistical framework on disaster-related statistics and the joint hosting of a webinar on disaster risk reduction highlighting the importance of collaboration and partnerships supporting the use of geospatial information during all disaster phases by Member States, citing Hurricane Beryl as a relevant case study. Also noted in the report are working group's efforts to cultivate partnerships that advance robust discussion and facilitate greater understanding and the identification of synergies between disaster risk management and climate resilience. In the report, the working group encourages collaboration and partnership among national disaster agencies and national geospatial information agencies with a view to increasing awareness and implementation of the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters; addresses the development and distribution of structured forms to collect information on national challenges relating to the use of geospatial information for disasters risk management; and presents its revised workplan for the period 2024 - 2026.

In its report, the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience provides details on progress made to deliver its stated outcomes during the intersessional period. This includes the focus to develop and launch a paper entitled "Applying geospatial information to climate challenges", as well as support for the convening of the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Mexico City in October 2024. Noted in the paper, which is provided as a background document, is the importance of having political leaders involved in advocating for and investing in geospatial infrastructure to increase resilience. The vital role of the Committee of Experts and its frameworks, such as the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, in supporting Member States in developing the capacity to withstand increasing risk and to recover from disasters, in a manner that is transformative and that can become the basis for long-term resilience, is highlighted in the paper through national case studies. The task team also notes in its report that, as the tasks set for it by the Committee of Experts have been delivered, it will conclude its activities at the fifteenth session of the Committee.

Both reports contain information on the meetings and discussions held between the two groups in the later part of the intersessional period with a view to forging coordination and coherence on strategic orientations and synergies with regard to activities related to geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience. The reports also include points for discussion for the Committee of Experts related to providing inputs and guidance on the substantive content associated with the agenda item; encouraging Member States and relevant interested experts to contribute to forthcoming consolidated activities under the agenda item; and expressing its views on the preparation of a single holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and resilience are considered, to be presented to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

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## I. Introduction

1. Acting on climate resilience is not just an imperative for the Committee of Experts; it is an imperative for the world. Through the work of the Task Team, since its thirteenth session, the Committee has advocated for and raised awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience. It has done so through a variety of fora, notably as part of a side event on the margins of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) and by supporting the convening of the Seventh High-level Forum, with the theme “Accelerating Implementation: Achieving Resilience”.

2. Provided as a background document to the report, the paper “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges” advocates that in order to build long-term resilience, countries and communities need to develop systems that can prevent disasters or better manage risk. This can include taking actions such as investing in resilient infrastructure that can withstand climate impacts, and improving economic and social opportunities to reduce underlying social vulnerability to hazards by increasing community resilience. Through national case studies, the paper highlights and recognizes the vital role of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) as an enabling framework that can support Member States in developing the capacity to withstand increasing risk and recover from disasters in a manner that is transformative and forward-looking, providing a foundation for long-term resilience.

3. In its decision 13/107, the Committee of Experts emphasized that acting on climate resilience is now imperative, that we should not delay this item further, and that it is critically important to advocate for and raise awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience. It is with this urgency in mind that the Task Team on Geospatial Information for Climate Resilience was established.

4. In its decision 14/108, the Committee re-emphasized that acting on climate resilience remained an urgent imperative for the Committee of Experts and that it was critically important to advocate for and raise awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience, commended the progress made by the task team during the intersessional period and its consideration and development of a paper entitled “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges”. Furthermore, the Committee also appreciated the many and varied contributions of national experiences that complement the paper, promoting awareness and understanding of the importance of geospatial information in all its forms to address climate challenges and resilience, further encouraged Member States and relevant stakeholders to share their national, regional and global experiences demonstrating the role and relevance of geospatial information for climate resilience and to use that body of evidence to advocate for local, national and regional actions, and in that context appreciated the contribution of the task team to the substantive programme of the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management.

5. Moreover, the Committee recalled earlier consideration on the importance of a “joined-up” approach to address climate resilience and disaster risk management, requested the task team and the working group to continue with their current working modalities, planned work and activities for the upcoming intersessional period and to continue to report under the current agenda item, and decided to rename the working group as the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management with a renewed focus on access and utilization of integrated geospatial information that supports all aspects of disaster risk management.

6. This report summarizes the activities and tasks delivered since its inception at the thirteenth session. Additionally, it reaffirms the discussions and decisions made at the fourteenth session to acknowledge the crucial importance of geospatial information for climate and resilience. It notes that as the tasks set by the Committee of Experts have been delivered, the Task Team will conclude its activities at this present session. This report will guide the Committee of Experts in considering the topics of environment, climate, resilience, and sustainability holistically, and provide some considerations on how the Committee of Experts could advance this agenda item in alignment with the Strategic Framework 2025-2030. Points for discussion and decision are in paragraph 28.

## **II. Activities in the intersessional period**

7. The task team has been led by Barbados, Tonga, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the). The following Member States have contributed to the work of the task team since its inception in 2023: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Ethiopia, Germany, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Singapore, South Africa, Tonga, Türkiye, The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the), and United States of America. This wide cross-section of Member States has ensured that the task team's work is relevant to all Member States.

8. The task team has met on an ad hoc basis during the intersessional period, on a roughly quarterly schedule. The three main areas of focus have been to finalize the report of the task team, support and deliver elements of the Seventh High-Level Forum, and prepare for the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

9. The co-convenors and leadership team within the Task Team have taken a proactive approach to promote the paper “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges” during the intersessional period. This has been supported by a series of events designed to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of geospatial information in addressing climate challenges and enhancing resilience, as well as to increase awareness of the Committee’s work more broadly. This includes:

- (a) In October 2024, the task team supported the convening of the Seventh High-level Forum of UN-GGIM. During this event, the task team presented and launched the report, showcasing examples of how geospatial information is currently being used to make a difference at local, regional, and global scales. More details can be found below.
- (b) In February 2025, the Bureau and Expanded Bureau met in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. This regular meeting brought together the leadership elements of the Committee of Experts to consider the strategic direction and priorities for the Committee and to progress the decisions agreed upon at the fourteenth session. The topic of climate, environment, and resilience was discussed during the meeting, and the task team provided guidance and options to the Bureau and the Expanded Bureau on how to progress this activity and align the work within the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework 2025-2030, which will be adopted at this fifteenth session.
- (c) Additionally, in February 2025, the task team published an article in GIM International’s Business Guide 2025. The article ‘How to transform climate action’ discussed how, while we can have a positive impact in tackling the climate change crisis as individuals, collectively our voice becomes even more powerful. Policymakers, decision-takers, activists, and champions all have a role to play. This has been

a core set of messages within the task team, aligned with the overall objectives and tasks outlined in the work plan.

10. There has also been a positive shift in the adoption of discussions around climate and resilience, and this has been seen within the activities of the UN-GGIM Regional Committees, by way of example:

- (a) In May 2025, the UN-GGIM: Europe Line of Work on the Sustainable Development Goals hosted a webinar focused on SDG 15.3.1 – the proportion of land that is degraded over the total land area. The webinar brought together leaders from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the GEO Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship (GEO-LDN) and the Task Team on Geospatial Information for Climate Resilience to explore the different institutional frameworks and methodologies that can be used to meet the aims of SDG 15.3.1. This is linked closely to the objective of the task team to strengthen the use of geospatial information, in all its forms, to address climate and resilience; and,
- (b) In June 2025, UN-GGIM: Europe incorporated the theme of resilience as a core concept into the agenda of the Twelfth Plenary, held in Brussels, Belgium, on 24 to 25 June 2025. This included focused sessions on Resilience – operating context; Resilience – solutions to global challenges; and, Resilience – data we trust. This demonstrates the increased importance of climate and resilience, linking the global priorities of the Committee of Experts through to the regional context.

11. The task team has continued an active dialogue with the Committee's working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management and believes that the Committee of Experts, the Bureau, and the Secretariat all have important roles and responsibilities to accelerate the impact and focus on embedding geospatial information within discussions on climate, environment and resilience.

12. High-level political engagement has been a core aspect of the task team's work throughout its operation. This engagement has included support from the Hon. Prime Minister of Barbados for the High-level Forum in October 2024, as well as the involvement of the Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations and the United Kingdom's Special Envoy to SIDS during the side event at the SIDS4 conference in May 2024. Participants at the side event during the fourteenth session heard firsthand from the Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations, who discussed how this political engagement demonstrates the increased need and demand for trusted, reliable geospatial data to inform and impact climate- and resilience-related decision-making.

### **III. The Seventh High-Level Forum on UN-GGIM**

13. The second objective of the task team was to convene an appropriate and relevant international forum or event on geospatial information for climate resilience, bringing together relevant stakeholders to establish an effective programme of work. In this regard, the Seventh High-level Forum of UN-GGIM was convened in Mexico City from 8 to 10 October 2024, on the theme "Accelerating Implementation: Achieving Resilience". Detailed information on the forum can be found in the paper entitled *Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements* (E/C.20/2025/4) also tabled at this present session.

14. To avoid duplication and overlap, it was decided that the task team would contribute to the development and delivery of the High-level Forum, rather than convening a separate event. The convenors of the task team played an active role

on the Forum's Advisory Committee and were responsible for delivering a substantive part of the agenda, anchored on day two of the event, which focused on 'Achieving a resilient planet with geospatial information'.

15. Day two of the event included keynote speeches, presentations, discussion opportunities, and a platform to formally launch the paper "Applying geospatial information to climate challenges". A highlight for the task team was the participation of the Hon. Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister, Barbados who delivered the opening remarks which focused on the trust we need to place in our data and our systems, highlighting that to foster resilience we must be bold in our approach to transformation and that together we can build a world where resilience is woven into the fabric of our societies.

16. In the closing remarks on day two, the task team provided three calls to action: i) as experts you know how your organisations are using geospatial information for climate resilience, share those stories and learn from one another; ii) as a geospatial community we need to reach out and connect to other communities; iii) our geospatial community, in all its forms, should be advocates, enablers and agents of change.

#### **IV. The paper “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges” and its compendium of national experiences**

17. The third objective for the task team was to develop a more detailed concept paper. An advanced unedited draft was launched at the High-Level Forum, in October 2024 and has been available on the website of the Committee of Experts'. The paper entitled "Applying geospatial information to climate challenges", including its compendium of national experiences, is provided in the background document accompanying this report.

18. Since the establishment of the task team, the development and refinement of the paper have been key tasks. The paper has always been intended to serve as a starting point for discussion. Given the breadth and depth of related content, the paper is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of geospatial information for climate resilience, but rather to increase awareness and support for the Committee's work programme in this area. In publishing the final version of the report, these principles remain.

19. It can be summarized that the paper and its compendium are anchored in two key principles: 1. The UN-IGIF is vital to building the institutional capacity necessary for climate and resilience; and, 2. Acting on climate resilience is not just an imperative for the Committee of Experts; it is an imperative for the world.

20. A set of national experiences and good practices, provided by members of the task team, provide an evidence base that demonstrates that geospatial information is already being used to drive impact at local and national levels. It also highlights the importance of geospatial information in combating the climate challenge, which has and remains a key topic for the Committee throughout all its activities. The Committee and Member States are encouraged to continue using the paper in discussions on climate, environment, and resilience.

#### **V. Concluding the work of the Task Team**

21. Acting on climate resilience is not just an imperative for the Committee of Experts; it is an imperative for the world. This has been the guiding principle for the task team's work since its inception at the thirteenth session. Since then, the task team and the Committee have advocated for, and raised awareness of, the potential of geospatial information in all its forms for climate resilience.

22. The task team had three objectives: i) establish a task team ii) convene an appropriate and relevant international forum, iii) develop a more detailed concept paper. During the intersessional period, and with support from the wider global geospatial information management community, these three tasks have been successfully undertaken. In line with good practice and good governance arrangements, the task team will conclude its activities at the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

#### **Next steps for the topic of climate, environment and resilience**

23. This report, along with the discussions within the Committee of Experts, has demonstrated that a coordinated approach to addressing climate, environmental, and resilience issues is necessary. The topic of climate, environment and resilience is now embedded within the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework 2025-2030. This should serve as a foundation for any future activities.

24. During the intersessional period, numerous discussions have taken place between the task team, the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management, the Bureau, and the Secretariat on advancing this agenda item after the fifteenth session.

25. A standalone working group on climate, environment and resilience may appear to be an elegant solution. If this approach were followed, it should only be considered as part of a wider programme review of current activities within the Committee that focus on the topics of climate, environment and resilience. Any future proposal should be adequately scoped, resourced, and supported by a broad consensus of Member States to enable successful outcomes.

26. The Committee of Experts could consider how it can successfully act as ambassadors to embed geospatial information, and the work of the Committee more broadly, within other parts of the United Nations System. This consideration could include requesting the Secretariat to seek opportunities to engage in discussions on behalf of the Committee to embed geospatial information within broader discussions on climate, environment and resilience.

27. It is recommended that the Secretariat continue to collaborate with the Bureau and interested Member States to develop a proposal for how the Committee can further integrate climate, environment, and resilience into its work and report back to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

## **VI. Points for Discussion**

### **28. The Committee of Experts is invited to:**

- (a) Take note of the present report and express its views on the progress by the Task Team, including its paper “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges” and its compendium of national experiences;**
- (b) Express its views on the contribution of the Task Team to the Seventh High-level Forum on Global Geospatial through the organization of a segment on Climate resilience and its contribution to the Forum’s advisory Committee;**
- (c) Express its views on the efforts and contribution of Barbados, Tonga and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the) for their leadership to raising political awareness and advancing geospatial information for climate and resilience;**
- (d) Continue to focus on integrating geospatial information into discussions on climate, environment and resilience;**

- (e) Express its views on the successful completion of the tasks laid out in the Task Team's Terms of Reference and decision 13/108 of the Committee of Experts, and, note in line with good practice, future activities will cease;
- (f) Provide guidance on the substantive content associated to the agenda item, on climate, environment and resilience;
- (g) Encourage Member States and relevant interested experts to contribute to forthcoming consolidated activities under the agenda item and express interest in participating in these consolidated activities; and,
- (h) Express its views on the preparation of a single holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and resilience are considered, to be presented to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

# Economic and Social Council

15 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6– 8 August 2025

Item 10 of the provisional agenda\*

**Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience**

### **Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience**

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

##### **Summary**

The present paper contains the report of the Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/108](#), in which the Committee welcomed the reports of the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience and the working group on geospatial information and services for disasters, and the efforts made by the task team to further position the Committee to address climate resilience with integrated geospatial information, and by the working group to revitalize its working modalities with renewed membership, revised terms of reference and an updated workplan for the period 2024–2025.

The Committee also recalled earlier consideration on the importance of a “joined-up” approach to addressing climate resilience and disaster risk management, requested the task team and the working group to continue with their current working modalities, planned work and activities for the forthcoming intersessional period and to continue to report under the current agenda item, and decided to rename the working group as the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management, with a renewed focus on access and utilization of integrated geospatial information that supports all aspects of disaster risk management.

Also at its fourteenth session, the Committee requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to holistically consider climate resilience and disaster risk management as part of the development of the strategic framework of the Committee of Experts for the period 2025–2030, considering all current working modalities, planned activities and deliverables of the task team and the working group.

In its report, the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management outlines the progress it made and intersessional activities it carried out, including collaboration on and contributions to the development of a common statistical framework on disaster-related statistics and the joint hosting of a webinar on disaster risk reduction highlighting the importance of collaboration and partnerships supporting the use of geospatial information during all disaster phases by Member States, citing Hurricane Beryl as a relevant case study. Also noted in the report are working group’s efforts to cultivate partnerships that advance robust

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

discussion and facilitate greater understanding and the identification of synergies between disaster risk management and climate resilience. In the report, the working group encourages collaboration and partnership among national disaster agencies and national geospatial information agencies with a view to increasing awareness and implementation of the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters; addresses the development and distribution of structured forms to collect information on national challenges relating to the use of geospatial information for disasters risk management; and presents its revised workplan for the period 2024 - 2026.

In its report, the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience provides details on progress made to deliver its stated outcomes during the intersessional period. This includes the focus to develop and launch a paper entitled “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges”, as well as support for the convening of the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Mexico City in October 2024. Noted in the paper, which is provided as a background document, is the importance of having political leaders involved in advocating for and investing in geospatial infrastructure to increase resilience. The vital role of the Committee of Experts and its frameworks, such as the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, in supporting Member States in developing the capacity to withstand increasing risk and to recover from disasters, in a manner that is transformative and that can become the basis for long-term resilience, is highlighted in the paper through national case studies. The task team also notes in its report that, as the tasks set for it by the Committee of Experts have been delivered, it will conclude its activities at the fifteenth session of the Committee.

Both reports contain information on the meetings and discussions held between the two groups in the later part of the intersessional period with a view to forging coordination and coherence on strategic orientations and synergies with regard to activities related to geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience. The reports also include points for discussion for the Committee of Experts related to providing inputs and guidance on the substantive content associated with the agenda item; encouraging Member States and relevant interested experts to contribute to forthcoming consolidated activities under the agenda item; and expressing its views on the preparation of a single holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and resilience are considered, to be presented to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

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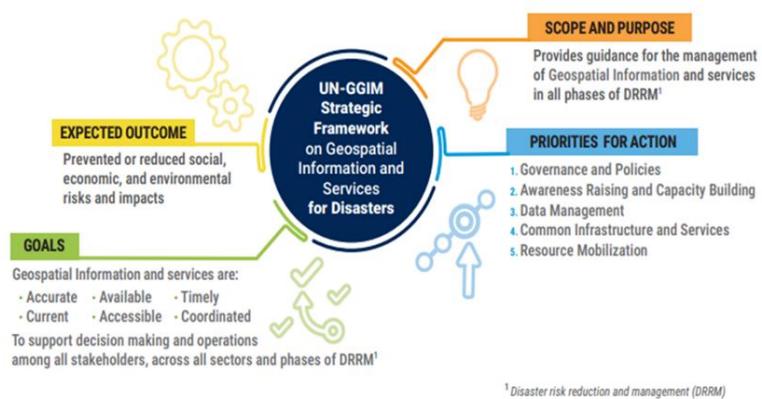
## I. Introduction

### **Reiterating the importance of and value of Disaster Risk Management**

1. Disaster Risk Management (DRM) is crucial for several reasons, with significant benefits impacting lives, livelihoods, and long-term development. The following points reiterate the value and importance of DRM:

- i. Lives and livelihoods are saved: DRM focuses on protecting those most vulnerable to disasters, ultimately reducing fatalities and minimizing the negative impacts on individuals and communities.
- ii. The cycle of disaster and dependency is broken: By investing in prevention and preparedness, DRM helps communities avoid the cycle of disaster, response, and dependence on external aid, freeing up resources for development.
- iii. Economic benefits are accruable: DRM has proven to be a cost-effective investment. Studies show that every dollar invested in disaster mitigation can save significantly in recovery costs. For example, fortifying infrastructure can save substantial amounts in reconstruction, and preparedness efforts can preserve jobs and economic activity.
- iv. Resilience is built: DRM aims to strengthen communities and their capacity to anticipate, survive, and recover from disasters. This includes measures like improving infrastructure, implementing early warning systems, and training communities, countries can face future challenges with greater confidence.
- v. National development is facilitated: Unplanned development increases disaster risk and hinders progress towards sustainable development goals. Integrating disaster resilience into development planning is essential to safeguard investments and unlock development potential.

2. The Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management (GI4DRM) is guided by the vision of quality geospatial information and services being made available and accessible in a timely and coordinated way to support decision-making and operations within and across all sectors and phases of disaster risk management, as outlined in the Working Group's terms of reference. Geospatial Information Management (GIM) is therefore immensely important for DRM across all phases: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The Working Group encourages improved access to solutions through geospatial services in addressing cascading and systemic risk and encourages Member States to implement the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters (2016 – 2030) (Strategic Framework), which supports the implementation of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030). The Strategic Framework, (shown in Figure 1 below) is fundamental to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



**Figure 1 - The UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters**

3. GIM tools, data and services enable informed decision-making, improved communication and coordination, and the development of effective strategies to mitigate the impact of disasters and build more resilient communities. GIM plays a crucial role across all phases of DRM<sup>1</sup>.

i. Preparedness and Risk Assessment:

- Identifying and mapping hazards: GIS software pinpoints regions vulnerable to specific hazards like floods, wildfires, or hurricanes by integrating various data layers, including hazard zones, population density, infrastructure, and historical event patterns.
- Vulnerability analysis: By analyzing demographic, economic, and climate data with geospatial tools, cities can assess vulnerable populations, identify critical infrastructure at risk, and understand the potential impact of disasters.
- Developing strategies and plans: Geospatial analysis helps simulate scenarios, model risks, and inform the development of risk reduction strategies and evacuation plans.
- Early Warning Systems: GIS integrates data from sensors and monitoring systems (such as satellite imagery, weather data) to provide real-time information on potential hazards, enabling timely alerts for communities at risk.
- Training and Capacity Building: GIM integrates geospatial technology into training programs for emergency responders and local authorities, enabling them to effectively utilize geospatial tools for disaster management.

ii. Response and Real-Time Situational Awareness:

- Real-time disaster tracking: GIS tools monitor the progression of disasters, such as wildfire spread or hurricane movement, to provide real-time information for informed decision-making.
- Enhanced Situational Awareness: GIS provides a common operational picture for multiple agencies and stakeholders by

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (2025), Special report on the use of Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction - <https://www.unrr.org/media/107230/download?startDownload=20250616>

integrating various data sources, allowing for better coordination and communication during a disaster.

- Optimized Resource Allocation: GIS helps pinpoint the nearest response teams, medical facilities, and evacuation routes, ensuring faster and more effective allocation of resources.
- Locating Survivors: Geospatial technology can aid search and rescue operations by identifying areas where survivors may be trapped.

iii. Post-Disaster Recovery and Mitigation:

- Damage Assessment: Comparing pre- and post-disaster geospatial data allows for rapid assessment of damage to buildings, infrastructure, and the environment.
- Guiding Recovery Efforts: GIS helps prioritize recovery efforts, allocate resources efficiently, and monitor the progress of reconstruction and rehabilitation activities.
- Building Resilience: Geospatial analysis informs policies and strategies to build more resilient communities, including enhancing infrastructure and addressing long-term vulnerabilities.

4. At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/108, in which the Committee welcomed the report of the then named working group on geospatial information and services for disasters, and the efforts made by the working group to revitalize its working modalities with renewed membership, new name, revised terms of reference and an updated workplan for the period 2024–2025.

5. In this present report, the Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management outlines the progress it has made and intersessional activities it carried out, including collaboration on and contributions to the development of a common statistical framework on disaster-related statistics and the joint hosting of a webinar on disaster risk reduction highlighting the importance of collaboration and partnerships supporting the use of geospatial information during all disaster phases by Member States, citing Hurricane Beryl as a relevant case study. Also noted in the report are the working group's efforts to cultivate partnerships that advance robust discussion and facilitate greater understanding and the identification of synergies between disaster risk management and climate resilience. In the report, the working group encourages collaboration and partnership among national disaster agencies and national geospatial information agencies/national mapping agencies with a view to increasing awareness and implementation of the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters; addresses the distribution of structured forms to collect information on national challenges relating to the use of geospatial information for disaster risk management; and presents its revised workplan for the period 2025–2026.

6. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the present report which includes the Working Group's progress and intersessional activities. The Committee of Experts is also invited to express its views and provide guidance on the proposals presented. The points for discussion and decision are in paragraph 65.

## **II. Strengthening the functioning of the working group**

### **UN General Assembly Resolution 79/205 on Disaster Risk Reduction**

7. The UN General Assembly Resolution [79/205](#) on Disaster Risk Reduction, adopted in December 2024, underscores the importance of the Sendai Framework

for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, welcomes the progress under the *UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters* and calls for their effective implementation. Some key points emphasized in the resolution include encouraging Member States to strengthen national and local disaster risk governance, adopting a multi-hazard and multi-sectoral approach that involves various stakeholders and highlighting the interconnectedness of disaster risk and climate change, emphasizing the need to address both together.

8. Importantly, clause 35 of the resolution recognizes and supports the Working Group's implementation of its strategic framework.

*35. Also welcomes progress under the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters for the period 2020–2023, which is a guide for Member States to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality geospatial information and services across all phases of disaster risk reduction and management, and encourages enhanced support to developing countries for the implementation of the Framework as a means to provide quality geospatial information and services to support decision-making and disaster risk management efforts, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;*

9. Other clauses in the resolution are germane to informing the working groups work, which recognizes the importance of collecting, recording and sharing disaster losses and relevant disaggregated data and statistics to strengthen disaster risk modelling, assessment, mapping, monitoring and multi-hazard early warning systems, to enhance and institutionalize its use in decision-making processes and investments across sectors and all relevant ministries and institutions.

#### **Bureau, Membership and Task Teams**

10. The Leadership of the Working Group strengthened its operational modalities through broadening the composition of its bureau, with the inclusion of Task Group Chairs and Co-Chairs. The Working Group congratulated Japan on its leadership as Co-Chair, given the retirement of the Co-Chair from Japan. China agreed to serve as the interim Co-Chair. During the intersessional period, the Working Group was Co-Chaired by Jamaica and China.

11. The Working Group's membership list was reviewed and updated post the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts. Membership remained consistent from the previous reporting year, with representation from 26 Member States, six observer organizations (from academia, the private sector and non-government organizations) and one UN entity. Geographical representation is largely from the Asia Pacific region, with 65% of the Group's member countries located below the tropic of cancer and 46% are island states and archipelagos. This geographical distribution of the Working Group's membership is highly representative of countries that are most vulnerable and impacted by disaster events. Therefore, the need for continued implementation of the Strategic Framework and Sendai Framework, inclusive of greater collaboration and representation from national disaster management organizations, is recognized as being key.

12. An initial four task teams were created based on the priority areas of work identified in 2024. For the reporting period, all task teams had active representation. The Task Groups, as listed below, were entrusted to update and implement their workplans.

Task Group A    Geospatial data in support of DRR

Task Group B    Capacity development and awareness raising

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Task Group C	Implementation of the Strategic Framework and alignment with the Sendai Framework
Task Group D	Collaborate with existing international projects

### **Working Group Meetings**

13. Over the intersessional period the Bureau of the Working Group planned and convened four working group meetings in September 2024 and February, March and May 2025 which largely addressed the group's programme of work for 2024-2026 and organizational issues. A minimum of twelve Bureau meetings were held which addressed preparations for the general Working Group meetings and discussed and decided on strategic and operational matters.

14. At the September 2024 meeting the decisions and actions emanating from the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts were reviewed and a special presentation was done on the GAR Special 2024 report, entitled 'Forensic Insights for Future Resilience: Learning from Past Disasters'. In addition, the members from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) gave an update on the preparations for the 'Fourth Global Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Disaster Related Statistics. The Working Group as a standing member of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics (IAEG-DRS), decided to participate in the Forum. Also addressed at the meeting was the finalization of the Working Group's workplan. Work items generated from the meeting included developing and distributing structured forms to collect national disaster risk management challenges, to organize thematic webinars and to participate in the UN-GGIM Knowledge and Innovation Center's Knowledge and Innovation Week in October 2024.

15. The Working Group at its February 2025 meeting discussed possibilities of an in-person meeting and workshop including potential hosts and a draft agenda outline. Preparations for the Committee of Experts' fifteenth session were discussed, updates were provided on fact finding discussions with United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), and arrangements shared on the Working Group's participation in the UNDRR Global Platform and the Fourth Global Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Disaster Related Statistics'. Additional information on this forum is provided in sections 21 to 25 of this report. Also discussed were collaborative preparations for the UN-GGIM: Americas Caribbean Geospatial Development Initiative (CARIGEO) webinar on 'Preparation, Response and Recovery: Lessons Learnt from Hurricane Beryl. In addition, the structured form to identify challenges in geospatial information for disaster risk management was reviewed. During the meeting, the Co-Chair from China gave an update on the disaster management theme of the Knowledge and Innovation Week. Details of this meeting are provided in sections 26 to 27 of the report.

16. At its March 2025 meeting, the Working Group reviewed, refined and completed its 2025-2026 workplan, which is submitted as a background document to this report. It featured the activities of the four task groups on geospatial data in support of DRR, capacity development and awareness raising, the implementation of the UN-GGIM disaster strategic framework and its alignment with the Sendai Framework and collaboration with existing international projects. The agenda for the joint CARIGEO webinar was discussed and circulated to members for their review and comments. Other logistical arrangements were made. The second proposed webinar entitled 'Strategizing on synergizing between climate resilience and disaster risk management', was also discussed, and proposals were made for it to be convened with a tentative date for May 2025, in collaboration with UNDRR New York and Bonn, and the Task Team on GI for Climate Resilience. Also discussed at this meeting was the

preparation of the structured form to collect national challenges. The meeting also discussed the timeline and hosting options for a future in-person meeting.

17. At its May 2025 meeting, the Co-Chairs updated the Working Group on matters arising from its March meeting, which included preparations for the webinars, the planning for the proposed face-to-face meeting, contribution to the Common Statistical Framework on Disaster Related Statistics, and other housekeeping matters such as preparations for the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts. An agreement was reached on the Working Group's new logo, given the Group's new name. The new logo is shown below.



**Figure 2 The Working Group's New Logo**

18. Importantly, the Working Group was updated on the meeting held with the Task Team on Climate Resilience on 2 April 2025. The objective of the meeting was to facilitate an exploratory discussion on forging a pathway forward to address disaster risk management and climate resilience agendas within the UN Committee of Experts and to plan coordination for the upcoming fifteenth session in August 2025. Both groups shared their ongoing work and discussed future activities. The Task Team indicated that they would close their activities at the fifteenth session and that they were open to discussing how to integrate climate resilience in the Committee of Experts' work programme moving forward. There was recognition of the interconnection between disaster risk management and climate resilience and that both groups should consider presenting a common language for the recommendations on the future of the subject areas in their reports to the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

#### **Consultation with UNDP and UNDRR**

19. Subsequent to the fourteenth Session, the Working Group facilitated multiple consultation discussions with representatives of the United Nations' Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery for Building Resilience Team (DRT) of the United Nations Development Programme. Discussions were also held with representatives of the UNDRR New York and Bonn Offices. The objectives were to: a) understand the dynamics behind global trends in disaster risk reduction and management and climate resilience, b) gain insights on how the international community was addressing the subjects of climate resilience and disaster risk management, which requires leveraging capacities from several disciplines and c) learn of the work being executed by these UN bodies and the synergies that exist or can be facilitated between both thematic areas. It was noted that these disciplines often conduct their work within separate communities of practice, use different methodologies, access different funding mechanisms, and are coordinated by different ministries and communities of practice. A climate and disaster risk-informed **UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework** is being encouraged by UNDRR, which promotes integrated risk management practices, supports a whole-of-society approach, and helps prevent crises. An important requirement will be the need to proactively bring together expertise,

stakeholders, and evidence across disciplines and sectors to identify the most effective interventions within a country<sup>2</sup>.

### **Capacity Development and Awareness Raising**

20. Risks and impacts of disasters will be properly managed if Member States and other stakeholders are fully aware of their respective geospatial data and information holdings. This requires all entities to bring the necessary changes towards making available and accessible quality geospatial information and services across all phases of disaster risk management. This matter is addressed in Priority <sup>2</sup>: awareness-raising and capacity-building of the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework on Disasters. This topic is therefore also a main priority of the Working Group and related activities are executed by Task Group B. The following sub-sections detail capacity development and awareness activities conducted during the reporting period.

### **Participation in the Fourth Global Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Disaster-related Statistics**

21. The Fourth Global Expert Forum was held from 28 October to 1 November 2024 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Forum aimed to advance the production and use of disaster-related statistics for risk-informed development, in fulfilment of the objectives of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics (IAEG-DRS) of the United Nations Statistical Commission. The Forum encouraged collaboration and knowledge sharing amongst users and producers of disaster-related statistics.

22. The Expert Forum was organized in a hybrid format, with participation from over 299 experts from National Statistical Offices, National Disaster Management Agencies, National Geospatial Authorities, UN Agencies, academia, non-governmental organizations and representatives of intergovernmental organizations, and international bodies.

23. During the Forum, in session four on “Strengthening Capacity and Resources” the GI4DRM, represented by its UNECA member, delivered a presentation on the “Strategic Framework Supporting Disaster-related Statistics”. The presentation focused on one of the global geospatial frameworks, the ‘Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters’. The presentation informed that the Strategic Framework aims to guide Member States and other stakeholders in making available and accessible all quality geospatial information and services before, during and after disaster events. The Strategic Framework supports the importance of data management mechanisms to support DRS being managed effectively and being accessible to producers and users of the data. It highlighted the importance of accurate and reliable data being provided to decision-makers and other data users in a timely manner.

24. It also informed that the UN-GGIM working group on disaster had established a global data repository: UN-GGIM DRR Global Inventory Hub. This is a central platform that provides information on national, regional, and international DRR organizations and lists their respective DRR platforms that provide geospatial information and services. The WG continues to encourage contributions and welcomes information from disaster-related statistics producers and organizations to complete the online forms that facilitate the updating of the hub. The Inventory hub and global surveys are available on UN-GGIM WG Disasters webpage: <https://ggim.un.org/UNGGIM-wg5/>.

25. Relevant resolutions of the forum encouraged members of ECA to collaborate with and participate in the work of other relevant organizations,

<sup>2</sup> Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, July 2020.  
<https://www.undrr.org/media/47534/download?startDownload=20250710>

including the UN-GGIM WG GI4DRM, the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information and the working group on geospatial information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics. For additional information, including presentations please access the Forum's website: <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/fourth-global-expert-forum-producers-and-users-disaster-related-statistics>

**Contribution to the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UNGGKIC) Geospatial Week**

26. To accelerate the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the first [United Nations Geospatial Week \(UN GeoNow\)](#) was held in Deqing, Zhejiang, China from 21 to 24 October 2024. The event, themed *Geospatial Intelligence for a Better World*, focused on innovative applications of geospatial information. It centred on leveraging the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) and featured six specialized forums. These included digital twin and smart cities, smart agriculture and food security, natural resource surveys and territorial governance, clean energy and green development, climate change response, disaster prevention and mitigation, in addition to geospatial modelling and geospatial intelligence. Approximately 1000 participants from over 50 countries including representatives from relevant UN agencies and ministries from China attended the event.

27. The Special Forum on Climate Change Response and Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, was organized by the National Institute of Natural Hazards, Ministry of Emergency Management of China and supported by UN-GGIM WG GI4DRM. The forum featured presentations by ten experts and scholars from both domestic and international institutions. The event focused on the current status, policies, and technological applications in climate change response, disaster prevention and mitigation. Exchanged were experiences on key issues such as cross-regional disaster management mechanisms, monitoring and early warning systems, emergency response strategies, resource allocation, and the development of emergency spatio-temporal think tanks. During the roundtable discussion, experts discussed the opportunities and challenges of leveraging spatio-temporal information technology for climate change response, disaster prevention and mitigation. It also explored the ideas and measures for building an emergency spatio-temporal knowledge ecosystem and a United Nations emergency spatio-temporal think tank. The forum concluded with calls to strengthen geospatial information, data management and related infrastructure and enhance cross-border cooperation, both of which are essential for building resilience in the midst of intensified climate-related risks globally.<sup>3</sup>

**Collaboration to convene Webinar with UN-GGIM Americas – Caribbean Geospatial Development Initiative**

28. The Working Group sought opportunities to foster greater collaboration and partnership with regional committees and DRR related bodies during the intersessional period. One such partnership and collaboration was with the UN-GGIM: Americas' CARIGEO Initiative. The initiative is led by a Steering Committee comprised of Caribbean Member States, with technical membership support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), the UN-GGIM Private Sector and Academic Networks, the HLG-IGIF, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico and the UN-GGIM Secretariat.

29. The UN-GGIM: Americas' CARIGEO Steering Committee seeks to geo-empower Caribbean Member States by promoting the strengthened implementation and utilization of geospatial technologies and information in advancing the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, while also

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<sup>3</sup> [https://ggim.un.org/meetings/2024/Deqing\\_China/documents/GeoNow2024\\_Summary\\_Notes\\_03Dec.pdf](https://ggim.un.org/meetings/2024/Deqing_China/documents/GeoNow2024_Summary_Notes_03Dec.pdf)

addressing concerns that affect Caribbean Member States by bolstering their ability to make better informed decisions in achieving national priorities. The fostering of greater awareness, the building of capacity and the forging of partnerships and collaborations within the region, in addition to harnessing the technical support of stakeholders outside the Caribbean sub-region are key focus areas of CARIGEO.

30. The Caribbean subregion and wider Americas region are significantly impacted by tropical systems during the annual North Atlantic Hurricane Season. Hurricane Beryl devastated the Americas region in July 2024 as a Category 5 Hurricane. Areas such as Carriacou and Petit Martinique (Grenada), Union Island and Canouan (St. Vincent and the Grenadines), Jamaica, in addition to sections of the Yucatan Peninsula and the Gulf Coast of the United States of America experienced extensive damage.

31. Given the level of devastation, the impacted countries significantly relied on existing partnerships and collaborations to assist with assessment, monitoring and response initiatives. The impact of Hurricane Beryl also led to the forging of new partnerships and collaborations that enabled the harnessing of geospatial human resources, technologies and information to support the monitoring, response, restoration and provision of relief supplies.

32. Given this background, CARIGEO sought to host a webinar focused on reinforcing known principles of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) and sharing lessons learnt by Member States, regional and international agencies who provided support during the preparation, response and recovery phases of Hurricane Beryl. On May 20, 2025, a webinar entitled “Preparation, Response and Recovery: Lessons Learnt from Hurricane Beryl” was hosted in collaboration with UN-GGIM WG GI4DRM, UNECLAC and the UN-GGIM: Americas Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disasters. The Working Group partnered with CARIGEO towards highlighting the experiences of Member States and the benefits that can be had when partnerships are forged between National Disaster Agencies and National Geospatial Agencies / National Mapping Agencies, as this enables available and accessible, accurate, timely and reliable geospatial information and services to aid national disaster management mechanisms. The Working Group recognizes that partnerships such as these will ensure greater success in the implementation of the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters within Member States.

33. The webinar benefitted from rich speeches and presentations delivered by the UN-GGIM: Americas Board of Directors, UN-GGIM: Americas Working Group on GI for Disasters, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA): Unmanned Aerial Systems for Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme, Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management of Jamaica (ODPEM), Jamaica’s National Emergency Response GIS Team (NERGIST), National Emergency Management Organization of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (NEMO), the United Nations Coordinating Office of Jamaica, International Charter on Space and Major Disasters and Map Action.

34. Stakeholders from the Caribbean subregion and wider Americas region, thus engaged in rich discussions on disaster risk, reduction and management, exchanged knowledge and experiences, shared best practices and innovations (including the use of geospatial technologies, geospatial information and earth observation data in support of preparations for the 2025 North Atlantic Hurricane Season and beyond. A wide cross section of 120 participants from 33 countries from across the five UN-GGIM regions contributed to and benefitted from the rich exchange. This webinar satisfied the Working Group’s implementation of priority 2 (Awareness Raising and Capacity Development) and priority 5 (Resource Mobilization) of the Strategic Framework within Member States. Additional information on the webinar is available on [CARIGEO & UN-GGIM](#)

[\*\*WG GI4DRM Webinar website\*\*](#). A background paper entitled *Geospatial Support through partnership and collaboration for Hurricane Beryl 2024: Jamaica Case Study version 2.0* is provided for additional information.

**Participation in the UN 2.0 Week Webinar on ‘Data for Resilience: a Disaster Tracking System to inform action on losses and damages’**

35. This webinar was organized by the UNDRR Bonn office along with key partners, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the context of the UN 2.0 week, held on 11 June 2025. The virtual webinar featured a demonstration on the Disaster Tracking System, and how the toolkit, open-source software, data standards and methodological guidance can be used to address DRM challenges and increase the quality, access, relevance and usability of data. This was followed by a panel discussion comprising a small selection of speakers from governments and UN partner organizations, who reflected on the challenges and good practices on collecting, analyzing and using losses and damages data. The webinar was designed to help Member States to accelerate their journeys towards achieving the critical SDGs.

36. The Co-Chair from Jamaica spoke on challenges, needs and innovation for official disaster and climate change loss and damage data collection and use. Her presentation answered the questions on: What challenges do Small Island Developing States face in tracking the impact of climate change and disasters? and What innovations (technologies, institutional arrangements, capacity development) have been used to address some of the challenges being experienced? The responses highlighted the importance of damage and loss especially in terms of taking stock of the cost of the impact of disaster events, the need to adequately plan for such events, and build resilience to reduce physical and economic vulnerability to disasters. Qualifying costs associated with each event have proven to be valuable as it has allowed countries to review and assess their impact on specific sectors and the economy.

37. Also highlighted were challenges of data inconsistency, data collection and quantifying impact data for specific types of disasters, incomplete datasets and baseline data for critical sectors, the over-estimation of impacts and the willingness of sharing data among entities coupled with limited resources. The presentation also featured areas where innovation has taken place. These included:

- Improving the post disaster assessments with technology to improve data quality
- Use of remote sensed data, satellite imagery and unmanned aerial vehicles
- Development of databases and platforms
- New research methods and data products
- The use of AI to support data collection – with data validation
- Impact based forecasting

38. The Working Group’s contribution to this webinar is directly aligned with the implementation of the UN-GGIM’s Strategic Framework on GI and Services for Disasters, in particular, priority 3 - Data Management and the activities of Task Group A - Geospatial data in support of DRR.

**Contribution to the Common Statistical Framework for Disaster Related Statistics**

39. The Working Group was invited by the IAEG-DRS and the Common Statistical Framework for Disaster Related Statistics of the United Nations Statistical Commission to contribute a chapter on the Strategic Framework on

Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters to the Common Statistical Framework being developed.

40. A draft of the chapter on the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services (SF-GISD) has been prepared. It highlights the integration of geospatial information into Disaster related statistics against the five priority areas of the SF-GISD, namely Governance and Policies, Awareness Raising and Capacity building, Data Management, Common infrastructure and Services and Resource Mobilization, with the critical areas of the Common Statistical Framework. The chapter underscores the role of the SF-GISD by promoting interoperability between geospatial platforms and statistical systems that enhance the ability, quality, interoperability, accuracy and timeliness of geospatial data to support the areas of disaster risk management and disaster related statistics. It also highlights how geospatial data supports the classification of records, the analysis of disaster events and their resultant impacts. The use of hazard, exposure and vulnerability maps, in addition to damage assessments, and damage and loss data, all contribute to accurate risk assessments and evidence-based data. These are necessary for effective decision making by emergency responders, disaster risk management practitioners and policy makers to build resilience.

41. Also included in the chapter is the fact that the SF-GISD also contributes to the alignment and standardization of geospatial and statistical data, thus promoting interoperability between geospatial platforms and statistical systems. It explores mechanisms for integrating geospatial services into national statistical systems and emergency operations through interoperable metadata, shared vocabularies, and standardized data protocols. This aligns with the Common Statistical Framework's emphasis on comparability and data coherence across time and jurisdictions. By illustrating case studies and practical applications, the chapter provides insights into how countries can operate both frameworks to enhance coordination among geospatial, statistical, and disaster management institutions - ultimately supporting the Sendai Framework and the SDGs through more robust data ecosystems.

### **III. The Disaster Risk Management and the Climate Resilience landscape**

42. This section of the report briefly looks at the thematic areas of disaster risk management and climate resilience, given the need for the Committee of Experts to identify a pathway forward to comprehensively address these thematic areas given their interconnectedness and opportunities for collaboration and synergies. The Working Group recognizes that different types of expertise are needed to manage the interactions between climate change, natural hazards, biological hazards and technological hazards, and their impacts on people, communities, and ecosystems. This therefore requires greater understanding of the subject areas, their challenges and geospatial data, tools and analysis requirements in support of reducing and managing risk and losses. The section features global interventions such as the 2025 Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Global Assessment Report (GAR) 2025 and the OGC Climate and Disaster Resilience Pilot, which provides information that should guide the next steps for the Committee of Experts in the application of its frameworks, and the creation and management of geospatial data and tools. The section concludes with a look at the challenges and benefits of integrating the two thematic areas.

#### **The 2025 Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction**

43. The 2025 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025) served as a critical forum for assessing progress and accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Held in Geneva,

Switzerland, from June 2nd to 6th, 2025, under the theme "Every Day Counts, Act for Resilience Today," the platform gathered governments, the UN system, and other stakeholders and took stock of accomplishments, exchanged knowledge, and discussed new developments in reducing disaster risk.

44. The outcome document of the 2025 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025), titled the "[Geneva Call for Disaster Risk Reduction,](#)" (Co-Chairs' summary of the Global Platform) is a guiding document and a call to action for governments and stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 by the 2030 target.

45. Key takeaways and calls to action summarized in the Geneva Call for Disaster Risk Reduction include:

- (a) Prioritizing inclusive disaster risk reduction: The document highlights the need to address the impact of disasters on vulnerable groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, and older persons, by empowering them in planning and implementation.
- (b) Strengthening risk governance and cooperation: The Geneva Call encourages integrating plans across various areas like climate change adaptation and social protection and enhancing international and regional cooperation to address transboundary and emerging risks.
- (c) Investing in prevention and risk-informed development: The document emphasizes that increased funding for disaster risk reduction is crucial for achieving benefits across development, humanitarian, and climate agendas, and encourages mobilizing resources from various sources.
- (d) Democratizing risk understanding and data: The Geneva Call stresses the importance of accessible and usable risk information for all stakeholders, utilizing both local knowledge and technology.
- (e) Scaling up early warning systems and anticipatory action: The outcome document highlights the need to expand Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS) and calls for international support to achieve "Early Warnings for All".
- (f) Promoting risk communication: The Geneva Call emphasizes the role of clear and actionable risk information to empower individuals and communities.
- (g) Preparing to "Build Back Better": The document encourages better planning for post-disaster recovery, focusing on inclusive efforts.

46. For the geospatial community, the call was made for the collection, analysis and application of risk information. Countries need to collect and share historical data, track disaster impacts, broken down by sex, age, disability and income, and conduct predictive analyses. [The Geneva Call for Disaster Risk Reduction](#) serves as a renewed commitment to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework, emphasizing inclusive strategies, investment in prevention, enhanced risk understanding, and stronger international cooperation to build resilience against escalating disaster risks and climate change impacts.

### **The Global Assessment Report (GAR) 2025**

47. The Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2025 (GAR 2025), themed "Resilience Pays: Financing and Investing for Our Future," is a crucial report published by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) that highlights the escalating global costs of disasters and advocates for a significant shift towards proactive investment in disaster risk reduction (DRR) to build resilience and secure a sustainable future. The GAR 2025 emphasizes the critical role of data collection and management in effectively managing disaster risk and building resilience.

48. The report stresses that high-quality, accessible, and timely risk information is fundamental for directing investment effectively to prevent, reduce, and manage risk. This underscores the need to make risk data widely available and usable by various stakeholders. The following is a summary and extraction of important recommendations related to data.

- Standardized and Accessible Risk Information: The report advocates for risk information to be standardized, accessible, and open source.
- Connect Hazard Data with Exposure and Vulnerability: Governments should improve the linkage between hazard data and information on exposure and vulnerability.
- Provide Robust Risk Information to Stakeholders: Both public and private sectors need reliable risk information for decision-making.
- Tailor Metrics to Local Realities: Risk metrics should be customized to local contexts and stakeholders' needs. More details can be found on [UNDRR website](#)
- Complement Risk Metrics with Resilience Indicators: The benefits of investing in resilience need clearer demonstration and integration into decision processes.
- Harness Technology for Analysis and Learning: Leveraging local knowledge and technology like machine learning and AI can accelerate risk analysis. More details can be found on [UNDRR website](#)
- Invest in Improving Risk Data and Analytics: Countries should invest in enhancing risk data, analytics, modelling, and foresight.
- Improve Access to Quality Risk Data: Governments should set guidelines, share knowledge, and improve access to quality risk data.
- Require Insurance Companies to Publish Data: Requiring insurance companies to publish coverage and non-renewal data can signal costs related to risky infrastructure and areas. More details can be found on [UNDRR website](#).

49. In summary, GAR 2025 emphasizes a collaborative and comprehensive approach to data for disaster risk reduction, highlighting accessibility, standardization, and the use of technology for improved analysis and decision-making.

### **The OGC Climate and Disaster Resilience Pilot**

50. The Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) Climate and Disaster Resilience Pilot (CDRP) is a multi-phase project focused on enhancing our collective readiness for climate change and related disasters by improving the processes and systems used to transform data into usable information for decision-makers.

51. The CDRP brings together various stakeholders, including government organizations, the private sector, and research institutions, to address challenges in areas like data integration, analysis, and communication within the context of climate resilience and disaster management. The OGC Climate and Disaster Resilience Pilot yielded several significant outcomes and findings, including:

- Improved Workflows and Models: Prototyped workflows and components were developed for tracking extreme weather events, integrating real-time data, and incorporating predictive analytics.
- Enhanced Landslide Prediction and Mapping: The pilot improved the accuracy of landslide prediction and mapping through the use of scientific algorithms and deep-learning models.
- Refined Flood Risk Assessment: Workflows were developed for flood risk assessment, leading to improved resolution and accuracy in flood simulations.
- Modelling Extreme Heat Impacts: The pilot successfully modelled extreme heat events and their effects on human health in urban areas.

- Real-time Urban Digital Twin Workflows: Workflows were created to integrate weather sensor data for urban digital twins, supporting real-time risk assessments and scenario analysis.
- Advanced Metadata Retrieval Methods: Methods were explored for transitioning to Geospatial Knowledge Infrastructures (GKIs) using AI, enhancing data discovery and integration.
- Stakeholder Engagement and Visualization Tools: The pilot focused on engaging stakeholders and supporting the adoption of developed tools through visualization and interactive platforms.
- Emphasis on Analysis-Ready Data (ARD) and Decision-Ready Indicators (DRI): The importance of having ARD and DRI readily available for better analysis and communication of risks was demonstrated.
- Integration of AI: The pilot explored integrating AI, including generative AI, into geospatial tools for tasks like wildfire management.
- Strengthened Foundation for FAIR Data Services: The pilot aimed to enhance climate and disaster services by moving technical systems towards FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) principles, promoting collaboration and equity in data access.

52. Overall, the OGC Climate and Disaster Resilience Pilot demonstrated that open standards and innovative geospatial technologies, including AI, can significantly improve the workflows and tools used to address climate change impacts and disaster risks, ultimately enhancing climate resilience and informing effective decision-making.

### **Forging coherence and coordination between Climate Resilience and Disaster Risk Management**

53. The landscape of disaster risk management (DRM) and climate resilience is characterized by both progress and significant challenges. While efforts to reduce disaster risks have intensified, particularly under the umbrella of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the scale and scope of challenges are growing due to factors like climate change and complex socio-economic issues. To manage risks in this uncertain context, effective climate and disaster risk management must integrate different types of expertise to manage the interactions between climate change, natural hazards, biological hazards and technological hazards, and their impacts on people, communities, and ecosystems. This involves leveraging capacities from several disciplines.

54. **Climate Resilience:** This is the ability of communities, ecosystems, and systems to anticipate, prepare for, cope with, and recover from the impacts of climate change. It is about minimizing vulnerability and maximizing the capacity to adapt to both short-term climate hazards (like floods and storms) and long-term changes (like sea-level rise and shifts in temperature). Essentially, it is the capacity to thrive despite the challenges posed by a changing climate.<sup>4</sup> **Climate Change Adaptation:** Is the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects. **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR):** DRR is aimed at preventing new and reducing existing disaster risk and managing residual risk, all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore to the achievement of sustainable development. DRR is the policy objective of disaster risk management. **Disaster Risk Management (DRM):** Disaster risk management is the application of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies to prevent new disaster risk, reduce existing disaster risk

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<sup>4</sup> Centre for Climate and Energy Solutions, Climate Resilience Portal <https://www.c2es.org/content/climate-resilience-overview/#:~:text=Climate%20resilience%20is%20the%20ability,better%20cope%20with%20these%20risks.>

and manage residual risk, contributing to the strengthening of resilience and reduction of disaster losses.<sup>5</sup>

55. These disciplines often conduct their work within separate communities of practice, use different methodologies, access different funding mechanisms, and are coordinated by different ministries and communities of practice. This often leads to siloed approaches to managing risk. There is a growing recognition of the interconnectedness of disaster risk and climate change, leading to efforts to integrate these approaches. Both disciplines aim to reduce vulnerability and exposure to hazards, while simultaneously increasing resilience. Climate change impacts, such as changes in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, directly increase disaster risk. More sophisticated risk assessments are being conducted, although challenges remain in fully capturing all aspects of risk and translating them into actionable information. Integrating disaster risk management and climate change adaptation can lead to greater policy impact, more efficient use of resources, and more effective action in protecting lives, livelihoods, and assets.

56. Efforts to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation are increasingly recognized as essential for building resilience against climate and disaster risks. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report emphasizes the need to integrate both thematic areas for meeting Sustainable Development Goals and building a climate-resilient future. A climate and disaster risk-informed UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework promotes integrated risk management practices, supports a whole-of-society approach, and helps prevent crises.

57. The Committee of Experts is however invited to note that practitioners' perception is that the integration of climate change adaptation into their practice is at an early stage, and that they need to improve their understanding of climate change adaptation. The study '*Integrating climate change adaptation into disaster risk reduction in urban contexts: perceptions and practice*', referenced identified factors that may impact integration, which may be deemed applicable: (a) a recognized lack of understanding of climate change adaptation, (b) insufficient guidance on how both disciplines may be integrated, (c) the robust structure of the disaster risk reduction frameworks which provides suitable channels for facilitating integration, and (d) the fact that climate change adaptation receives more attention and financial and technical support from the international community<sup>6</sup>.

#### **IV. Proposal to the Committee of Experts**

58. As the Committee of the Experts seeks to position geospatial information to address local, regional and global challenges, it is essential that we ensure geospatial leadership, resources and capabilities are coordinated, integrated, sustainable, accessible, and useable by Member states, towards ideally addressing their current and future challenges and needs.

59. During the intersessional period the Working Group has facilitated multiple discussions with the United Nation's Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery for Building Resilience Team (DRT) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the UN-GGIM Task Team on Climate Resilience, and the UN-GGIM Secretariat towards understanding the landscape of disaster risk management (DRM) and

<sup>5</sup> Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, July 2020.  
<https://www.undrro.org/media/47534/download?startDownload=20250710>

<sup>6</sup> Rivera C. Integrating climate change adaptation into disaster risk reduction in urban contexts: perceptions and practice. 2014 Jan 15 ;<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3893352/#ref2>)

climate resilience. Both thematic areas are characterized by progress and significant challenges for stakeholders and Member States.

60. Member States are significantly impacted by disasters and climate change, which impact their environment on varying scales, including significant devastation and crippling economies, particularly within the global context of small island developing states (SIDS). The broad consensus of the Member States is therefore needed on how geospatial information and services further need to be integrated in streamlining the operations, procedures and decision-making process pre, during, and post varying disaster events.

61. The Working Group recognizes the efforts to integrate climate, environment and resilience, through the proposal to establish a working group focused on these areas. However, an emphasis on disasters and their short to long-term impacts on Member States, in addition to the need for geospatial information and services that strengthen their capacity to plan, coordinate, respond and recover should remain at the forefront. This is especially as many countries have small economies and limited resources, resulting in the increasing need to consider systemic risks.

62. The Working Group supports the need for the Committee to foster greater awareness of the importance and use of geospatial information as a cross-cutting theme. Further, the need for holistic integration, cohesiveness and collaboration of geospatial information throughout all arms of the UN System will enable the most strategic use of finite resources for the maximum benefit of UN organizations and Member States.

63. The Working Group seeks the support and guidance of the Bureau and the Secretariat to facilitate robust discussions with Member States on how best to integrate disaster, climate, environment and resilience within and across the work of the Committee of Experts.

64. The Working Group, in collaboration with other stakeholders, seeks to organize a webinar focused on integrating climate, environment and resilience to determine strategic synergies between Disaster Risk Management and Climate Resilience. The overarching aim and expected outcome of this webinar will be to explore paradigms in disaster and climate resilience, examine relevant policies, agreements, and frameworks and address challenges faced by Member States. This webinar is intended to provide an initial frame for areas of synergies that may be achieved by examining these thematic areas.

## V. Points for Discussion

65. The Committee of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the present report, its background documents, and the work undertaken by the Working Group during the intersessional period, and express its views on the continued efforts to implement the Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters at the country level and by regional committees;
- (b) Recognize the need for National Mapping/Geospatial Agencies to engage National Disaster Management Agencies and their experts, to encourage collaborative working relationships towards implementing the Strategic Framework and thus realize the benefits of comprehensive disaster risk management;
- (c) Express its views and provide guidance on the activities of the Working Group including efforts to collaborate across the international community of disaster risk management experts, to raise awareness and encourage the implementation of the Strategic

**Framework, and strengthen connections for emergency responses at the country-level;**

- (d) Take note of the Working Group's intention to contribute to an in-person meeting and workshop during the next intersessional period;
- (e) Provide guidance on the substantive content associated to the agenda item, on climate, environment and resilience;
- (f) Encourage Member States and relevant interested experts to contribute to forthcoming consolidated activities under the agenda item and express interest in participating in these consolidated activities; and,
- (g) Express its views on the preparation of a single holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and resilience are considered, to be presented to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

# Economic and Social Council

10 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6– 8 August 2025

Item 11 of the provisional agenda\*

**Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information**

## Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/109](#), in which it, inter alia, emphasized the importance of coordination and collaboration, supported the ongoing efforts of the Expert Group to strengthen engagement with the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and efforts to engage and interact with relevant functional groups of the Committee of Experts and the Statistical Commission, noting that the many data integration challenges, including for the production of national development indicators, the Sustainable Development Goal indicators, the measuring and monitoring for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, other current and future global, regional and national development agendas, priorities and programmes, required the full and coordinated implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework at the country level.

In the report, the Expert Group provides information on its recent activities, including the outcomes of its eighth meeting, convened jointly with the seventh meeting of the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators at the headquarters of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), in Nairobi from 17 to 19 September 2024. The outcomes of the meetings included the endorsement of the approach of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names regarding a unique identifier for cities; the review of the outcomes of its workplan for the period 2022 – 2024; and the development of the workplan for the period 2025 – 2027, in which it established the task team on the coordination and communication for the alignment of geostatistical information, the task team on resources for Global Statistical Geospatial Framework implementation and the task team on Global Statistical Geospatial Framework advancement (containing subgroups that focus on the development of technical guidance on topics such as address registers, institutional arrangements, geocoding and common geographies (grids)).

The report also discusses the process of developing the second edition of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, with the updates aiming at ensuring alignment with the present geostatistical landscape. The second edition of the Framework is

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

provided to the Committee of Experts for endorsement. In the report, the Expert Group also highlights the finalization of the paper entitled “Benefits of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for the statistical domain” and discusses opportunities for its promotion, examining future opportunities for raising awareness on the Framework to the Statistical community.

In considering the significance of the integration of statistical and geospatial information within the work programme of the Statistical Commission, the Expert Group presents in its report the outputs related to geostatistical integration of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission and discusses the steps that it is taking to accelerate the implementation of the Economic and Social Council resolution [2022/3](#) and other relevant mandates of both the Commission and the Committee of Experts and other subsidiary bodies of the Council. In this regard, the Expert Group has developed the report entitled “Geostatistical integration for now and the future: strategic plan and vision for 2030”, which is presented to the Committee for its review and comment, building on its previous reports, in which it has considered its own role within the evolving programme of work of the Committee and the Commission, including in relation to global agendas and national development priorities.

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## I. Introduction

1. Established in 2013 to be the bridge between the statistical and geospatial communities, the Expert Group is mandated by the Statistical Commission, by its decision 48/108, to be the overall coordination group for all activities in the area of the integration of statistical and geospatial information. In this regard, in the intersessional period, the Expert Group has made significant progress in the advancement of its objectives, *inter alia*, the revision of Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) to reflect developments within our global data ecosystem, the development of a series of policy papers to highlight the vital role of geostatistical integration to advance national priorities and global development agendas, supported work across the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and has developed a new work plan 2025 – 2027.
2. The Expert Group acknowledges that its role as a bridge between the statistical and geospatial communities necessitates equal support and engagement, and there remains work to be done. Since its adoption in 2019, the GSGF has been implemented by many countries as a crucial foundation that facilitates the integration of statistical and geospatial information at the national, regional, and global levels, enabling more accurate and comprehensive analyses for informed decision-making. The Expert Group recommends adopting a holistic approach to the national integrated data environment and considers that such an approach requires leadership at all levels to help break down silos, identify gaps, and utilize existing resources, thereby developing new partnerships and institutional arrangements as opportunities arise.
3. Pursuant to Statistical Commission decision 44/101, the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information comprises members of the professional statistical and geospatial communities of Member States and relevant international organizations. The overall objectives and functions of the Expert Group are to pursue the implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, as endorsed by the Commission in its decision 51/123 (see E/2020/24), and to support regional and global agendas, such as the 2020 round of population and housing censuses and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since its establishment in 2013, the Expert Group has reported to both the Commission and the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management at each of their respective annual sessions.
4. Decision 14/109 of the Committee of Experts emphasized the importance of coordination and collaboration, supported the ongoing efforts of the Expert Group to strengthen engagement with the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and efforts to engage and interact with relevant functional groups of the Committee of Experts and the Statistical Commission, noting that the many data integration challenges, including for the production of national development indicators, the SDG indicators, the measuring and monitoring for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, other current and future global, regional and national development agendas, priorities and programmes, required the full and coordinated implementation of the GSGF at the country level. Moreover, the Committee welcomed the progress made by the Expert Group in developing and operationalizing the self-assessment tool for the GSGF which supports countries in assessing their geostatistical capacity, the ongoing consideration leading to the preparation of a paper on the benefits of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) for the statistical domain and a paper on the development of a globally unique identifier for cities, and highlighted the need to further review, refine and strengthen the GSGF.
5. Through the efforts of the Expert Group, the Committee of Experts continues to work with the Statistical Commission to support the implementation of the

GSGF as a globally consistent mechanism for integrating statistical and geospatial information. In this regard, the Expert Group stands ready to support the Committee of Experts to liaise with the Statistical Commission to achieve broader aims and objectives, including the implementation of ECOSOC resolution 2022/3 (Ensuring that the work in the field of statistics and data is adaptive to the changing statistical and data ecosystem).

6. This report details the recent activities of the Expert Group, as well as the main strategies for coordinating activities related to the integration of statistical and geospatial information in an increasingly complex data production ecosystem. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 36.

## **II. Enhancing geostatistical integration across the Economic and Social Council**

### **Fifty-sixth session of the Statistical Commission**

7. At the 56th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, the engagement of the Expert Group was woven throughout the Commission's work programme, representing a substantial increase over previous sessions. By way of example:

- (a) The Expert Group has directly supported the process leading to the endorsement of the "Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 4". This updated revision includes comprehensive references to geospatial information, based on both the GSGF and the UN-IGIF. These improvements significantly enhance the guidance on geospatial aspects for the upcoming round of population and housing censuses. The revision process was led by a working group chaired by a representative of the Expert Group and offers a model of how the Expert Group, through the active participation of its members in other bodies, can be effective.
- (b) The GSGF has been recognized as a reference framework in the new Conceptual Framework for Social and Demographic Statistics, currently under development by the Friends of the Chair group on Social and Demographic Statistics. This inclusion is expected to broaden the use of the GSGF across a wide range of social and demographic statistics;
- (c) Members of the Expert Group, led by Australia, have contributed to the development of the Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics' discussion note on the integration of geospatial information into statistical business registers; and,
- (d) Under the agenda item on household surveys, the Commission reviewed the document titled "Small Area Estimation with Geospatial Data: A Primer" which highlighted the application of geospatial information to improve statistical outputs at disaggregated levels and reflected substantive contributions from the Expert Group.

8. References to the importance of geostatistical integration were also found in several decisions adopted by the Commission, including: 56/102 – Population and Housing Censuses (paragraphs b and d); 56/105 – Data and Indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (paragraphs f and g); 56/118 – Household Surveys (paragraph b); 56/121 – Regional Statistical Development (paragraph b); and, 56/108 – Social and Demographic Statistics (paragraph a). However, much more could be done if suitable resources were to be made available; these could include activities in the domain of environmental-economic accounting or disaster-and climate-related statistics.

9. Additionally, five side events held during the 56th session were directly related to geospatial information, reflecting the growing relevance of the topic within the Commission's agenda: Solving Data Disaggregation for SDG Localization and Beyond; Rescuing the SDGs with Geospatial Information; Mapping Progress: Advancing the Degree of Urbanization Global Implementation; Data Science, AI, GIS and Official Statistics; Intra- and Inter-regional Cooperation for Geostatistical Integration. These developments demonstrate the growing awareness and importance of integrating geospatial and statistical information within the global statistical community, as well as the continued efforts of the Expert Group in this regard.

10. The Expert Group at its seventh meeting in Santiago identified the need to enhance collaboration and coherence across the Statistical Commission's work programme and undertook a process of outreach with the functional groups of the Commission. This has led to significant advances in the awareness and operationalization of the GSGF by the functional groups of the Commission; however, this progress is unequally distributed due to the scope of the Commission's work programme. Thus, the Expert Group has developed the paper 'GeoStatistical Integration for Now and the Future: the EG-ISGI Strategic Plan and Vision for 2030', elaborated upon in section V of this report.

## **2025 Session of UNGEGN**

11. Decision 2025/8<sup>1</sup> of the 2025 Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) acknowledged the importance of the integration of unique identifiers and cross-referencing systems for evidence-based standardization, the usage of artificial intelligence, mobile applications and the exploration of how digital platforms could serve multiple user groups. In this regard, UNGEGN adopted the concept of a universal unique identifier for cities, as detailed in the document on the development of a globally unique identifier for cities, and requested the Statistics Division to implement this concept within the World Geographical Names Database as a consistent and reliable unique identifier for cities.

12. As part of the preparatory work<sup>2</sup> leading up to the adoption of the concept, the Expert Group met with the Convenors of the UNGEGN Working Group on Geographical Names Data Management and reviewed and provided feedback on the concept. Moreover, the Expert Group has shared this concept and reported on its progress on this matter to the Statistical Commission at its 56th session within the (virtual) side event "Solving Data Disaggregation for SDG Localization and Beyond", in February 2025, and welcomes the broader UNGEGN – UN-GGIM Collaborative Project discussed at this present session (see E/C.20/2025/17).

13. The Expert Group is pleased to note the adoption of UNGEGN decision 2025/8 and recommends that the Committee of Experts endorse this decision. Following this, the Expert Group would make the same recommendation to the forthcoming 57th session of the Statistical Commission.

## **III. The eighth meeting of the Expert Group**

14. Hosted by UN-Habitat at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya, the eighth meeting of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information was convened jointly with the seventh meeting of the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators<sup>3</sup> (IAEG-SDGs). The meeting convened 30 representatives from 11

<sup>1</sup> E/2025/70. Report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on its 2025 session. See: <https://docs.un.org/en/E/2025/70>

<sup>2</sup> Concept of a globally unique identifier for cities. See: [GEGN.2/2021/84/CRP.84](https://docs.un.org/en/GEGN.2/2021/84/CRP.84)

<sup>3</sup> See: [https://ggim.un.org/meetings/2024/Joint\\_Expert\\_Meeting\\_on\\_Geo-statistical\\_Integration/](https://ggim.un.org/meetings/2024/Joint_Expert_Meeting_on_Geo-statistical_Integration/)

Member States (consisting of representatives from both national statistical offices and national geospatial information agencies from Brazil, Finland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America), two (2) SDG custodian agencies (UN Environment Programme and UN-Habitat), and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to take stock of the 2022-2024 work plan and engage in discussions to finalize a 2025-2027 strategic plan. Meeting participants discussed strategies to facilitate collaboration between the Expert Group and the Working Group, as well as concrete goals to support the further implementation and operationalization of the GSGF and SDGs Geospatial Roadmap, anchored by the UN-IGIF, to support member states in their efforts to leave no one behind. In recognition of recent efforts to strengthen interregional dialogue and engagement, plans were drafted to facilitate communication and coordination between relevant working groups within the regional bodies.

15. At the meeting, the Expert Group agreed on actions aimed at strengthening the bridge between the geospatial and statistical communities, with the goal of fortifying the efforts of countries and regional bodies to advance geostatistical integration. The immediate actions will focus on developing guidance to support the disaggregation of statistics by geography and identifying an approach that will enable the Commission to implement ECOSOC resolution 2022/3. Further, in considering how to strengthen the role of the geographic dimension within the SDGs and its global indicator framework, the Expert Group is looking forward to supporting the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the IAEG-SDGs with its work plan for 2025 (and successive annual work plans).

16. At the meeting, the Expert Group also agreed on a new Work Plan 2025-2027, which tackles the recognized importance of reinforcing coordination activities as a means of operationalizing and implementing the GSGF and improving data integration opportunities. This work plan is provided to the Committee as a background document.

## **IV. Advancing the Expert's Group Work**

### **The Expert Group's Work Plan 2025-2027**

17. The Expert Group operates at the global level and considers that the key to greater data integration is increased awareness and implementation of global geospatial frameworks, such as the GSGF. The Expert Group notes that there are many initiatives at the global, regional, and national levels that help promote and support the adoption, implementation, and operationalization of the GSGF. However, the landscape for mobilizing and coordinating resources is often complicated and suboptimal; thus, the Expert Group underscores that greater promotion and coordination of activities will reduce confusion and facilitate the speedier adoption of data integration frameworks. Against this background, the Expert Group elaborated on the work plan for 2025 -2027 as part of interactive and participatory discussions held at its eighth meeting in Nairobi. This work plan for 2025 –2027 is provided as a background document to this report and is structured as follows.

18. The **Task Team on the Coordination and Communication for the Alignment of Geostatistical Information**, led by Jordan, Namibia and the United States of America, with the support of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), will continue to work on strengthening interlinkages and coordination with relevant bodies and groups across the UN to foster stronger collaboration opportunities and promote the implementation of the GSGF. This initiative aims to identify opportunities to maximize positive outcomes of ongoing and forthcoming activities at the regional and functional levels, which can be collated at the global level. It seeks to reduce duplication of efforts, make efficient

use of resources and expand areas of collaboration between geospatial and statistical bodies as well as regional bodies and encourage sharing of knowledge assets across the community. Having already received great support through engagement with UNESCWA, UNECA, ECLAC, and ESCAP, the Task Team will continue to broaden its efforts and work closely with the other Task Teams.

19. The **Task Team on Resources for GSGF Implementation**, led by Indonesia, Norway and Sweden, will develop and maintain a global authoritative repository for resources on data integration and the operationalization of the GSGF, collating and/or signposting to resources from various regional and functional groups in a centralized environment (e.g. the Expert Group's wiki). The task team has begun reviewing the GSGF information available worldwide, including on the Committee's website, the Expert Group's wiki, UN-GGIM regional websites, and the websites of other organizations. It is currently scoping changes and drafting a new organizational structure for the repository, which would facilitate greater findability and accessibility of relevant resources.

20. The **Task Team on GSGF Advancement** supports the development of technical guidance on emergent topics through smaller work streams. These work streams are meant to be short-lived with focused output. The topics relevant to the global agenda identified as priorities are: (i) *Localized Geostatistical Modelling* (also known as spatial disaggregation) and (ii) *Cities / Urban Definitions (Degree of Urbanization)*.

- (a) The **Work Stream on Localized Geostatistical Modelling** led by Ireland and the United States, is focused on forging stronger ties and collaborative projects with the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the United Nations Inter-agency and Expert Group. This is intended to enhance the production and dissemination of the SDGs, facilitating interactions between the global geospatial and statistical communities. This kind of modelling and small area estimation addresses the growing demand for detailed geographic and subpopulation statistics by using statistical models to produce more precise estimates for areas like counties and states, since traditional national surveys do not have large enough samples for reliable direct estimates.
- (b) The **Work Stream on Cities and Urban Definitions (Degree of Urbanization)** led by Brazil and Canada has the objective to promote greater harmonization among international classifications and frameworks related to the Degree of Urbanization (DEGURBA) and the GSGF, thereby enhancing consistency and comparability across countries. This guidance aims to support National Statistical Offices (NSOs) in integrating the DEGURBA approach into their statistical and geospatial infrastructure, in alignment with the principles of the GSGF.

### **Improving Implementation, Developing Capacity, Enhancing Coordination and Coherence**

21. The Expert Group is experiencing an increased demand for capacity development to support the growing needs of countries to strengthen their maturity for statistical-geospatial data integration. Capacity-building activities can take many different shapes and forms, spanning a broad spectrum of issues, from strategic and organizational to operational and technical concerns.

22. Through its Task Team on Capacity Building, the Expert Group made significant progress, including the Global Survey on Readiness to Implement the Global Statistical Framework (2021-2022); the creation of the GSGF self-assessment tool (2023); and the draft institutional agreement for cooperation

between NSOs and National Geospatial Information Agencies (2024). In addition, the Expert Group has been present at numerous events, contributing to the socialization of the GSGF as a facilitating device for the integration of statistical and geospatial information. One of the key takeaways from the past four years is that the demand for capacity development support has increased, and the Expert Group, to an increasing extent, faces expectations that exceed its role, level of resourcing, and capacity as a global Expert Group, but as more countries move towards implementation, the need for operational and technical support increases.

23. The Expert Group opines that there is a need for a new coordination “architecture” to support geostatistical data integration capacity in a more efficient and more concerted way. Experience from supporting the convening of the High-Level Seminar in Bangkok in 2023 and subsequent activities has demonstrated the criticality of implementing the GSGF, as well as the limitations of the Expert Group in supporting countries’ capacity development needs. The Expert Group, as a body of technical experts from national organizations, can support capacity development activities but is understandably limited in its ability to initiate and follow through on the capacity development needs of countries. Thus, the Expert Group, through its Task Team on the Coordination and Communication for the Alignment of Geostatistical Information, is focused on developing a “coordination architecture”. This will underscore that while the Expert Group cannot develop capacity alone, it can function as a ‘first stop’ convening hub for countries to articulate their geostatistical capacity needs and be supported or matched with potential donors and capacity development groups. This will necessitate the permanent participation of donors and other supporting organizations, such as regional commissions and UN-GGIM regional committees, as well as the United Nations system (including the Secretariat) and others, to coordinate the implementation of the GSGF.

### **The second edition of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework**

24. Led by the United Kingdom and the United States of America, the Task Team on the GSGF is pleased to announce the publication of the second edition of the GSGF, which is provided to the Committee as a background document to this report for endorsement. This publication finalizes the work of its Task Team on GSGF, established as part of the Expert Group’s work plan 2023-2025. The focus of this Task Team was on the following concepts and tasks:

- (a) An editorial review to simplify the language and structure of the documentation, ensuring clarity of message to leave no one behind;
- (b) To further promote the Expert Group’s role as a bridge between the statistical and geospatial domains;
- (c) Elaborate on the GSGF’s strategic positioning and alignment to key frameworks in the statistical and geospatial communities (e.g., the UN-IGIF, Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM), the Geospatial View of the Generic Statistical Business Model (GeoGSBPM); and,
- (d) The inclusion of additional topics and guidance, reflecting novel statistical and geospatial developments since the initial drafting of the GSGF.

25. The second edition of the GSGF has been iteratively developed over the past two years. An advanced draft of the second edition was discussed during its eighth meeting in Nairobi, where structural changes were agreed upon and the revised design was welcomed. The updated framework was actively promoted at the Statistical Commission through contributions from the Expert Group, as well as in regional meetings and webinars of UN-GGIM Regional Committees. Following these engagements, the second edition has been finalized by the Expert Group in

close consultation with its forty (40) Member States and observers from across the statistical and geospatial communities. The outcomes of this consultation have been overwhelmingly positive but also underscored that the underlying foundation and principles of the GSGF is a solid foundation for geostatistical integration.

26. In this regard, the second edition of the GSGF does not dramatically change what was adopted by the Committee of Experts in 2019. It is shorter, simplified in structure and language, easier to navigate, and with refreshed branding. It positions the GSGF against other relevant and key United Nations adopted frameworks that support statistical and geospatial data integration. It focuses on being broad and timeless to ensure consistency, clarity, and stability in future years to come. Additional guidance and resources, such as implementation guides, national use cases, and technical guidance, will continue to form complementary resources, allowing for more regular and independent updates.

27. Following the prospective endorsement of the GSGF by the Committee at this session, the Expert Group will provide the second edition of the GSGF to the Statistical Commission for endorsement. The Expert Group notes with continuing regret that resources still need to be mobilized to translate the GSGF into the six official languages of the United Nations. Now, the Expert Group intends to focus its efforts on translating the second edition of the GSGF and welcomes the support of the Committee, including through voluntary contributions or extra-budgetary resources.

### **The paper on the benefits of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for the statistical domain**

28. Developed by Canada and Mexico, the paper entitled ‘The Benefits of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for the Statistical Domain’ is provided to the Committee of Experts as a background document aims to introduce the benefits of the UN-IGIF for the statistical domain, emphasizing its role in enhancing the statistical production process through geospatial integration. The paper consists of five chapters, in two parts: Part 1 is focused on communicating the high-level benefits of the UN-IGIF for the Statistical Domain and is aimed at being a resource for policymakers and decision-makers. Part 2 takes a deep dive into the nine strategic pathways, discussing the benefits of, and how they can be operationalized to enhance national statistical capabilities and capacities.

29. By demonstrating how the UN-IGIF supports the generation of geospatially enabled statistical data, the paper aims to raise awareness of its cross-cutting value across social, economic, and environmental domains. This is especially relevant as National Statistical Offices (NSOs), National Statistical Systems (NSS), and broader data ecosystems evolve to address both current and emerging national priorities—such as the future Rounds of Population and Housing Censuses—and global development agendas, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. The Expert Group continues to note the need to include national experiences of how elements of the UN-IGIF are used to support national (and regional) statistical systems and invites Member States and regional bodies to share these experiences. However, no material has been received so far.

30. With the intent to submit this paper to the forthcoming 57th session of the Statistical Commission in March 2026, the Expert Group proposes to conduct a broad and inclusive global consultation of this document following this present session and will seek coordination with the High-Level Group on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework to ensure that the overarching work of the Committee, through the UN-IGIF, can support the broader alignment of geostatistical integration programmes in other subsidiary bodies of the ECOSOC. This consultation is intended to close in November 2025, with the goal of finalizing and formatting the paper for submission with the Expert Group’s forthcoming report to the Commission. The Committee is invited to take note of

the progress and proposed activities to finalize this paper and contribute to its consultation.

## V. Towards 2030 and beyond

31. The landscape of statistical and geospatial data production is undergoing a significant transformation driven by several key developments. The increased availability of Earth observation imagery, combined with advancements in processing and storage capabilities and improvements in artificial intelligence algorithms, has expanded the possibilities for data analysis and interpretation. At the same time, the use of administrative records is increasing in the generation of both statistical and geospatial information. Data production is also becoming more decentralized, with a growing number of stakeholders contributing to the ecosystem. This shift is fuelled by improved access to diverse data sources, including Earth observation data, sensor networks such as mobile technology and the Internet of Things, administrative records, crowdsourced inputs, big data, and sophisticated processing tools. As a result, there is a decreasing reliance on traditional data collection methods, such as household surveys and interviews. Instead, indirect methods such as web scraping and the use of administrative records are increasingly being adopted. While traditional statistical and geospatial methodologies will continue to play a role in the near term, the emerging model of data production is expected to gain greater prominence. Concurrently, the demand for geospatially enabled statistical information is on the rise, as the integration of these data types becomes critical for informed decision-making and the generation of new insights.

32. These developments underscore the growing complexity of governance in statistical and geospatial information management. National information systems must adapt to ensure a cohesive and integrated approach to handling both domains. In this regard, the geospatial community has positioned the UN-IGIF as a key mechanism to guide this evolving landscape. When enhanced by the GSGF, the UN-IGIF presents generous enabling resources to enhance the production of geospatially integrated statistical data.

33. In this regard, the Expert Group has developed the paper ‘GeoStatistical Integration for Now and the Future: the EG-ISGI Strategic Plan and Vision for 2030’. In adopting a strategic approach that encompasses multi-year guidance, the Expert Group aims to support others, including UN-GGIM Regional Committees and the UN system, in aligning their yearly work plans to enhance the implementation of the GSGF.

34. In considering the evolving perspective of the various mandates provided to the Expert Group from the Statistical Commission and the Committee of Experts. These include Statistical Commission decisions 44/101<sup>4</sup> (2013) and 48/108<sup>5</sup> (2017) and UN-GGIM decisions 3/107<sup>6</sup> (2013) and 9/106<sup>7</sup> (2019). The Expert Group also considers the relevance of ECOSOC resolutions 2016/27, 2022/3, and 2022/24, as well as the UN General Assembly’s adoption of the “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” document (2015). The strategic plan aims to present a forward-looking vision, with the intent of accelerating the integration of statistical and geospatial information across Member States through the implementation of the GSGF, thereby contributing to the production of higher-quality statistics that are better suited to inform decision-making and support the

<sup>4</sup> E/2014/24-E/CN.3/2014/35. See: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/decisions-ref/?code=44/101>

<sup>5</sup> E/2016/24-E/CN.3/2016/34 See: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/decisions-ref/?code=48/108>

<sup>6</sup> E/2013/46-E/C.20/2013/17 Report of the third session of UN-GGIM. See: [https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/documents/GGIM3/Report%20of%20the%20third%20session\\_en.pdf](https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/documents/GGIM3/Report%20of%20the%20third%20session_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> E/2020/46-E/C.20/2019/19 Report of the ninth session of UN-GGIM. See:

See: <https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/9th-Session/documents/GGIM9-report-e.pdf>

implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It proposes three strategic goals (focused on communication exchange and sharing; data governance, availability, and accessibility; and capacity building). These goals are achieved through actions that aim to further define the role of the Expert Group as a means to enhance the capacities of its parent bodies to implement relevant resolutions of ECOSOC.

35. The Expert Group aims to redouble its efforts to promote and raise awareness of the GSGF across various statistical domains, including the environment, agriculture, social, and demographics, among many others, where geostatistical integration is a key enabler. In this regard, the Expert Group is realistic in that while the use of traditional data collection techniques will persist, particularly in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the upcoming 2030 census round, there are still opportunities to implement the GSGF and receive the benefits that its implementation provides.

## **VI. Points for Discussion**

**36. The Committee of Experts is invited to:**

- (a) Take note of the present report, provide guidance, and urge for the continued adoption and implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework;**
- (b) Endorse the second edition of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and urge the mobilization of resources for its translation into the six official languages of the United Nations and others;**
- (c) Endorse decision 2025/8 of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names regarding the ‘concept of a globally unique identifier for cities’;**
- (d) Take note of the progress and proposed activities of the Expert Group during this intersessional period, including the paper ‘Benefits of the UN-IGIF for the statistical domain’;**
- (e) Express its views on the ‘GeoStatistical Integration for Now and the Future: the EG-ISGI Strategic Plan and Vision for 2030’, ensuring that these efforts remain aligned with the strategic objectives and programme of work of the Committee; and,**
- (f) Urge relevant stakeholders to mobilize additional resources to accelerate the implementation of the GSGF.**

# Economic and Social Council

10 July 2025

## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6 – 8 August 2025

Item 12 of the provisional agenda\*

### Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management

## Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report of the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/110](#), in which it welcomed the continuing focus on communicating, promoting and raising awareness of the merits and benefits of effective land administration, acknowledged the importance of addressing the integration of the terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains and understanding the complexities of the land-sea interface, and in that regard expressed appreciation for the ongoing collaborative efforts of the expert group with regional committees and functional groups of the Committee together with relevant international and regional partners and organizations.

The Committee of Experts reiterated that the Framework for Effective Land Administration was an important element of the Committee's work that provided guidance to Member States in developing, reforming, strengthening and modernizing effective and efficient land administration systems. The Committee welcomed the implementation of the Framework by Member States in accordance with national circumstances.

The Committee noted the proposed considerations and preparations for a paper addressing the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, and requested the expert group to consider and include land registration, the use of new technologies and innovation, and to engage Member States and relevant stakeholders on use cases and lessons learned in the proposed paper.

The Committee of Experts commended the expert group for its collaborative approach and requested the deepening of engagement and collaboration with the regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks and other relevant international organizations and stakeholders in its efforts and activities and to include the views and perspectives of Indigenous communities.

In the report, the expert group provides information on its activities, including the organization of virtual and in-person meetings to engage its members and advance its workplan. The expert group also highlights its collaboration with the regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks and international organizations of

\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management. Of particular note were partnerships with the United Nations global geospatial centres, the working group on marine geospatial information, the International Federation of Surveyors and EuroSDR on, and joint contributions towards, promoting the Framework for Effective Land Administration and assisting Member States in their efforts to develop and modernize land administration systems.

The report contains a summary of progress made on the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, which includes the development, in collaboration with the working group on marine geospatial information, of a comprehensive guide designed: (a) to demonstrate to policymakers the value of geospatial information for sustainable development; (b) to provide technical experts with strategies aligned with the nine strategic pathways of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework; and (c) to promote innovative approaches for Member States and the geospatial community. To support the development and ensure the relevance of the guide, the expert group invited Member States to complete a questionnaire in order to collect experiences, identify challenges and good practices and analyse how the Framework's strategic pathways support integration.

The report provides a summary of the international workshop entitled “Joining land and sea”, held in December 2024 in Bogor, Indonesia, which brought together experts to support Member States in addressing the technical and governance complexities of integrating terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains. The report also provides an overview of the expert group’s activities to promote and implement the Framework for Effective Land Administration, with a particular focus on priority regions, including Africa, Latin America and the Arab States.

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## I. Introduction

1. Land administration relates people to land and informs on the “how”, “what”, “who”, “when” and “where” of land tenure, land use, land value and land development. Land administration systems are the basis for recording the complex range of rights, restrictions and responsibilities related to people, policies and places. Effective land administration must be fit-for-purpose, appropriate and adequate, interoperable and sustainable, flexible and inclusive, and able to accelerate efforts to document, record, recognize and monitor people-to-land relationships in all forms. Effective land administration provides humanity with better access to and security of land and property rights. Noting that not all actors can be satisfied with every land administration decision, effective land administration helps mitigate issues related to land as a root cause of conflict, and supports leaving no one behind, the central commitment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2. The Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA), with its nine strategic pathways, provides reference and guidance for Member States when establishing, strengthening, coordinating and monitoring their land administration at national or sub-national levels. FELA aligns directly with the overarching United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) – it effectively implements the UN-IGIF for the land sector. The nine pathways of FELA present a mechanism to achieve effective leadership, advocacy, mobilization and actions to document, record and recognize people-to-land relationships in all forms, for the well-being of society, the environment and the economy.

3. At its thirteenth session in August 2023, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [13/109](#), which included two significant developments. First, the Committee formally renamed this agenda item to “Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management”. Second, it provided strategic direction to the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management (EG-LAM), tasking it to address the inventory of issues it had identified, and specifically to examine how effective land administration can support climate change initiatives. The decision also emphasized integrating terrestrial, maritime and cadastral domains through strategic partnerships with international organizations, reflecting a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to land administration.

4. At its fourteenth session in August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/110](#), welcoming the Expert Group’s continued progress in promoting effective land administration and particularly acknowledging the successful fifth meeting of the Expert Group (held in Aguascalientes, Mexico, April 2024). The Committee emphasized the critical importance of integrating terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains to address climate challenges and enhance coastal resilience and endorsed the development of a guiding document to support this integration. While reaffirming FELA as a fundamental framework, the Committee underscored the need for flexible implementation based on national circumstances. The decision encouraged the Expert Group to maintain its coordinated, cross-cutting and inclusive approach, and to deepen collaboration with regional committees, functional groups and international organizations. Furthermore, the Committee supported the Expert Group’s initiatives to enhance outreach in underrepresented regions through webinars and knowledge-sharing activities, reflecting a commitment to advancing integrated geospatial information management with inclusive and effective implementation across Member States.

5. The present report describes the Expert Group’s progress and the implementation of its 2024–2025 workplan, highlighting key activities and

collaborations with regional committees, functional groups and international organizations during the intersessional period. The report concludes by outlining planned future activities and strategic considerations going forward.

6. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of this report and express its views on the activities and progress of the Expert Group – focusing on improving leadership, advocacy and awareness of FELA and the merits and benefits of effective land administration at the country level; the promotion and implementation of FELA alongside the UN-IGIF at the country level; the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains; and the Expert Group's efforts in addressing its inventory of issues and executing its workplan for 2024–2025. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 45.

## II. Workplan 2024 – 2025

7. During the intersessional period, the Expert Group began implementing its workplan, convened in-person and virtual meetings, supported various activities, and collaborated with regional committees, functional groups of the Committee of Experts, and international and regional organizations. The workplan defines five focus areas: (1) leadership and advocacy in effective land administration; (2) promotion and implementation of FELA at the country level; (3) integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains; (4) innovation in land administration and management to strengthen resilience and sustainability; and (5) engagement and collaboration, including efforts to further anchor FELA in the Committee's programme of work.

8. The next section highlights activities undertaken to drive the implementation of the Expert Group's workplan (see Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of activities

S/N	Activity	Date
1	Fourteenth session of UN-GGIM: Side event on Integration of terrestrial, maritime and cadastral domains	6 August 2024
2	Regional Seminar on Effective Land Administration and Management – New Delhi, India	26 November 2024
3	Geoinformation Week Malaysia 2024	24–26 September 2024
4	COBRAC (Brazilian Congress on Cadastre) – Brazil	November 2024
5	UN-GGIM-AP Working Group 2 – Cadastre and Land Management	29 November 2024
6	UN-GGCE International Workshop on Integration of Terrestrial, Maritime, Built and Cadastral Domains (“Joining Land and Sea”) – Bogor, Indonesia	2–5 December 2024
7	12th Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States – Presentation on EG-LAM activities and FELA	2–6 February 2025
8	Arab Land Conference 2025	18–20 February 2025
9	5th Plenary Meeting of the Subcommittee on Geodesy	10–14 March 2025
10	Compilation Report on the Integration of Terrestrial, Maritime, Built and Cadastral Domains (Part 1: Terrestrial and Maritime Domains)	Ongoing
11	FELA Framework Global Virtual Webinar (planned)	17 July 2025 (scheduled)

### **III. Activities and progress**

#### **Leadership Update and Domain Integration Forum at the fourteenth session of UN-GGIM**

9. During the intersessional period, at the Expert Group's nineteenth virtual meeting (27 May 2025), Singapore (Singapore Land Authority) stepped down as co-Chair after having jointly led the Expert Group alongside Chile. The Expert Group expressed its sincere appreciation to Singapore for its valuable contributions and dedicated leadership. The Netherlands (Kadaster International) volunteered to assume the co-Chair role and was confirmed as the new co-Chair, with Singapore remaining an active member of the Expert Group.

10. A major focus during the reporting period was the integration of geospatial information across domains. At the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts in August 2024, the Expert Group organized a side event on "Integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains". This forum opened with a comprehensive presentation exploring the fundamental aspects of integrating these domains. It was followed by an insightful case study on terrestrial–maritime integration in the Pacific region, presented by representatives from Fiji, Tonga, and the Pacific Community. The Pacific case study highlighted practical lessons learned and good practices, with particular focus on the unique challenges faced by small island developing States in managing their land–sea interface.

11. A moderated discussion during the side event included expert discussants from various working groups. The discussion emphasized the importance of addressing technical complexities at the land–sea interface, the critical role of geodetic reference frames and datums, and the need for integrated approaches to support climate resilience and sustainable coastal management.

12. Key outcomes from this forum included recognition of the need for comprehensive guidance material for Member States and an appreciation that both technical and governance challenges must be addressed to achieve successful domain integration. Discussions stressed the need to consider multiple aspects – including standardized data formats and interoperability standards, legal and policy frameworks, and emerging technologies – to enable seamless integration. The value of international collaboration in developing solutions was highlighted as crucial for advancing this complex work. This well-attended side event represented a significant step forward in addressing the integration of different geospatial domains, and it demonstrated strong support for the ongoing work of both the Expert Group and the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information (WG-MGI) in this area.

#### **Regional Seminar on Effective Land Administration and Management**

13. The Regional Seminar on Effective Land Administration and Management, held on 26 November 2024 in New Delhi, India, was a special event convened as part of the 13th UN-GGIM: Asia-Pacific plenary meeting. The seminar was structured around two sessions: the first showcased regional developments in land administration and cadastre, with presentations by seven Member States; the second explored public–private perspectives on driving innovation and capacity-building, with contributions from industry and academia. This format allowed for a thorough examination of both practical implementations and strategic considerations in land administration.

14. The seminar's content aligned closely with several focus areas of the EG-LAM workplan. In terms of leadership and advocacy (Focus Area 1), it provided a platform for Member States to demonstrate leadership by sharing experiences in

modernizing land administration. A presentation dedicated to FELA supported Focus Area 2, by promoting FELA's implementation at the country level. The seminar's emphasis on technological innovation – including discussions on AI-driven geospatial information platforms, modern surveying technologies, and digital cadastre systems – directly addressed innovation in land administration (Focus Area 4). Importantly, the event exemplified engagement and collaboration (Focus Area 5) by bringing together diverse stakeholders from government, the private sector, and academia to exchange knowledge and build partnerships.

15. Through intensive discussions, the seminar identified several critical challenges facing land administration systems in the region. These included regulatory and institutional barriers to innovation, technical and human resource limitations, and significant gaps in capacity and education. The persistent issue of siloed operations between agencies, as well as ongoing challenges with data quality and digitization, emerged as common themes across different Member States.

16. Importantly, the seminar did not only identify problems – it also elicited potential solutions. Participants emphasized the need for standardized geospatial curricula in higher education, the implementation of professional certification programs for surveyors and geospatial professionals, and the adoption of modern technologies to improve public access and participation in land administration processes. The value of global frameworks like the UN-IGIF was highlighted, along with calls to promote open data initiatives to facilitate better integration and cooperation. The success of the seminar was in its practical, solution-focused approach to the EG-LAM workplan, providing actionable insights for improving land administration in Asia and the Pacific. The outcomes of this seminar align with the broader objectives of the Committee of Experts and offer clear direction for Member States seeking to modernize their land administration systems while fostering regional cooperation and knowledge exchange.

### **UN-GGIM: Asia-Pacific Working Group 2 – Towards Integrated Land Administration**

17. The UN-GGIM: Asia-Pacific Working Group 2 on Cadastre and Land Management met on 29 November 2024 in New Delhi, India, alongside the regional plenary. Notably, the Working Group was renamed to “Integrated Geospatial Information for Effective Land Administration”, aligning its scope and title more directly with the evolving agenda and terminology of the Committee of Experts. The meeting’s resolutions emphasized several priorities: engaging young leaders in the geospatial field; aligning effective land administration activities with the UN-IGIF and FELA to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and reaffirming core principles such as fit-for-purpose approaches, interoperability, sustainability, flexibility and inclusiveness. A practical outcome of the meeting was a request for Member States to participate in a terrestrial–maritime integration questionnaire (for the aforementioned guiding document), underscoring the region’s commitment to integrated approaches in land administration.

18. These outcomes strongly support all five focus areas of the Expert Group’s workplan. For example, developing young geospatial leaders and advocating integrated approaches reinforces Focus Area 1 (Leadership and Advocacy). The direct emphasis on FELA implementation corresponds to Focus Area 2. The support for the terrestrial–maritime integration initiative demonstrates a commitment to Focus Area 3 (Domain Integration). The call for interoperability and sustainable solutions aligns with Focus Area 4 (Innovation and Resilience). Finally, the emphasis on avoiding duplication through coordination clearly supports Focus Area 5 (Engagement and Collaboration). Overall, the Working Group’s actions reflect a comprehensive approach to advancing effective land administration in Asia-Pacific, in strong alignment with global frameworks and with an eye to developing future leadership in the sector.

## **International Workshop “Joining Land and Sea”**

19. An International Workshop on the Integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains – themed “Joining Land and Sea” – took place on 2–5 December 2024 in Bogor, Indonesia. Hosted by Badan Informasi Geospasial (BIG) and organized by the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE), the workshop substantially advanced several areas of the EG-LAM workplan. The workshop most directly addressed Focus Area 3 (Domain Integration) by convening experts to examine technical and policy aspects of integrating land-based and marine geospatial information. In addition, the workshop supported Focus Area 1 (Leadership and Advocacy) through high-level discussions and the development of effective communication strategies, Focus Area 4 (Innovation) by exploring cutting-edge approaches and technologies for integration, and Focus Area 5 (Engagement and Collaboration) by bringing together a wide range of domain experts and organizations, including the WG-MGI, the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks, and other international bodies.

20. A key theme that emerged from the workshop was the challenge of integrating data across traditionally separate domains to address complex real-world questions. It was noted that while experts within specific domains (for example, hydrographers or land surveyors) can make very precise decisions in their own areas, broader issues – such as assessing the impacts of land subsidence in coastal cities – demand expertise and data that span multiple domains. Participants highlighted that, at present, no comprehensive guidance exists for Member States on how to effectively integrate land and sea data to tackle such multidisciplinary challenges.

21. The workshop identified several critical issues and challenges that need to be addressed, including:

- Governance challenges: Many countries have historically managed maritime and terrestrial geospatial information separately, leading to siloed governance and coordination gaps.
- Geodetic reference frameworks: There is a need for better understanding and connection between geodetic reference systems and datasets across the land and sea domains.
- Fit-for-purpose solutions: Integration strategies must be “fit for purpose”, taking into account each nation’s unique circumstances and requirements rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.
- Technical complexities: Differences in vertical datums and other reference standards pose significant technical hurdles for aligning terrestrial and marine data.
- Capacity building: Developing countries, in particular, require capacity development and knowledge transfer to manage and integrate complex geospatial information.
- International collaboration: Sustainable integration of geospatial data will require strengthened international collaboration, to share best practices, technologies and resources.

22. A primary outcome of the workshop was a commitment to develop comprehensive guidance material for Member States on land–sea integration. The forthcoming guidance will provide practical information on establishing common reference levels, requisite geodetic infrastructure, and methods to connect different height and depth models, along with advice on implementation. The guidance will address key technical elements such as choosing appropriate geodetic datums and geoid models, harmonizing land height reference systems with tidal and sea level models, and the importance of storing data at the highest available accuracy and transforming it as needed for various uses.

23. The workshop also established a clear path forward for improving how complex geospatial information is communicated and put into practice. Plans were outlined to develop communication materials that explain technical concepts in accessible terms for decision-makers and the public—these will include cost-benefit analyses, impact assessments, and simplified visual graphics to illustrate the value of integration. Participants furthermore recognized the critical importance of sustaining the global geodetic reference frame and infrastructure (“the global geodesy supply chain”) and emphasized the need to cultivate the next generation of geospatial professionals with relevant expertise. These outcomes reflect a balanced approach between technical advancement and real-world implementation, with a strong focus on capacity-building and effective communication to ensure that integrated geospatial information can support resilience and sustainable development.

### **Geospatial Innovations Week – Egypt’s Cadastre Modernization**

24. Members of the Expert Group and the UN-GGIM Private Sector Network jointly organized the First Geospatial Innovations Week in Cairo, Egypt, from 9 to 13 December 2024. Hosted at the German University in Cairo, this inaugural conference was unique in combining high-level presentations with practical training. Each morning featured international and Egyptian keynote speakers, and each afternoon offered hands-on workshops. A total of 311 attendees from 13 countries participated, marking great success for the first conference of its kind. Plans are already underway to continue this series with a Second Geospatial Innovations Week in December 2025.

25. Two keynote presentations by the Egyptian Survey Authority (ESA) addressed the ongoing modernization of the Egyptian cadastre. The first focused on upgrading Egypt’s geodetic infrastructure – specifically, modernizing the network of GNSS stations to provide centimeter-level positioning via real-time kinematic (RTK) services for cadastral updates. The second keynote outlined the challenges Egypt faces in updating its cadastral records amid rapid building and infrastructure development. To date, only about 9% of Egypt’s total urban areas have up-to-date cadastral information. This underscores the need for new technologies, such as GeoAI, advanced GNSS hardware and software, and automated interpretation of satellite and aerial imagery, to accelerate cadastral surveying and data capture in the near future. In addition, representatives from Kadaster International (Netherlands) and Hexagon/Leica Geosystems delivered keynote addresses on state-of-the-art approaches in modern cadastre and GNSS. Industry experts from Esri and Leica Geosystems (Dubai) also presented new workflows for geospatial information technology and 3D/4D mapping, respectively.

26. During discussions, participants proposed initiating a pilot project involving ESA, Hexagon/Leica Geosystems, the German University in Cairo, Kadaster International and the University of Stuttgart. The pilot, planned to begin in late 2025, will demonstrate how the latest geospatial technologies and methodologies can significantly accelerate Egypt’s cadastre modernization, in alignment with UN-GGIM’s IGIF and FELA principles. A key lesson from the Geospatial Innovations Week was the value of the UN-GGIM network itself: its members and stakeholders proved highly cooperative and supportive, offering a ready platform for knowledge exchange. In particular, the UN-GGIM Private Sector Network was recognized as playing an important role in helping developing countries address geospatial challenges by facilitating access to expertise, technology and training.

### **Outreach in the Arab States**

27. The Expert Group was invited to participate in the 12th Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States, held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 2 to 6 February 2025. This opportunity was used to introduce the work of the Expert Group – and the

principles of FELA – to the national geospatial and mapping agencies of the Arab States.

28. The presentation delivered at the Arab States plenary focused on two main areas: an introduction to FELA, and an overview of the Expert Group's work on geospatial information domain integration. The aim was to raise awareness and encourage Member States in the region to consider implementing FELA in their land administration initiatives. The presentation also highlighted the value and importance of integrating data across terrestrial, marine and built environment domains – an ongoing focus of the Expert Group's efforts – to support sustainable land and coastal management in the region.

### **Collaboration with the Subcommittee on Geodesy**

29. The fifth plenary meeting of the Subcommittee on Geodesy took place on 12 March 2025 at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany. During this meeting, participants reported significant progress in the collaboration between the UN-GGCE, the Expert Group and the WG-MGI to address land–sea domain integration challenges.

30. A key highlight of the discussion was the emphasis on strengthening partnerships and collaborative efforts in integrating land and sea geospatial information. The meeting recognized the importance of leveraging each partner's unique strengths and expertise, and of incorporating the latest research findings into practical applications. This collaborative approach builds on the outcomes of the “Joining Land and Sea” workshop, held in Bogor, December 2024 and is contributing to the development of a guiding document that will address the complexities of integrating terrestrial and maritime geospatial data.

31. The collaboration with the Subcommittee on Geodesy demonstrates a coordinated approach to solving the technical challenges of domain integration, with geodesy providing the fundamental reference framework needed for seamless land–sea data integration. These efforts align with the broader objectives of improving geospatial information management, while ensuring technical accuracy and reliability. The initiative directly supports Focus Area 3 (Integration of domains) and Focus Area 5 (Engagement and collaboration) of the EG-LAM workplan, exemplifying the Expert Group's commitment to fostering meaningful partnerships and advancing technical solutions for integrating geospatial information across domains.

### **Compilation Report on Terrestrial and Maritime Domain Integration**

32. The Expert Group, in collaboration with the WG-MGI, has made substantial progress in developing a Compilation report on the Integration of Terrestrial, Maritime, Built and Cadastral Domains - Part 1: Terrestrial and Maritime Domains. This joint initiative aims to gather Member States' perspectives on terrestrial–maritime integration and to put forward key recommendations for achieving effective geospatial information management across these domains. The report will provide a foundation for the Committee of Experts to identify and discuss priority actions needed to achieve seamless integration between land and sea, while also laying the groundwork for future efforts to integrate other domains, such as the built environment, in a comprehensive manner.

33. The development of the report followed a structured, inclusive approach. A detailed questionnaire was designed and circulated to Member States to capture a range of insights. The questionnaire comprised three main sections: (a) establishing the conceptual understanding of “domain integration” within national geospatial information management; (b) exploring practical applications and benefits of terrestrial–maritime integration, including how such integration supports national development priorities and contributes to the SDGs; and (c) leveraging the nine

strategic pathways of the UN-IGIF to identify the three pathways most crucial for successful integration in each country, as well as the three pathways where additional support or guidance is needed. The Expert Group received 47 responses from 40 Member States (several Member States submitted more than one response, through different national agencies).

34. Member States have been actively engaged through the questionnaire, sharing their challenges, success stories and good practices in terrestrial–maritime integration. These responses form the evidence base for the forthcoming report. Through a systematic analysis of the inputs – structured around the nine strategic pathways of the IGIF – the report examines conceptual understanding, practical benefits, and implementation approaches under various dimensions, including technical workflows, legal and policy frameworks, institutional coordination and capacity gaps. Starting with fundamental definitions and frameworks, the report then presents detailed analyses of the benefits and challenges of terrestrial–maritime integration, and concludes with six key recommendations. These recommendations cover critical areas, including:

- establishing clear definitions and terminology for geospatial domain integration;
- documenting and sharing successful use cases and applications of land–sea integration;
- developing governance frameworks to enable integrated terrestrial and marine geospatial information management;
- addressing technical gaps (e.g., data interoperability and reference frame alignment) that hinder integration;
- building national capacity and skills for integrated geospatial data management; and
- enhancing communication and stakeholder engagement to underscore the importance and benefits of domain integration.

Together, these recommendations represent significant steps toward achieving more effective and integrated approaches to land and marine administration and management.

### **Global Webinar on the FELA Framework**

35. In line with Focus Area 2 of the workplan – promoting and encouraging the implementation of FELA at the country level – the Expert Group has identified a need to broaden global awareness and understanding of the framework. To address this, the Expert Group plans to increase the number of virtual outreach events. These events aim to raise awareness, promote knowledge exchange, and facilitate access to information about FELA for Member States, institutional stakeholders, and the broader geospatial community.

36. As a first step, a global virtual webinar on FELA is being organized to provide comprehensive information on the framework’s value and use. The primary objective of the webinar is to highlight the benefits of FELA, its relevance to the geospatial and land administration community, and practical examples of its implementation at national and regional levels. To ensure broad accessibility and inclusivity, the session will be conducted in both English and Spanish, supported by financial contributions from UN-GGIM: Americas. The webinar is conveniently organized within the series of webinars leading up to the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts, providing a good opportunity for outreach in the geospatial community.

37. The webinar program will feature thematic discussions covering key elements of the FELA framework, challenges in regional and local implementation, enabling technologies and platforms for effective land administration, and

illustrative case studies from different countries. Renowned researchers and practitioners in the field of land administration and FELA will share insights on current initiatives and innovations.

38. Scheduled for 17 July 2025, the webinar will be open to a global audience and will be actively publicized among land administration institutions worldwide. The intent is to reach professionals and decision-makers who deal with land administration challenges on a daily basis, ensuring they can benefit from the knowledge shared. This initiative is expected to significantly boost awareness of FELA and support more informed, inclusive and integrated land governance practices.

#### **IV. Next steps**

39. The Expert Group continues to implement its agreed workplan and to broaden its outreach, with a strong focus on making key resources available in multiple languages. FELA has already been translated into Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, French and Spanish by Expert Group members, and further voluntary translation efforts are welcomed – both for FELA itself and for the upcoming guiding document on integrating terrestrial, maritime and cadastral domains. Such translations are vital for raising awareness, promoting understanding and encouraging the implementation of FELA and geospatial domain integration in countries where English is not widely used.

40. To promote the benefits of effective land administration and the country-level implementation of FELA, the Expert Group (in collaboration with UN-GGIM: Americas) will host the global webinar described above, with live interpretation in English and Spanish. Beyond this, the Expert Group will continue to support and participate in relevant activities organized by its members, partners, regional committees and other functional groups of the Committee of Experts. In particular, the group will leverage virtual platforms to reach the land administration community in all regions of the world, facilitating meaningful dialogue and creating opportunities for regional collaboration and knowledge exchange.

41. Recognizing the complex nature of integrating terrestrial and maritime domains, the Expert Group is committed to supporting efforts to develop comprehensive technical documentation and guidelines for land–sea integration. In parallel, the Expert Group and its partners will intensify capacity-building activities to share technical know-how on datum transformations, geodetic reference frames and other foundational aspects, and to promote the practical benefits of seamless integration between land and marine geospatial information. These efforts will involve working closely with members, regional committees and other groups under the Committee of Experts. They demonstrate the Expert Group’s commitment to providing practical guidance and technical expertise while fostering international collaboration to advance effective land administration.

#### **Supporting a Hub on Effective Land Administration**

42. The Committee of Experts has long recognized that frameworks such as FELA – and complementary standards like the Land Administration Domain Model (LADM) – provide essential guidance for building fit-for-purpose, interoperable and sustainable land administration systems. However, many countries, particularly in the developing countries, face challenges in translating these global frameworks into locally implementable solutions.

43. In this context, Expert Group intends to discuss a proposal for the establishment of a global Hub with a focus on operationalizing the framework for effective land administration as a timely and strategic initiative for technical support, innovation and capacity development, and could provide much-needed

assistance to countries in implementing FELA and LADM in line with their unique legal and societal contexts.

44. The Expert Group will further discuss the proposal and contributions to the development of such Hub. The proposed Hub can be a key opportunity to help close the implementation gap – to move from principles and frameworks to on-the-ground improvements. By providing targeted support, facilitating collaboration, and enabling knowledge sharing, the Hub could greatly assist countries in operationalizing FELA and related standards, thereby strengthening their land administration systems.

## V. Points for Discussion

45. The Committee of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the present report and express its views on the work, progress and activities of the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management, and provide guidance on ways to strengthen leadership, advocacy and awareness of the Framework for Effective Land Administration and its implementation, alongside the UN-IGIF, and on the merits of effective land administration at the country level, in accordance with national circumstances;
- (b) Provide views and guidance to accelerate the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains in geospatial information management, including support for the efforts outlined in the above-mentioned compilation report on land-sea integration, and encourage Member States and relevant stakeholders to consider the recommendations proposed therein;
- (c) Encourage innovation in land administration and management to strengthen climate resilience and sustainability, and consider how new technologies and approaches can be harnessed in this regard;
- (d) Encourage that the Framework for Effective Land Administration be maintained as a living document, cognizant of changing social, economic, environmental, political and technological environments, and be adaptable and evolving in accordance to diverse national needs; and
- (e) Encourage the engagement, collaboration and partnerships – including with UN-GGIM regional committees, thematic groups, and external organizations – to improve awareness and coordination in implementing FELA according to national circumstances and needs; and, take note of the support by partners that have organized, hosted and supported the Expert Group's activities as mentioned in the present report.

# Economic and Social Council

09 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6 – 8 August 2025

Item 13 of the provisional agenda\*

Integrated marine geospatial information

## Integrated marine geospatial information

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report of the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/111](#), in which it welcomed the report of the working group and its leadership in continuing to raise awareness, provide guidance and encourage the availability, accessibility and integration of marine geospatial information for the benefit of society, the environment and the economy, and urged sustained efforts to provide practical guidance and to support the implementation of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management in accordance with national circumstances. The Committee also welcomed and supported the proposal for the working group on marine geospatial information and the International Hydrographic Organization marine spatial data infrastructures working group to deepen their collaboration and cooperation and optimize resourcing through the formation of a single unified global work group, and requested the working group on marine geospatial information to initiate that process by updating its current working modality and procedures.

The Committee acknowledged the importance of and encouraged a coordinated, cross-cutting and holistic approach in addressing the integration of the terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, noting its implications for addressing climate challenges, coastal resilience, sustainable coastal communities and the blue economy, among others, and the need to tackle the technical complexities of the land -sea interface and the vertical reference frame, as well as considering cross-cutting perspectives such as institutional, legal, regulatory and policy aspects and governance arrangements.

The report provides an outline of activities undertaken by the working group during the reporting period. In it, the working group highlights its updated workplan for 2025–2026 and its collaboration with international partners, including the International Hydrographic Organization, technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization, the Open Geospatial Consortium and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence. It also promotes the use of innovation and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to facilitate the integration and implementation of marine geospatial information management efforts.

In the report, the working group highlights three priority areas of focus: (a) advancing the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, including the convening of the forum on the integration of those domains held in August 2024 and the development of a reference guide aligned with the strategic pathways of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework; (b) promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management at the national level; and (c) strengthening collaboration with the marine spatial data infrastructures working group

of the International Hydrographic Organization by updating working modalities and procedures. With regard to advancing the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, the reference guide is being developed in collaboration with the expert group on land administration and management, supported by innovation and experimentation through the Joint International Hydrographic Organization-Singapore Innovation and Technology Laboratory, including the application of artificial intelligence. In support of that work, the working group and the expert group on land administration and management jointly developed a questionnaire to compile use cases and perspectives on domain integration and on ways in which the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management can support integration efforts. The questionnaire received 47 responses from 38 Member States, the insights of which are informing the development of the reference guide.

The report also provides a summary of the international workshop entitled “Joining land and sea”, held in December 2024 in Bogor, Indonesia, which brought together experts from the Committee of Experts, the expert group on land administration and management, the working group on marine geospatial information, the working group on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management, the Subcommittee on Geodesy, the International Hydrographic Organization, the Open Geospatial Consortium and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence. Participants explored the use of integrated geodetic information and reference systems to address global challenges, including measuring sea level rise and assessing the impacts of floods on freshwater aquifers.

The report provides several suggestions for enhancing collaboration and integration for the consideration of the Committee of Experts. The working group reaffirms its commitment to promoting the implementation of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management in alignment with the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and to advancing integrated marine geospatial information management to support coordinated, sustainable and resilient responses to climate impacts and ocean-related challenges. In the report, the working group also notes its commitment to strengthening cross-cutting initiatives across terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains through continued engagement with stakeholders in land management, geodesy and the International Hydrographic Organization, within and beyond the United Nations system. These activities serve as recognition of the importance of coordinated action to deliver sustainable and integrated solutions that contribute to broader societal, environmental, and economic benefits.

## I. Introduction

1. Approximately seventy percent of the Earth's surface is covered by water, encompassing lakes, rivers, coastal zones, seas, and oceans. Marine environments are vital for socio-economic development, food and energy production (including renewable energy), ecosystem health, and human well-being. The oceans are central to climate change adaptation and connect society, the environment, and the global economy. For example, over 4 billion people rely on fish as a primary protein source, and an estimated 90% of global trade is conducted via the oceans. Marine geospatial information is integral to achieving all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

2. At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/111](#), in which it welcomed the working group's report and leadership, and urged continued efforts to raise awareness and provide guidance to improve the availability, accessibility, and integration of marine geospatial information. The Committee emphasized support for the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management (UN-IGIF-Hydro), in accordance with national circumstances.

3. The Committee supported the proposal for the working group and the International Hydrographic Organization Marine Spatial Data Infrastructures Working Group (IHO-MSDIWG) to deepen their collaboration and cooperation and optimize resourcing through the formation of a single unified global work group, and requested the working group to initiate that process by updating its current working modality and procedures in coordination with the Marine Spatial Data Infrastructures Working Group

4. The Committee also encouraged deeper collaboration among regional UN-GGIM regional committees, thematic networks, the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), and other international organizations to address challenges such as sea-level monitoring, the land-sea interface, sustainable and resilient coastal communities, and the development of the blue economy. The Committee further requested that integrated marine geospatial information management, including the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built, and cadastral domains, be included within its proposed UN-GGIM strategic framework for 2025–2030.

5. The Committee acknowledged the need for a holistic approach to domain integration, including addressing technical challenges at the land-sea interface and vertical reference frame, and considering institutional, legal, regulatory, and governance aspects. It further requested that relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea's Agreement on Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) be taken into account.

6. Member States were also urged to contribute to the Working Group's activities and to strengthen partnerships, ensuring that the UN-IGIF-Hydro meets countries' operational requirements, particularly for Small Island Developing States.

7. The Working Group underscored the importance of promoting awareness of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) and the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management (UN-IGIF-Hydro). The Committee emphasized that UN-IGIF-Hydro must remain a living document, continuously evolving to remain relevant for national marine geospatial and hydrographic initiatives. This report provides updates on the working group's progress and activities during the reporting period, including efforts to advance the development and implementation of the UN-IGIF-Hydro at the national level.

8. As reliance on marine resources continues to grow, timely and reliable access to marine geospatial data becomes increasingly essential for evidence-based management of coastal and marine areas. Knowing where people, ecosystems, activities, and assets are – and how they relate – is critical for informed policy and decision-making. The timeliness of such data is equally important. Access to real-time marine geospatial information is necessary for effective emergency preparedness and response to crises and disasters. The working group encouraged national efforts to improve marine geospatial data availability and accessibility, including through the repurposing of existing data and the development

and implementation of open marine geospatial data and metadata standards at the national level.

9. The Committee of Experts is invited to express its views on the working group's progress in guiding and promoting the availability, accessibility, and integration of marine geospatial information in support of sustainable development, climate resilience, and broader environmental and economic benefits. Points for discussion and decision are outlined in paragraph 22.

## **II. Meetings and Activities**

10. The working group continued its work during the intersessional period, holding virtual meetings and collaborating with international partners to advance its objectives. It held four virtual meetings, during which it continued its consideration of the UN-IGIF-Hydro, delivered work plan items, and collaborated with the IHO, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) to ensure synergy and avoid duplication.

### **Integration of terrestrial, marine, built, and cadastral domains**

11. A key priority of the working group has been the integration of terrestrial, marine, built, and cadastral domains. In 2023, the working group, in collaboration with the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management (EG-LAM), continued its joint efforts to produce a Compilation report synthesizing good practices and lessons learned in domain integration. The report addresses key challenges such as vertical referencing, data interoperability, metadata standards, and explores how integration supports climate resilience, coastal development, and disaster management. The working group acknowledged EG-LAM's leadership in advancing this important work.

12. The Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks and the IHO-Singapore Innovation and Technology Laboratory (IHO-Singapore Lab) have also joined the initiative, contributing technical expertise and piloting innovative solutions, including AI-based approaches. To inform the Compilation report, a joint questionnaire was issued to gather Member State perspectives on domain integration and the relevance of the UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro frameworks. A total of 47 responses were received from 40 Member States, and these insights have shaped the content and direction of the report.

13. Structured around the nine strategic pathways of the UN-IGIF, the Compilation report addresses what needs to be integrated, as well as how and why integration should occur. It includes: (i) definitions of domain integration provided by Member States; (ii) case studies highlighting integration benefits in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals; and (iii) key enablers and challenges aligned with the UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro. The report identifies priority action areas and presents seven recommendations for the Committee's consideration.

### **Domain Integration Forum (6 August 2024)**

14. A combined forum on the Integration of terrestrial, maritime, built, and cadastral domains was held, sponsored by EG-LAM, WG-MGI, and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE). The forum addressed integration-related issues and gathered insights on why Member States should consider domain integration initiatives. Participants included representatives from governments, academic institutions, the private sector, and organizations such as the IHO and UN-GGCE. Discussions highlighted the importance of long-term monitoring of land and sea to assess sea-level changes and vertical land motion, as well as the use of emerging technologies like LiDAR and Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) reflectometry. The forum also considered the benefits and challenges of using the geoid as a unified height reference for land-sea integration.

### **"Joining Land and Sea" Workshop (2–5 December 2024)**

15. The co-Chairs working group and EG-LAM participated in the International Workshop organized by UN-GGCE and hosted by the Geospatial Information Agency of

Indonesia in Bogor, Indonesia. The workshop brought together experts from the Committee of Experts including the working group on Policy and Legal Frameworks, and the Subcommittee on Geodesy, IHO, OGC, and UN-GGCE. Discussions explored integrated geodetic and spatial reference systems to address global challenges such as sea-level rise and freshwater aquifer impacts from coastal flooding. Participants were invited to complete a joint questionnaire, developed in collaboration with EG-LAM, to inform the Compilation report on domain integration and support the advancement of the working group's workplan.

### **Emerging Applications**

16. The working group observed growing interest in and usage of marine geospatial information for new applications beyond traditional navigational safety purposes. In particular, integrated land-sea data are being used to study the impacts of climate change and sea-level rise. The working group also noted potential uses of marine geospatial data in protecting people, the environment, and infrastructure (e.g., undersea cables and pipelines) from unregulated use of the underwater sea space by an increasing number of civilian, manned or unmanned, sub-surface activities of vessels. Another emerging area of interest is the designation of area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, under the BBNJ Agreement. The working group recognizes the need to articulate the value of integrated marine geospatial information across safety, environmental, and economic dimensions. These efforts will help build investment cases, foster partnerships, and guide national capacity-building aligned with the UN-IGIF-Hydro.

### **Joint Working Group with IHO-MSDIWG**

17. At its fourteenth session, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/111, which welcomed and supported the proposal for the working group and IHO-MSDIWG to strengthen collaboration, enhance cooperation, and optimize resources through the establishment of a unified global joint working group. In response, the working group was requested to initiate this process by reviewing and updating its working modality and procedures in coordination with the IHO-MSDIWG.

18. To advance this effort, the working group has engaged closely with the IHO-MSDIWG on the necessary next steps, including: (i) proposing an appropriate name for the joint working group; (ii) updating the Terms of Reference; and (iii) seeking endorsement from both the Committee of Experts and the IHO for the revised working modality. The IHO Inter-Regional Coordination Committee has formally endorsed the proposed name—UN-GGIM & IHO Joint Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information—and the updated Terms of Reference (provided in Annex I of this report).

## **III. Next Steps and Considerations**

19. Going forward, the Working Group identified the following priorities for 2025–2026: (a) advancing the implementation of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management at the country level; (b) promoting the coordinated integration of terrestrial, maritime, built, and cadastral domains; (c) examining the implications of the BBNJ Agreement for integrated marine geospatial information management; (d) identifying areas of collaboration to demonstrate and communicate the value of integrated marine geospatial information; and (e) finalizing the establishment of the Joint Working Group with the IHO-MSDIWG and subsequently developing its joint workplan.

20. The Working Group remains committed to building momentum in coordinated and cross-cutting efforts in domain integration through its continued engagements and collaborations. It will continue engaging stakeholders in land administration, geodesy, and hydrography to ensure coordinated approaches. This reflects the understanding that integrated solutions are essential for addressing climate impacts and supporting sustainable development.

21. The Compilation report emphasizes that domain integration should be approached through the lens of the nine strategic pathways of UN-IGIF. The initial focus should be on addressing technical challenges, particularly those at the land-sea boundary and within the

vertical reference system. Integration strategies should draw on good practices from other disciplines and take into account legal, policy, and governance perspectives. The working group encourages Member States and partner organizations to prioritize these efforts, recognizing their significance for climate resilience, disaster risk management, marine protected areas and the advancement of sustainable coastal development.

## IV. Points for Discussion

22. The Committee of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the present report and provide guidance on the ongoing activities, and proposed next steps of the working group, including the update to its work plan;
- (b) Endorse the proposed name, Terms of Reference, and working modalities of the new Joint Working Group developed in collaboration with the IHO;
- (c) Take note of the priority areas and next steps identified by the working group, express its views, and provide guidance on the way forward, including on the collective efforts to advance the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built, and cadastral domains, as reflected in the recommendations of the Compilation report;
- (d) Express its views on the necessary collaboration and partnerships required to enhance understanding and coordination in support of the implementation of the UN-IGIF-Hydro, ensuring it meets the operational needs of Member States; and
- (e) Express its appreciation to the Government of Indonesia and its Geospatial Information Agency for successfully hosting the international workshop on “Joining Land and Sea,” held from 2 to 5 December 2024 in Bogor.

## ANNEX I

### UN-GGIM & IHO JOINT WORKING GROUP ON MARINE GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION (MGI)

#### Draft Terms of Reference

##### 1. Mandate

1.1. The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), at its Fourteenth Session in August 2024 (decision 14/111), welcomed the proposal to consolidate its Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information with the International Hydrographic Organization Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure Working Group (IHO-MSDIWG). The Committee requested both groups to initiate this process by updating their working modalities and procedures in coordination with each other.

1.2. The UN-GGIM and IHO Joint Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information (hereinafter "the Working Group") is established under the mandate of UN-GGIM, a subsidiary expert body of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and under the authority of the Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC) of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) to strengthen global coordination, technical development, and strategic alignment in the domain of marine geospatial information.

1.3. The Working Group aligns its activities with the marine geospatial information policy directions of both UN-GGIM and the IHO, ensuring consistency with the marine geospatial information policy directions and strategic goals of both the UN-GGIM and the IHO. Its work programme should be structured and managed to reflect and support the shared objectives and priorities of these organizations.

1.4. The Working Group shall also promote the recognition of the strategic role of national hydrographic offices in providing fundamental marine geospatial data essential for safe navigation, marine spatial planning, disaster risk mitigation, maritime boundary delimitation, and sustainable ocean resource management, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the recommendations of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO).

##### 2. Objectives

The objectives of the Working Group are to:

2.1. Provide strategic leadership and raise political awareness about the critical importance of reliable, timely, and fit-for-purpose of marine geospatial information for the sustainable administration, governance, management, and use of the marine environment.

2.2. Provide technical and policy advice on the role of integrated marine geospatial information in supporting international agreements, including those related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), sustainable use of marine biodiversity, environmental protection, and joint use of sea space.

2.3. Promote and support the adoption and implementation of internationally agreed geospatial frameworks, schemas, and standards to strengthen the integration, enhance interoperability, and improve the usability of marine, coastal, and terrestrial geospatial information.

2.4. Promote the integration of marine and land-based geospatial information and infrastructure to support coordinated approaches to cross-sectoral challenges, in line with the 2030 Agenda and relevant international frameworks, including UNCLOS.

2.5. Coordinate and support activities across UN-GGIM and IHO on Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI), and Marine SDI (MSDI).

2.6. Promote and strengthen international and regional cooperation for the effective governance and maintenance of marine geospatial information management, systems, standards, and infrastructure.

2.7. Contribute and advance the development of global norms, principles (including FAIR principles), guidelines and standards to increase the availability, accessibility, quality and interoperability of authoritative marine geospatial information.

2.8. Promote the integration of national hydrographic data into Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) frameworks at global and regional levels to ensure interoperability between terrestrial and marine geospatial information and support evidence-based decision-making.

### **3. Functions**

The Working Group shall undertake the following functions, organised under thematic domains:

#### **3.1. Policy leadership and strategic alignment**

- Promote and monitor the inclusion of marine geospatial considerations in global and regional policy processes, including UN-IGIF, UN-IGIF-Hydro, and SDGs.
- Advise Member States on the integration of marine geospatial priorities into national, regional and international geospatial strategies.
- Facilitate alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the UN Decade of Ocean Science.
- Provide guidance on the integration of marine geospatial information in alignment with international agreements such as UNCLOS and the BBNJ Agreement.
- Advocate for policies that enhance the availability, accessibility, and usability of marine geospatial information.

#### **3.2. Technical development and data governance**

- Support and strengthen the development, adoption, and maintenance of integrated marine geospatial information management, infrastructure, systems, and geospatial data standards, including the S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model and the IHO S-100 Roadmap.
- Promote relevant geospatial standards to enhance interoperability across land, inland, coastal, and marine geospatial information management systems through harmonised MSDI frameworks.
- Develop and maintain technical guidance on datum challenges, metadata standards, and reference models for marine data.
- Promote integration of hydrographic data from oceans, seas, coastal zones, tributaries and inland waters into cohesive geospatial frameworks.

#### **3.3. International coordination and stakeholder engagement**

- Provide a platform for coordination between Member States, the UN system, IHO, international organizations and other global and regional stakeholders.
- Foster collaboration in marine environment mapping with marine policy bodies, scientific initiatives, and regional SDI communities.
- Promote geographic and thematic balance in participation and leadership.
- Improve the usability and integration of marine geospatial information.
- Support Member States in operationalizing the IGIF-Hydro.

#### **3.4. Data accessibility, capacity development and knowledge exchange**

- Advocate for open data policies while addressing legitimate data sensitivity and security concerns.
- Identify and support capacity development needs, including the creation and delivery of training materials for integrated marine geospatial information management and marine SDI familiarisation syllabus.
- Promote sharing of good practices, case studies, and technical resources among stakeholders by establishing and maintaining a knowledge repository of frameworks, guidelines, technical solutions, and examples of cross-border planning.

#### **4. Membership and governance**

4.1. Membership shall comprise expert representatives nominated by IHO and/or UN Member States from the national mapping, hydrographic, geospatial, and relevant data services. Additional subject matter experts from the UN System, international organizations, NGIOs and other organizations may be invited to contribute.

4.2. The Working Group shall have two Co-Chairs—one nominated by the IHO and the other through the UN-GGIM process—who should ideally serve staggered three-year terms, renewable once, subject to practical considerations and mutual agreement.

4.3. The Working Group may establish sub-groups or task teams to focus on specific aspects of its work programme. These teams shall have clearly defined objectives, deliverables, and timeframes, reporting progress regularly to the Working Group's Co-Chairs and the Secretariat. Performance should ideally be reviewed at the plenary meeting, considering the scope, duration, and nature of each sub-group's mandate.

4.4. The Working Group may engage with topic-related international organizations and the Co-Chairs invite their nominated experts as observers to contribute insights and expertise in integrated marine geospatial information.

4.5. Each member State is encouraged to nominate representatives from its national hydrographic authority to the Working Group to ensure a balanced representation of land and marine geospatial expertise.

#### **5. Secretariat and administrative support**

5.1. The United Nations Secretariat for the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management in the Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, shall serve as the permanent Secretariat, managing coordination, communication, and administrative support for the Working Group.

5.2. The Secretariat, working in coordination with the IHO secretariat, shall:

- Support the organisation and documentation of meetings, including agenda preparation, invitations, minutes, and follow-up correspondence;
- Facilitate internal and external communication on behalf of the Working Group;
- Maintain a repository of deliverables, reports, guidance materials, and technical documentation;
- Coordinate inputs for joint reporting to UN-GGIM and IHO-IRCC.

5.3. The Co-Chairs shall coordinate and monitor sub-groups or task teams and report on their activities to UN-GGIM and the IHO-IRCC.

5.4. In coordination with the Co-Chairs, the Secretariat shall assist with the organization of meetings, preparation of agendas, and dissemination of notices and relevant materials.

#### **6. Meetings and work modality**

6.1. The Working Group shall primarily operate through virtual collaboration, utilising digital platforms to advance its work on a continuous basis.

6.2. Physical meetings should preferably be convened biennially, where feasible, in conjunction with IHO or UN-GGIM plenary sessions. Alternate-year in-person or virtual events may include management meetings, workshops, or high-level thematic seminars.

6.3. Sub-groups and task teams may convene virtual ad hoc meetings as required to meet specific milestones, in alignment with the Working Group's work plan.

## **7. Governance and decision-making**

7.1. The Working Group shall seek to make decisions by consensus. In cases where consensus cannot be achieved, decisions may be made through a formal voting process involving only UN and IHO Member States, with each Member State entitled to one vote. Decisions shall be determined by a simple majority of the votes cast.

7.2. Governance of the Working Group shall be reviewed periodically by the UN-GGIM Bureau and IHO-IRCC, which may propose updates to these Terms of Reference based on the evolution of global needs or strategic direction.

7.3. In case of persistent disagreement, lack of progress, or conflicting mandates, the matter, if it falls within the purview of the Working Group, shall be referred to the UN-GGIM Bureau and/or IHO-IRCC for resolution.

7.4. The Working Group shall strive to ensure continuity and institutional memory by staggering Co-Chair transitions and maintaining consistent engagement with both parent bodies.

## **8. Reporting procedure**

8.1. The Working Group shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Committee of Experts. This report shall include:

- A summary of key achievements, outputs and challenges;
- Progress against agreed objectives and work plan deliverables;
- Recommendations for strategic direction or new areas of work.

8.2. In parallel, a complementary report, prepared in accordance with the IHO reporting template, shall be submitted annually to the IHO-IRCC for review and guidance.

8.3. Reports shall be co-authored by the Co-Chairs and Secretariat, based on contributions from sub-groups and participating Member States, and aligned with the UN-GGIM and IHO reporting cycles.

8.4. The Working Group may also prepare and issue relevant background documents such as thematic briefs, technical notes, or policy guidance documents, as required, to inform relevant UN or IHO working groups, task teams, or relevant stakeholders.

8.5. All reporting shall be results-oriented, evidence-based, and aligned with the objectives of the UN-GGIM, IHO Strategic Plan, the Sustainable Development Goals, UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro.

# Economic and Social Council

04 July 2025

## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2024

Item 14 of the provisional agenda\*

**Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies**

### **Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies**

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

##### **Summary**

The present paper contains the report prepared by the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/112](#), in which it expressed its appreciation for the activities and progress achieved during the intersessional period under the leadership of Canada and Saudi Arabia. The Committee noted the progress on the concept paper entitled “Geospatial data for public good” and encouraged the working group to continue to analyse the complex policy and legal issues with particular attention to the impact of emerging technologies and trends on geospatial information management, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, and to explore appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks in consultation with Member States and partners.

The Committee of Experts also noted the progress related to the preparation of the paper entitled “Authoritative, fit-for-purpose data for crises”, and welcomed the upcoming broad global consultation process after the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts with a view to presenting the paper to the Committee at its fifteenth session, in August 2025. The Committee welcomed the convening of the third in-person meeting of the working group, to be hosted by Saudi Arabia in Riyadh in October 2025, and encouraged Member States, in particular those in the region, to seize the opportunity to work together to ensure robust legal and regulatory frameworks for effective geospatial information management.

In the report, the working group provides information on the progress of its activities during the intersessional period on policy and legal issues in geospatial information management, with particular attention to the impact of emerging technologies and trends and for the positioning of geospatial information to address global challenges. The report contains details of the preparation of key deliverables provided as background documents for discussion, guidance and endorsement by the Committee of Experts, on authoritative data for crises, artificial intelligence and geospatial data for the public good.

The paper entitled “Authoritative geospatial data for crises”, which is the subject of a global consultation, supports data users and producers in identifying and mitigating potential trade-offs that can arise when responding to a crisis, outlining related policy and legal considerations for Member States. Building on previous deliverables of the working group, the paper highlights that enabling governance systems, including robust policy and legal frameworks and institutional arrangements, are necessary preconditions for trust in authoritative data for crisis response. Lastly, the paper offers guidance for data users and providers to identify gaps in governance regarding authoritative data in crisis applications to promote transparency and mitigate trade-offs in essential data characteristics.

To address decision 14/112 on continuing “to analyse the complex policy and legal issues” the working group is providing a concept paper on addressing potential implications for the geospatial sector on developing a legal and regulatory framework on artificial intelligence which highlights the need for a strategic framework to ensure that emerging artificial intelligence legal and regulatory frameworks adequately incorporate the unique requirements of the geospatial sector. It identifies priority actions, such as mapping existing regulations, analysing the impact on geospatial use cases, facilitating stakeholder consultation and promoting proactive engagement with policymakers and developing capacity for compliance and adaptation. A “Rallying statement to the Geospatial Sector on the development of a legal and regulatory framework for artificial intelligence” is also provided, with an emphasis on the urgency of establishing clear, ethical and comprehensive artificial intelligence regulations for the geospatial sector, containing a call for collective action to promote transparency, safeguard human rights and maximize the potential of geospatial artificial intelligence innovation. The statement is accompanied by a “Review of global artificial intelligence regulations in geospatial applications”, showcasing the evolving regulatory landscape, summarizing developments across regions and supporting informed decision-making and regulatory coherence among Member States.

Following the adoption, in September 2024, by Member States of the Pact for the Future and its annexes: the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations, the working group adjusted its existing concept paper on “Geospatial data for public good” to provide stronger ties between geospatial information management, the Global Digital Compact, and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The updated concept paper is provided for information as a background document to the report.

The report also contains details of upcoming priorities of the working group and its workplan for the period 2025–2027 aimed at continuing to help Member States to address complex policy and legal issues in geospatial information management, including as related to authoritative data and emerging technologies. As set out in its updated workplan, the working group seeks to continue to engage with the policy and legal community, as well as a broad range of experts across domains. The working group aims to further respond to key priorities within a rapidly evolving technological environment including artificial intelligence and autonomous vehicles and further welcomes considerations and views from Member States on policy and legal priorities.

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## I. Introduction

1. In 2024, in making decision [14/112](#), the Committee of Experts encouraged the working group to continue to analyse the complex policy and legal issues with particular attention to the impact of emerging technologies and trends on geospatial information management, including artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, and to explore appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks in consultation with Member States and partners.

2. The geospatial information ecosystem continued to evolve rapidly, similar to the application and use of emerging technologies, such as AI. The report elaborates on emergent and complex policy and legal issues that need to be addressed collaboratively with Member States and other stakeholders. As technology continues to advance, it remains vital to keep pace with related legal and regulatory frameworks. The activities and deliverables described in the updated Work plan 2025-2027 are part of this effort to ensure the availability, accessibility and integration of fit-for-purpose geospatial data in response to societal challenges.

3. The working group has been active throughout the intersessional period in terms of its membership and activities and held regular virtual meetings. In accordance with decision [14/112](#) in which the Committee of Experts welcomed the convening of the third in-person meeting of the working group, to be hosted by Saudi Arabia in Riyadh in October 2025, the working group has started the planning of its third in-person meeting. During the intersessional period, six background documents were prepared by the working group for consideration by the Committee at its fifteenth session, including: 1) an updated version of the concept paper on “Geospatial data for public good,” 2) a paper on “Authoritative data for crises,” 3) a paper on “Potential implications to the Geospatial Sector of the Developing Legal and Regulatory Framework on AI”, 4) a rallying statement for the Geospatial Sector on the Development of a Legal and Regulatory Framework for AI, 5) a compendium of regulations related to geospatial AI, and, 6) an updated Work plan for the period of 2025-2027.

4. Regarding the paper on “Authoritative data for crises,” a global consultation was completed in April and May 2025 which provided valuable considerations, feedback, and expert perspectives which contributed to a more comprehensive and focused paper.

5. The paper on “Data for public good in the digital world” provides key updates to the concept paper on “Geospatial data for public good,” initially presented to the Committee for consideration at its fourteenth session. As background, the initial paper explored both substantive and formal elements of sound policy and legal framework and discussed different approaches to geospatial data that favor the public good. Bearing in mind that effective policy and legal frameworks will evolve over time and recognizing that the concept of ‘public good’ is to be applied on a case-by-case basis, the paper identified ‘legitimate interests’ as criteria that can guide countries in their assessment of whether the use of geospatial data can be considered for ‘public good.’ Updates to the paper were made during the intersessional period to highlight critical linkages and insights related to the [Pact for the Future](#) and its annexes, adopted at the Summit of the Future held at the United Nations General Assembly on 22-23 September 2024. The paper provides initial guidance regarding policy and legal frameworks for approaching data and emerging technologies for the public good, grounded in an era of digital transformation and with the goal of advancing and accelerating the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).

6. To address the continuing need to respond to the impacts of emerging technologies, such as AI, on National spatial data infrastructures (NSDIs), as well as the important role of policy and legal frameworks at this critical juncture, the working group created several key documents, provided as background to this agenda item. These background documents include a concept paper on potential implications of AI on global geospatial information management, and the development of a compendium of regulations related to geospatial AI in the world today, which provides important context, good practices and

insights of interest to Member States. The working group also prepared a ‘rallying statement’ which calls on all Member States and observers participating to proceedings of the Committee of Experts to take action on AI and work together collaboratively, supporting global geospatial readiness to address this transformative technology.

7. Beyond AI, the working group is also looking at the impact of other key emerging technologies; for example, related to the policy and legal implications of automated navigation and high-definition maps in transportation using geospatial information management. Initial information on these and other projects is included in the Work Plan 2025-2027. Updates and key information will be presented to the Committee in the coming sessions.

## **II. Membership and activities**

8. During the intersessional period, the working group comprised of experts from sixteen Member States<sup>1</sup>, six partnering organizations<sup>2</sup> and two thematic networks<sup>3</sup> of the Committee. The working group continued to be led by its co-Chair, Canada and Saudi Arabia. The working group convened five virtual meetings during the intersessional period and is planning an in-person meeting for late 2025. All virtual meetings focused on progress towards the deliverables and activities identified in its previous Work plan for 2023-2025, as well as addressing the relevant decisions and guidance of the Committee provided at the fourteenth session.

9. The working group is also exploring continued collaboration and alignment with the terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, as well as other activities being undertaken by the Committee and regional divisions, including attending virtual meetings of relevant Working Groups, as appropriate.

10. To further explore opportunities for collaboration with other partners, such as the International Bar Association, the working group continued to engage including during its global consultation on the paper on “Authoritative data for crises”. The working group continued to engage with legal experts, policy specialist and professionals working humanitarian and risk reduction domain.

11. Finally, in accordance with decision 14/112 of the Committee when it welcomed the invitation by Saudi Arabia to host its third expert meeting, the third expert meeting is confirmed to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on 7-9 October 2025.

## **III. The paper on “Authoritative data for crises”**

12. In the present report, the working group provides an overview of the paper: “Authoritative data for crises,” as well as a summary of feedback received during the global consultation undertaken in April and May 2025. The paper on “Authoritative data for crises” (Part II) is a continuation of the paper of the initial paper on endorsed at the thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts, “Authoritative data in an evolving geospatial landscape: an exploration of policy and legal challenges” (Part I). The paper addresses policy and legal considerations of authoritative data within the context of crises, building on a fit-for-purpose approach and leveraging the “control-trust continuum” concept presented in Part I. As crises progress through stages from pre-crisis to acute and into post-crisis, timely access to information is critical to facilitate rapid response to crisis situations. This requires sound and robust policies, legislations and regulations grounded in enabling policy and legal environment.

13. The paper supports data users and producers in identifying and mitigating potential trade-offs that can arise when responding to a crisis, outlining related policy and legal

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<sup>1</sup> Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Finland, India, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Poland, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Space Law and Policy, EuroGeographics, Geospatial Framework, International Bar Association, International Hydrographic Organization and Open Geospatial Consortium.

<sup>3</sup> Academic Network and Private Sector Network.

considerations for Member States. It highlights that enabling governance systems, including robust policy, legal frameworks and institutional arrangements are necessary preconditions for trust in authoritative data for crisis response. Finally, the paper offers guidance for data users and providers to identify gaps in governance regarding authoritative data in crisis applications to promote transparency and mitigate trade-offs in essential data characteristics.

14. In addressing this goal, the paper continues to draw from the “control-trust continuum” presented in the earlier paper and kept as a core principle for global geospatial information management, in the context of policy and legal frameworks. The continuum illustrates that oversight of authoritative geospatial data exists along a spectrum, with public sector, private sector, and civil society instruments positioned between endpoints of ‘control’ and ‘trust.’ The paper builds on this work with a particular focus on crisis and disaster response use cases, identifying the diverse data sources and evolving roles of data providers across sectors in ownership and custodianship. Understanding these roles and sources is crucial for developing effective policy and governance frameworks to ensure the provision of fit-for-purpose geospatial data for crises and disasters.

15. As discussed during the fourteenth session, the paper is aimed at preparing Member States for crisis situations, leveraging existing products of the working group and of the Committee of Experts. The paper's scope was shaped through feedback from working group members, and from Member States and experts provided during the global consultation process. The paper underwent a global consultation with Member States and other relevant stakeholders from 15 April 2025 to 12 May 2025. During this period, the working group received a total of 22 feedback submissions from Member States, organizations, and UN system entities with a positive reception and no significant recommended changes to the scope or structure. The recommendations were integrated into a final draft, which is presented to the Committee for endorsement.

16. Several key changes were made to the paper to reflect feedback received during the global consultation. General modifications included a change to the paper title (from “Authoritative geospatial data for crises” to “Authoritative data for crises”), improvements to formatting and readability using visual tools, acknowledgement throughout the paper of the influence of different legal, policy, political, and socioeconomic realities of Member States, and the addition of examples highlighting marginalized populations’ disproportionate risks faced during a crisis.

17. In addition, through the global consultation, real-world examples were added in Part I of the paper “Authoritative data for crises” to illustrate trade-offs in data characteristics, and to highlight equity considerations related to data quality. In Part II of the paper, the readability was improved using callout boxes to clarify complex legal concepts, in addition to a list of types of policies to facilitate data access during a crisis. In Part III of the paper, two new case studies were added to increase the paper’s diversity and scope. In Part IV of the paper, additional practical guidance for producers and users was included, and the control vs. trust continuum’s practical utility for governments was outlined.

18. Some of the comments received during the global consultation, while relevant to the mandate of the working group on Policy and Legal frameworks for geospatial information management, were ultimately determined to be out of scope for this document. Drawing from the feedback, future activities of the working group may explore policy and legal tools for addressing biases in datasets (e.g., underrepresentation of rural or Indigenous areas) harnessed for crisis response, inclusive governance approaches with specific recommendations for protecting marginalized groups’ data rights and access, and policy and legal implications of using AI and machine learning to address trade-offs in data characteristics during a crisis.

## IV. The paper on “Data for public good in the digital world”

19. In September 2024, following the adoption at the General Assembly of the [Pact for the Future](#) and its annexes: the [Global Digital Compact](#) and [Declaration on Future Generations](#), the working group adjusted its existing concept paper on “Geospatial data for public good” to provide stronger ties between geospatial information management, the Global Digital Compact, and progress towards the SDGs. The updated paper on “Data for public good in the digital world,” is provided as a background document to this report, and is being presented to the Committee for consideration and discussion.

20. The initial concept paper presented in 2024 discussed different approaches to geospatial data for the public good, including risk-based, rights-based, and market-based approaches. The rights-based approach considered that governments must recognize, develop, and promote the common good by defining and implementing rights, including through regulation and litigation processes. The market-based approach emphasized the definition and value of the growing geospatial marketplace and how governments can leverage market-based instruments to capitalize on geospatial opportunities arising from the technological revolution to address current global challenges. The risk-based approach focused on the apprehension of harm to human beings and/or the environment. The approach consisted of assessing levels of risk and recommending mitigating measures accordingly. The working group focused on the risk-based approach in the initial concept paper to frame the public good, as it provides a multi-dimensional approach.

21. These three fundamental approaches, as well as the foundational concept of the “trust-control continuum,” introduced in the paper “Authoritative data in an evolving geospatial landscape: an exploration of policy and legal challenges,” are kept as key themes underpinning the updated paper.

22. In the current context of extreme climate variability and transformation, the working group still highlights the importance of a risk-based approach to decision-making on geospatial information management, as it can inform both rights- and market-based approaches, help identify appropriate policy, legal and governance instruments, and support the overall SDGs - a universal call for action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030, all people enjoy peace and prosperity. This approach is also rooted in the [Pact for the Future](#) and its annexes, which aim to ensure that digital technologies contribute to sustainable development and human rights, while addressing risks such as the digital divide, cybersecurity, and misuse of technology. There are nuances, however, depending on which SDGs or priority is being considered, and as with the initial paper, Member States are encouraged to adapt their approach(es) on a case-by-case basis, depending on their national context, while working to implement the SDGs in an increasingly digital world.

## V. Policy and legal considerations related to emerging technologies and AI

23. To address decision [14/112](#) on continuing “to analyze the complex policy and legal issues,” the working group is providing a concept paper on “Addressing potential Implications to the Geospatial Sector on developing Legal and Regulatory Framework on AI,” which highlights the need for a strategic framework to ensure that emerging AI legal and regulatory frameworks adequately incorporate the unique requirements of the geospatial sector. The concept paper identifies priority actions, such as mapping existing regulations, analyzing the impact on geospatial use cases, facilitating stakeholder consultation, and promoting proactive engagement with policymakers and developing capacity for compliance and adaptation.

24. A “Rallying statement to the Geospatial Sector on the Development of a Legal and Regulatory Framework for AI” is also provided as background document and emphasizes the urgency of establishing clear, ethical, and comprehensive AI regulations for the

geospatial sector, calling for collective action to promote transparency, safeguard human rights, and maximize the potential of geospatial AI innovation. The statement is accompanied by a compendium report on “International Regulations on AI in Geospatial Applications” showcasing the evolving regulatory landscape, summarizing developments across regions and supporting informed decision-making and regulatory coherence among Member States.

25. In line with decision 14/112, the working group is also addressing other emerging technologies with implications for policy and legal frameworks for global geospatial information management, and as such started to consider and examine policy and legal considerations related to automated navigation and high-definition (HD) maps in transportation and geospatial information management, further detailed in the Work plan 2025-2027.

## VI. Work plan 2025-2027

26. During the intersessional period, the working group also updated its Work plan to adapt to new challenges and opportunities for policy and legal frameworks for global geospatial information management, pursuant to decision 14/112 of the Committee. The Work plan 2025-2027 builds on the progress of the working group to date, particularly in the areas of authoritative, fit-for-purpose data, and data for the public good. The Work plan also positions the activities of the working group to provide to the Committee with information and advice on the impact of emerging technologies and trends on geospatial information management, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, and other policy and legal considerations in the rapidly evolving geospatial landscape and in the broader context of digital transformation.

27. For the period covered by the Work plan 2025-2027, the goals and objectives of the Working Group are to:

- (a) Address policy and legal considerations for global geospatial information management that respond to evolving needs, societal progress and emerging technologies; notably, highlighting key policy and legal considerations related to AI and geospatial information.
- (b) Continue to provide relevant expertise and support to the Committee of Experts in the development of norms, principles and guidelines, sustaining and developing policy and legal capacity to respond to the needs of Member States and its functional groups.
- (c) Continue to engage and communicate the value of sound, robust policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management, among and with relevant stakeholders and partners.

28. In the Work plan 2025-2027, the working group also proposes a new project to examine automated navigation and high-definition (HD) maps in transportation and geospatial information management. The project aims to synthesize HD map knowledge, explain how these technologies might improve automated navigation safety, and the technical and institutional challenges of implementing HD maps at scale. The topic will address key questions including: What role should governments play in the stewardship of HD Maps? How do HD Maps affect public safety, privacy, liability, and interoperability? and, what governance models can ensure both innovation and public accountability? Updates, insights and relevant papers will be prepared and submitted to the Committee of Experts, as appropriate in the coming sessions.

29. The Work plan 2025-2027 is included as a background document to the report and for further considerations, discussions and guidance by the Committee of Experts.

## VII. Final considerations and summary

30. The Working Group will continue to analyze complex policy and legal issues in geospatial information and provide Member States with guidance and recommended actions to establish, strengthen or organize their national (or sub-national) arrangements towards sound and robust policy and legal frameworks for achieving the societal, environmental, and economic benefits from geospatial information management. These complex policy and legal issues relate to: the availability, accessibility and widest application of geospatial information; authoritative data, authority and custodianship; and, public good, together with open data, personal data, data privacy, data protection, data licensing, and the security and misuse of data. The working group's current deliverables and background documents reflect the objective. The working group encourages Members to consider these background documents, including the rallying statement on AI in geospatial, and to take action that responds to the needs of their own national contexts.

31. The working group will continue to advance with the implementation of its Work plan 2025-2027, including through the development of partnerships and collaboration both within and beyond the geospatial community, to ensure a coordinated path forward on policy and legal frameworks for the global geospatial information ecosystem. The working group will continue to advance its objectives and considerations including on emerging technologies and trends on geospatial information management, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, through virtual meetings and at its third in-person meeting in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 7-9 October 2025.

## VIII. Points for discussion

32. The Committee of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the present report, express its views, and provide guidance to the working group on its progress and efforts to consider and address complex policy and legal issues related to emerging technologies and trends on geospatial information management, including artificial intelligence, and related to real-world situations.
- (b) Consider and endorse the paper on "Authoritative data for crises," following its successful global consultation, in order to provide authoritative guidance to Member States and Observers on the use of geospatial data during a disaster.
- (c) Take note of the updated paper on "Data for public good in the digital world" and consider its potential applications as appropriate for geospatial information management and sustainable development.
- (d) Endorse the rallying statement to encourage global action to develop policy and legal frameworks that address the unique challenges and opportunities of geospatial AI and take note of the development of the compendium on "International Regulations on AI in Geospatial Applications".
- (e) Take note of the present report and express its views on the efforts to provide policy and legal considerations in the field of AI, including through the background document and the concept paper on "Addressing the Implications of the Developing Legal and Regulatory Framework on AI for the Geospatial Sector".
- (f) Take note of, express its views, and provide guidance on the proposed Work plan 2025-2027.
- (g) Take note of the third in-person meeting of the working group on policy and legal framework for geospatial information management to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 7-9 October 2025, in accordance with decision 14/111 of the Committee of Experts.

# Economic and Social Council

07 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6– 8 August 2025

Item 15 of the provisional agenda\*

### Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community

## Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report prepared jointly by the International Hydrographic Organization, technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the Open Geospatial Consortium on the implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/113, in which it welcomed the report of the three standards development organizations and their work with the Committee of Experts. The Committee welcomed the numerous examples of the ongoing standards development activities for data access and interoperability while also encouraging Member States to set policy that starts with open standards as a default for geospatial and location information programmes towards the implementation of standards-based solutions that ensure interoperability, data-sharing and flexibility to adapt to changing data sources and technologies, and to support actual real use cases for the integration of geospatial information and statistics, for the reporting of the Sustainable Development Goals, the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the use and application of artificial intelligence.

The Committee also urged Member States to collaborate with and participate in the maintenance, advancement and capacity development of geospatial standards, together with the standards development organizations.

In the report, the International Hydrographic Organization provides information on its continuing efforts to advance the S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model to support the creation and maintenance of interoperable maritime data product services that are compliant with the ISO 19100 series of geographic information standards. In 2024, the organization reported that edition 5.2.0 of S-100 had been released. Based on edition 5.2.0 of S-100, the organization has released a number of Phase 1 S-100 product specifications as operational editions, including S-101 Electronic Navigational Chart, S-102 Bathymetric Surface, S-104 Water Level Information for Surface Navigation and S-111 Surface Currents.

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.

Several additional S-100-based product specifications are being developed and implemented in collaboration with several international organizations, including entities of the United Nations system and partners such as the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation and the World Meteorological Organization. The International Hydrographic Organization also reports that it has established a freely available training resource on maritime spatial data infrastructure to assist its members in aligning their country-level work to the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management.

Technical committee 211 of ISO, in the report, provides information on its activities with entities of the United Nations system and partners, including supporting the modernization of the geodetic infrastructure as a partner of the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence; continued progress in the development of the ISO 19152 Land Administration Domain Model, of which parts 1 and 3 have been published and parts 2, 4 and 5 should be published by August – allowing better integration of land and sea boundaries and supporting the Framework for Effective Land Administration; ISO 19144 on land cover and land use, in conjunction with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, of which parts 1, 2 and 3 have been published and part 4 is under development with the Open Geospatial Consortium.

In the report, the Open Geospatial Consortium discusses its focus on developing and testing open geospatial application programming interface standards via pilots, projects and testbeds under its collaborative solutions and innovation programme, covering several areas including climate services, disasters, the marine environment, digital twins and the built environment. Over the past year, the Consortium has focused on a range of topics relevant to Sustainable Development Goals, including a multi-year continued focus on improved support for disaster response, increased coordination within the marine domain and innovation related to climate services. The Consortium emphasizes the integration of geospatial information with statistics and other data under the findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable data principles. The Consortium further reports that it continues to enhance interoperability with its standards, as well as the International Hydrographic Organization and ISO standards, thereby ensuring a cohesive framework for geospatial data utilization and standardization, in support of the global geospatial information agenda.

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## I. Introduction

1. The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), the Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO/TC 211), and the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) work in partnership to leverage their respective missions, and membership expertise to advance Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (F.A.I.R.) principles and Standards to meet the goals and objectives of the Committee of Experts. The standards development organizations continued to increase cooperation through formal liaison agreements and joint program initiatives to produce standards and good practice recommendations that could not be fully achieved by working in isolation. The goal is to ensure Member States take a high-level policy decision globally to ensure that open standards are the default starting point for all geospatial and location requirements.
2. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the present report and to express its views on the activities and plans of the three Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) and their contribution to the development, implementation, and adoption of open standards for the global geospatial information community. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 39.

## II. Update from the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC)

### **Introduction**

3. The Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) and its more than 450 members from across the private, public and academic and research sectors have guided the advancement of open Standards and associated practices to make geospatial information broadly accessible to support global requirements. For 2025, OGC focused on the Integrity, Provenance, and Trust of data.

4. Through its member meetings, workshops, forums, summit events, and practical results demonstrated via its 18 ongoing Collaborative Solutions and Innovation (COSI) initiatives covering a broad range of topics, OGC is addressing an expanding range of geospatial interoperability challenges facing the international community. As noted above, OGC's 2025 focused on developing Standards and supporting materials to establish an IPT framework. This work is in response to the increasing use of data produced by suppliers, and not by data custodians themselves as well as known instances of data falsification or even synthetic ("deep fake") imagery. Over the past year, OGC has focused on a range of topics relevant to SDGs including a multi-year continued focus on improved support to disaster response, increased coordination within the Marine domain, and innovation related to climate services.

### **Adoption and Implementation of OGC General Purpose Geospatial Standards**

5. OGC is continuing with its advancement of an open API Standards suite - a modernization and expansion of OGC's Web Services Standards. This work on the OGC API Standards is now expanding the capabilities of the core Standards and beginning to offer new functionality, such as APIs for Moving Features and Discrete Global Grid Systems.

6. OGC has a process to endorse externally developed specifications as Community Standards. The Spatio-Temporal Asset Catalog (STAC), built on top of OGC API – Features, is moving through this process.

7. OGC is nearing completion on the Features and Geometries JSON (JSON-FG) Standard. This Standard extends GeoJSON (a widely used Standard from the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)) to support Coordinate Reference Systems

(CRSS) and complex geometric representations of data. GeoJSON files are in wide use and will be fully valid instances of the JSON-FG Standard.

### **Adoption and Implementation of OGC Domain-Specific Standards**

8. With the rapid rise in use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in geospatial data processing and analysis, there is often a lack in confidence by those working with mission-critical data that cannot be wrong. OGC is adopting a staged approach to increase trust in AI processes, initially by adopting the Training Data Markup Language (TDML) for AI that provides a consistent metadata model to describe the source, provenance, and suitability of training and validation data for AI systems. Next in this effort will be a model description Standard to help users understand which sets of training and associated models are suitable for their own use cases.

### **Engagement with Regional Committees and other International Bodies**

9. Beyond coordination with ISO/TC 211 and IHO, OGC works with a number of other Standards-setting or domain-focused organizations to ensure that common principles are in place for the use of location information. OGC recently worked with ISO/TC 204 (Intelligent Transport Systems) to charter a new Transportation and Mobility Domain Working Group (DWG). This DWG considers all modes of transportation and methods of mobility, including land, sea, and air.

### **Compliance Testing Resources**

10. As part of OGC's compliance [testing and certification program](#), OGC continues to publish compliance tests for Standards, often soon after the Standards are published. These tests are open-source software and permissively licensed to permit developers to test their own work before creating software. OGC also offers a certification program using the tests and OGC evaluation of test results to formally mark software that is proven to properly implement OGC Standards.

### **Innovation and Standards Development**

11. Unique to OGC is the Collaborative Solutions and Innovation (COSI) program, which brings sponsors and participants together to collectively work on solving common problems across multiple domains. The COSI program uses real-world scenarios and demonstrations of results and is closely connected to the standards program. Testing OGC (and IHO and ISO) standards using practical use cases results in improvements based on implementations and shortens the adoption cycle of new and existing standards.

12. During the intersessional period, and carrying on into 2025, OGC led or participated in the following initiatives:

- (a) All Data for Green Deal - Man-made climate change is the great challenge of our time. The All Data for Green Deal (AD4GD) project defines the European Commission Climate Data Space and explores how FAIR approaches can help integrate data better to make more profound decisions at the regional and national level to mitigate climate change. This project is co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101061001.
- (b) CHEK -The goal of CHEK is to facilitate digital building permit procedures for municipalities. CHEK explores how to integrate geodata with Building Information Model (BIM) data. The CHEK model contains all information about the building's components, materials and properties as well as its location and orientation. By applying the latest semantic web research, CHEK enables automated

digital building permits using standards-based processing pipelines. (This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe programme under Grant Agreement No.101058559).

- (c) Climate and Disaster Resilience Pilot - designed to accelerate our collective readiness for accessing, fusing, and analyzing data from the climate change services and modeling communities with earth observation and social science data to contribute to the global push for achieving climate resilience. The pilot project explores how climate data, heat island data, and other important data can be used most effectively. The pilot project applies generative AI to respond to natural language questions.
- (d) CLIMOS - The CLIMOS project aims to help mitigate the emergence, transmission, and spread of pathogens (sand fly focus). The project develops guidelines and best practices on how data from various sources can be linked together most efficiently. This project is co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101057690
- (e) FOCAL - The FOCAL project (eFficient explOration of Climate data locALLY) tackles some of the most urgent challenges faced today in adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change. It connects local realities with regional and global ambitions, transforming data into actionable insights that empower decision-makers to build resilient cities and sustainable forests. FOCAL puts powerful tools in the hands of local planners and foresters, ensuring they can confidently tackle climate risks. By piloting cutting-edge AI and high-performance computing solutions, FOCAL positions Europe as a leader in climate science, setting an example for the world to follow.
- (f) iGuide - OGC is involved in this National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded project to explore how High-Performance Computing Platforms can be used in data infrastructures most efficiently.
- (g) IHO-OGC Federated Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure Pilot (FMSDI) - The Federated Marine SDI Demonstration (FMSDI) pilot explores the integration of the land-perspective with the sea-perspective. As such, it brings together two distinct domains in one of the regions most sensitive to climate change: The land-sea interface. The pilot continues into 2025 with more focus on feature type catalogs and knowledge graphs to explore linked data potentials and challenges.
- (h) ILIAD – Digital Twin of the Ocean - Over 50 Partners are building the solutions and infrastructure to monitor the marine environment with their own and public datasets and services. OGC is involved in several areas focusing on Social Science and Digital Twin of the Ocean APIs. Standards-based methods to discover, access, and process data of various types and in an appropriate variety of formats will enable open ecosystem integrations and the market of applications. These will be built on the OGC APIs linked to the multimodal semantic layer provided by the OGC Definition Server. This project is co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101037643.

- (i) InCASE - Earth observation data and measurement results must be discoverable and well documented. To do so, they must comply with relevant standards to ensure compatibility between different data sources. Compliance with such standards significantly improves the value of the data. Users can thus develop different services and monitor policy objectives. The InCASE project is investigating how these principles can be applied specifically to data measurements from sensors, etc., in the field. This project is funded by the European Environment Agency and OGC's main contribution to GEO and GEOSS.
- (j) OGC Sprints -OGC Sprints are collaborative events driven by rapid code development to implement and test specific capabilities of a technical approach or standard. Most OGC API Standards are refined and tested via these Sprints so that each final Standard is proven to be implementable and useful.
- (k) OGC Testbed-20 - The 2024 testbed addresses Interoperability, Provenance, and Trust, Geodatacubes, High-Performance Computing, and new imagery formats for better information storage and exchange.
- (l) OGC Testbed-21 – TEstbed-21 is in final planning stages at the time of this publication. The primary focus will be on Geodatacubes and Integrity, Provenance, and Trust.
- (m) Open Science Persistent Demonstrator - This pilot makes interoperability more tangible. The pilot explores how data and services can be used across cloud platforms in single workflows.
- (n) SEADOTs - The SEADOTs project (Social-Ecological Ocean Management Applications using Digital Ocean Twins) is an EU-funded initiative dedicated to revolutionizing ocean management by integrating socio-ecological data with Digital Ocean Twins (DOTs). By combining advanced ocean data with socio-ecological and socio-economic models, SEADOTs aims to empower policymakers and stakeholders to make informed, data-driven decisions for sustainable ocean use.
- (o) Urban Digital Twins Interoperability Pilot - Urban Digital Twins will be developed, but no single city can be expressed within a single twin. This project explores how multiple digital twins can be integrated using several smart city challenges.
- (p) USAGE -The Horizon Europe project USAGE (Urban Data Space for Green Deal) develops solutions and mechanisms to make city-level environmental and climate data available to citizens. This project is co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101059950
- (q) NSDI 2.0 - The Next Generation National Spatial Data Infrastructure research brings existing SDIs to the next level. Addressing previously underrepresented topics such as governance, customer-targeting design, knowledge infrastructure and geospatial ecosystem perspectives lead to the development of new best practices and guidelines for more efficient SDIs.
- (r) National and municipal spatial data solutions - the pilots in this context are closely aligned with the NSDI research. In these pilots,

the OGC explores how municipalities and national governments can optimize the handling of geospatial data for phases of planning, managing, monitoring, and evaluation.

### **III. Update from Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO/TC 211)**

13. ISO/TC 211 Geographic information/Geomatics manages ISO's geospatial standards, with the vision to support a sustainably prosperous future by providing, in cooperation with other organizations, a set of standards that enable better management of geographic information through collaboration, harmonization, and outreach. The specific focuses of ISO/TC 211 are on metadata and data quality in support of the FAIR Principles - that data should be findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable. The work with other standards bodies focuses on ensuring they can make best use of geographic information.

14. ISO/TC 211 works with United Nations (UN) agencies and others, including supporting modernization of the global geodesy supply chain (with the newly established UN-GGCE); continued progress in the development of ISO 19152 LADM, of which Part 1 has been published and Part 2 will be published by August - allowing better integration of land and sea boundaries, and supporting UN Framework for Effective Land Administration (UN FELA); ISO 19144 on land cover and land use, in conjunction with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), of which Parts 1 & 2 have been published and Part 3 should be published by August.

15. ISO/TC 21 has been working with the Expert Group in the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (ISGI) of the Committee of Experts on the revision of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) and has been updating ISO 19157 Data quality and this year hope is to launch an online register of data quality measures, with machine readable definitions. The ISO Registration Authority for this is the Open Geospatial Consortium.

16. ISO/TC 211 now consists of 39 Participating and 34 Observing members which are national standards bodies. ISO/TC 211 collaborates with numerous liaisons, including ISO committees and external organizations. Key internal ISO liaisons include integrated transport, digital twins, smart cities, smart farming, climate change and ESG (environmental, social, governance). For more information, the Strategic Business Plan is available on the ISO/TC 211 website. Freely available resources such as UML models and XML schemas for supporting standards implementations are also found on ISO/TC 211 website. The committee remains active in the ISO work towards machine readable standards and the ISO online standards development tool pilot.

17. ISO as a whole is now more focused on sustainability, particularly climate change in support of the United Nations Call for Action on Adaptation and Resilience. The focus is on standards in energy production, transport, and construction. The ISO Climate Change Coordination Committee recognizes the value of geospatial information and standards in planning and monitoring sustainability, and ISO/TC 21 is working with them to improve its portfolio.

#### **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

18. Geospatial standards support the broader objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: general purpose geospatial standards that are important for industry and infrastructure, and those standards in direct support of the UN-GGIM, specifically in the areas of Geodetic Referencing, Land Administration, Land Cover and Land Use, and Addressing. For example, the UN Convention on

Combating Desertification uses ISO 19144 to integrate land cover information; the standard was prepared and revised jointly with FAO. ISO provides [tools](#) to help technical committees to map their projects to the SDGs. ISO/TC 211 collects user stories showing how our standards have helped countries work towards specific SDGs; see <https://committee.iso.org/sites/tc211/home/standards-in-action/united-nations.html>.

### **General purpose geospatial standards and aligning with the business environment**

19. Several geospatial standards are so basic that users are not always aware of them being implemented. Standards that describe data in a uniform way (specifications, metadata and quality, and geographic point location by coordinates) are widely used. Other examples of these hidden standards cover the process of relating national coordinate reference systems to global geodetic reference systems (so that two or three numbers can represent a place on the earth), and the calibration of remote sensing devices. As geospatial technology becomes mainstream, some of the “specialist” standards are implemented in more mainstream software, such as the common implementation of spatial technology in relational databases. As the information technology environment changes, geospatial standards need to change; for example, ISO/TC 211 has begun its first project looking at a JSON encoding. Working with the European Commission, a [report](#) was published on using existing geospatial standards to publish data into generic “data spaces”.

### **Participation in standardization and advancing implementation**

20. The requirements for standardization are identified by the user community and therefore stakeholder participation is critical. In many cases, international organizations develop domain specifications based on the ISO/TC 211 and OGC standards, for example FAO, IHO, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the Defence Geospatial Information Working Group (DGIWG). Our biannual Standards in Action seminars generally contain a dozen presentations with speakers from various countries and the June 2024 seminar included the Global Environmental Data Strategy of UNEP, UK, Saudi Arabia, and India. Presentations are available on the ISO/TC 211 website.

### **Coordinate Reference Systems**

21. ISO/TC 211 supports the implementation of the Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF) by developing standards, including:

- (a) ISO 19111 “Referencing by coordinates”, which describes coordinate reference systems and transformations between them - how to represent a location in numbers.
- (b) ISO 19161-1 “International terrestrial reference system (ITRS)”, which adopts the work of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG), the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) and the International Astronomical Union (IAU) to show how to “realize” national and regional coordinate reference systems in alignment with the worldwide ones, such as GNSS.
- (c) By the time of the meeting, work should have started on ISO 19161-2 Geodetic references — Part 2: Unique identification of geodetic ground stations in collaboration with the International association of geodesy (IAG) and the International Earth Rotation and Reference Systems Service (IERS), this will extend and modernize the way that ground geodetic stations are identified. They form a key part of the GGRF.

- (d) ISO 19127 “Geodetic Register”, which specifies the [ISO Geodetic Register](#) (ISOGR) and its associated Control Body. The Control Body consists of convenors nominated by the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) and of international geodetic experts. The register contains official parameters and transformations for national and regional coordinate reference systems and is freely available online.
22. ISO/TC 211 is a recognized partner of both the UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy (SCoG) and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE) and continues to work with SCoG and UN-GGCE towards a sustainable Geodetic Register. Many geospatial users today are familiar with the EPSG Dataset and Registry managed by the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers (IOGP) and the OGC CRS registry. ISO/TC 211, OGC, and the IOGP have published a description of the different purposes of these registers and the interactions between them.

### **Land Administration**

23. Having engaged OGC, IHO, International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), United Nations Office of Legal Affairs’ Division for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (DOALOS), the World Bank, FAO, and UN-Habitat, ISO/TC 211 is running an extensive revision of ISO 19152:2012 “Land Administration Domain Model (LADM)” with confidence that the proposed new parts to this standard will cover the organizational requirements. The result of this revision is creating a multi-part standard: 1) General Conceptual Model (published in January 2024); 2) Land Registration; 3) Marine Georegulation (likely to be published before the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts); 4) Valuation Information; 5) Spatial Planning; and 6) Implementations. Parts 2, 4 and 5 should be published in 2025. Parts 2, 4, and 5 should be available for public comment (ISO Enquiry Stage) by the time of the meeting. A proposal for Part 6 is under preparation. ISO LADM supports the UN Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) and the Social Tenure Domain Model, while it is not expected that countries with well-developed land administration systems will adopt it.

### **Land Cover and Land Use (LCLU)**

24. LCLU is an essential and fundamental data themes used by millions of professional users globally across a wide variety of applications. While the explosion of Location Intelligence tied to these essential data layers continues at a pace, the growing need for an agreed upon LCLU meta language is more urgent than ever, to facilitate international analysis. ISO 19144-2:2012 “Geographic information - Classification systems - Part 2: Land Cover Meta Language (LCML)” was developed under the leadership of FAO, who is also leading the revision, including developing ISO 19144-3, a similar meta language standard for Land Use. The revised ISO 19144-2 was published in December 2023. ISO 19144-3 should be published by the time of the fifteenth session. A part 4 is planned to establish a register of land cover and land use classifications.

### **Addressing**

25. An address provides structured information for the unambiguous determination of an object, such as a house or apartment building. Addresses are essential for the management of cities, for governance and public administration generally, for service delivery in the public and private sector, and they can give people status or (legal) identity in society. ISO 19160-2 supports the Universal Postal Union’s initiative, “Addressing the World – An Address for Everyone”, which promotes the establishment of national addressing infrastructures to the benefit of all. The multi-part ISO 19160, Addressing, provides the standards required for a country’s addressing infrastructure, such as a conceptual data model;

terminology; good practices for assigning and maintaining addresses; how to measure the quality of address data; and international postal addressing, the latter jointly developed with the Universal Postal Union (UPU).

26. ISO 19160-2 Addressing - Part 2: Assigning and maintaining addresses for objects in the physical world was published in November 2023. ISO 19160-2 specifies how to plan, implement, and maintain addresses and corresponding address data to gain maximum benefits for governance and society in the long run. It is a tool against which Governments could measure the objectives, principles, and goals conformance of their address policies for a good practice and governance framework. This standard supports the first goal of United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), namely, enabling geospatial (address) information governance, policy and institutional arrangements that ensure effective geospatial (address) information management, accommodate individual organizational requirements and arrangements, and that are aligned to national and global policy frameworks. The standard is also useful for those involved in slum upgrading, as addresses are often assigned when housing conditions in settlements are being improved.

## **IV. Update from the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)**

### **Marine Geospatial Framework**

27. IHO continued to work on its S-100 Universal Hydrographic Data Model framework to support the creation and maintenance of interoperable maritime data product specifications compliant with the ISO-19100 series of geographic information standards. The S-100 infrastructure which includes the [Geospatial Information Registry](#). The Feature Catalogue and Portrayal Catalogue builders have been developed and are now embedded into the process of the development and maintenance of data product specification. S-100 based product specifications assigned to IHO, the International Association of Light Authorities (IALA), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the Inland ENC Harmonization Group (IEHG), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and NATO are being maintained on the [IHO website](#). Edition 5.2.0 of S-100, released in June 2024, represents the culmination of experiences of the past years in testing and development against S-100. This edition incorporates key extensions aimed at enhancing standards to better meet stakeholder requirements for safety and efficiency in the digital maritime domain. These enhancements include support for real-time data integration (e.g., water levels), streaming service delivery, improved data portrayal mechanism, and strengthened encryption to support data authentication and cybersecurity.

28. IHO S-100 Roadmap serves as the strategic foundation for the implementation of the Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) performance standards adopted by International Maritime Organization (IMO), based on the S-100 framework. It outlines the phased development, testing and deployment of S-100 based products, ensuring alignment with the IMO's regulatory timelines – beginning in 2026 and leading to mandatory carriage after 2029. This alignment ensures that both technical and regulatory elements are in place to enable a safe, efficient, and interoperable digital navigation environment.

### **Product standards development**

29. S-100 based product specifications have been developed and tested according to the S-100 Implementation Decade (2020-2030) roadmap. The Phase 1 product specifications – S-101 Electronic Navigational Chart, S-102 Bathymetric Surface, S-104 Water Level Information for Surface Navigation, S-111 Surface

Currents – have successfully published their operational Edition 2.0.0 between December 2024 and January 2025. S-121 Maritime Limits and Boundaries and S-130 Polygonal Demarcations of Global Sea Area are also under development. Following the release of their initial trial versions (Edition 1.0.0), their specifications are currently undergoing testing and validation to support the development of their operational editions. IHO has also made substantial progress on the S-122 Marine Protected Areas and intends to eventually have an online system to display protected areas on the high seas.

### **Testbed and Innovation Program**

30. IHO operates a project named S1OOP - S-100 Open Online Platform that is aimed to be the foundation for a digital ocean and accelerate the wide adoption of the S-100 hydrographic framework by jointly developing and making available the technical requirements needed to overcome any S-100 implementation barriers. The project installed four themes, Theme 1 - Online viewer, Theme 2 – Data Production and Protection, Theme 3 – Open-source management, and Theme 4 – Knowledge and Capacity. The Joint IHO-Singapore Innovation and Technology Laboratory (IHO Lab) established in Singapore in October 2021 is aimed to accelerate innovation in the field of hydrography through sandbox implementation of new S-100 standards under construction.

31. The IHO Infrastructure Centre will be established as a centralized hub to support the development and maintenance of S-100-based systems. In October 2024, the IHO Council approved its provisional operation in the Republic of Korea starting in 2025, with the final decision on its formal establishment to be made at the IHO Assembly in April 2026. The Centre will also serve as a platform for innovation, testing, and collaboration within the global hydrographic community.

### **Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure**

32. Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) has been highlighted as an important component of the future development of hydrographic offices. The IHO has established basic MSDI training material for the IHO Member States and Regional Hydrographic Commissions to conduct basic MSDI education/training. The MSDI training material is now freely available on the IHO web page <https://ihonet/en/body-of-knowledge>. An MSDI e-learning program has also been developed to enable people to access MSDI teaching externally and even receive the teaching online. The MSDI teaching material is available on the IHO's website for free and the e-learning interactive material can be downloaded and accessed on YouTube.

33. The FAIR Data Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Re-usable) are used widely in the geospatial community, promoting, and supporting knowledge discovery and innovation as well as data and knowledge integration, and sharing and reuse of data. The FAIR principles do not strictly define how to achieve a state of "FAIRness". Rather they describe a continuum of features, attributes, and behaviors that will move a digital resource closer to that goal. The principles help data and metadata to be 'machine readable', supporting new discoveries through the harvest and analysis of multiple datasets. To have a Hydrographic Offices approach to the FAIR Data Principles IHO has provided best practices on how IHO MS can use the FAIR principles in their work with their national and regional MSDI, the IHO is also working to establish FAIR principles checklist to guide implementation.

34. The continued improvement of the alignment between UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro is important as this will ensure a unified approach to data management between land and sea. IHO document C-17 should also be further aligned with, if not merged with, the UN-IGIF Hydro. The focus of IHO C-17 is on how Hydrographic Offices can act in response to UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro and the

broader global perspective and some of the working issues, like data consistency, data quality, multiple-use best practices, business models, the FAIR principles, maritime digital twins etc. leaving UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro to define broader use cases. The Edition 3.0 of C-17 is available on IHO publication at <https://ihonet/en/capacity-building-publications>.

#### **Global coverage of seabed topography**

35. To improve the incomplete image of the ocean's seabed topography from all available data resources, IHO has continued to develop its "Crowdsourced Bathymetry campaign" and its supporting guidance document (IHO B-12). In addition, significant developments have been undertaken to the IHO's Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB) to enhance uploading, data viewing and download functionality. The resulting General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) grid of global ocean seabed topography is publicly available under open data policy terms for download and re-use. The grid is now updated on an annual basis, having grown from 6% in 2017 to 24.9% in 2024.

### **V. Support to the implementation of the UN-IGIF**

36. After the 3rd edition of the standards guide from the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) was endorsed at the Eleventh session of the Committee of Experts, the SDOs made it available as a [web publication](#), open for continuous feedback.

### **VI. Geospatial Standards in Measuring and Monitoring the SDGs**

37. The SDOs continue to maintain and advance a framework of geospatial standards and good practices that support the mapping, visualization, analysis and forecasting related to the 17 SDG topics. The SDO general purpose geospatial standards continue to be adopted by technology suppliers worldwide to make it easier for the user community to implement F.A.I.R. solutions that are broadly compatible for collaboration and data sharing. The SDO domain specific standards are helping to address specific SDGs on addressing hunger, health, and sustainable communities.

38. Some specific examples of SDOs support to SDGs over this past year include:

- (a) Goal 2 Zero Hunger: ISO/TC 211 Land Cover/Land Use;
- (b) Goal 3 Good Health and Well Being: OGC Health Spatial Data Infrastructure Data Model;
- (c) Goal 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure: All SDOs general purpose standards apply;
- (d) Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities: implementation of OGC CityGML, OGC Indoor Mapping Data Format Community Standard;
- (e) Goal 13 Climate Action: SDO General Purpose Standards, OGC Open API: Environmental Data Retrieval; and
- (f) Goal 14 Life Below Water: S-101 - IHO Electronic Navigational Chart, S-102 – Bathymetric Surface, S-111 – Surface Currents, and S-129 – Under Keel Clearance.

## VII. Points for Discussion

39. The Committee of Experts is invited to:
- (a) Take note of this present report of the SDOs and express its views on their progress, work and plans;
  - (b) Take note of and express its views on the need to work with the UN Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence to support a sustainable ISO Geodetic Register;
  - (c) Encourage broad use of the Standards Guide to support implementation of standards-based solutions that ensure interoperability, data sharing, and flexibility to adapt to changing data sources and technologies;
  - (d) Encourage Member States and other relevant United Nations system entities to participate, through membership and resource contribution, in the international geospatial standards development processes and meetings of the OGC, ISO/TC 211, and IHO to follow and provide input into standards as they are developed, finalized and approved; and
  - (e) Encourage Member States to set policy that starts with open standards as a default for geospatial and location information programmes, and the broad use of geospatial standards.

# Economic and Social Council

8 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6– 8 August 2025

Item 16 of the provisional agenda\*

### Standardization of geographical names and collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

## Standardization of geographical names and collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted [decision 14/114](#), in which it welcomed the report prepared by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (see E/C.20/2024/18) and the activities conducted during the intersessional period to implement its strategic plan and programme of work for the period 2021–2029, including the strengthening of its operations through increased interaction across its 24 geographical and linguistic divisions, the renewed collaboration with the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History, and its focus on the value of spiritual and emotional aspects of cultural and linguistic heritage for improved belonging of peoples. The Committee also acknowledged the redevelopment of the Group of Experts World Geographical Names database as a reliable and extendable technical platform to be integrated with other authoritative place names, including from the United Nations system, and in that regard, encouraged the development of a consistent and reliable unique identifier for cities to be implemented for the database.

The Committee of Experts also welcomed the progress of the collaborative project between the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts, appreciated the leadership provided by Indonesia and the United States of America and encouraged Member States to contribute to the upcoming activities, including self-assessment exercises to identify and document good practices and other related tasks under the project, which supports the recognition of cultural heritage associated with geographical names.

In the report, the Group of Experts presents its activities conducted during the intersessional period to implement decision 14/114. It also provides a general update on the implementation of its strategic plan and programme of work 2021–2029; the launch of the questionnaire “Good practices of national mapping agencies and

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

national geographical names authorities” as a first step towards developing a compendium that outlines effective institutional arrangements and operational practices in the standardization of geographical names; the adoption of a universal unique identifier for cities, including a discussion on steps for its implementation by the Secretariat; and details the Bureau’s participation in the activities of the Economic and Social Council, such as the annual meetings of its subsidiary bodies and other events.

The Group of Experts also reports on the outcomes of its 2025 session, held in New York from 28 April to 2 May 2025. These include the renewal of its Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage; its activities towards operationalizing the “Geographical Names” theme of the global fundamental geospatial data themes through the World Geographical Names database; its efforts to improve publicity and awareness of the importance of geographical names standardization for technical as well as cultural purposes and, in turn, efforts aimed at developing national geographical names capacity; and its engagements with other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, including the Committee of Experts, as a means of supporting the Council in implementing the recommendations of its 2022 review of the Council’s functional commissions and expert bodies, among other matters.

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## I. Introduction

1. This report contains an overview of the Group of Experts' activities conducted during the intersessional period. In making decision 14/114 at its fourteenth session, the Committee welcomed the activities conducted during the intersessional period to implement the Group's strategic plan and programme of work for the period 2021–2029, including the strengthening of its operations through increased interaction across its 24 geographical and linguistic divisions, and its focus on the value of spiritual and emotional aspects of cultural and linguistic heritage for improved belonging of peoples. The Committee of Experts also welcomed the progress of the collaborative project with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, appreciated the leadership provided by Indonesia and the United States of America and encouraged Member States to contribute to the upcoming activities, including a global survey to identify and document good practices.

2. In making decision 2025/13 at its 2025 session, the Group of Experts noted the establishment of a new and enlarged secretariat for the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, the establishment of United Nations global geospatial centres of excellence in China, Germany and upcoming in Saudi Arabia, and the collaborative project between the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts. The Group of Experts also invited views on the efforts to strengthen collaboration in furthering the standardization of geographical names, welcomed the future publication of the compendium of good practices and recommendations for effective collaboration between mapping agencies and naming authorities within a country, and expressed its intent to support those recommendations actively. Furthermore, the Group also thanked Indonesia and the United States of America for leading the collaborative project.

3. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the work of the Group of Experts in strengthening collaboration with United Nations entities, and to identify other synergies and possible collaborative ventures that are mutually beneficial to both the Group and the Committee. Points for discussion and decision are provided in paragraph 26.

## II. UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021 - 2029 – Key updates

### Implementation of the UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029

4. At the 2025 Session, in its decision 2025/3, the Group of Experts took note of the co Vice-Chair's report<sup>1</sup> on the Implementation of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029<sup>2</sup> during the period of 2023-2025, and welcomed their assessment of how the

<sup>1</sup> See GEGN.2/2025/161/CRP.161

[https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/documents/GEGN.2\\_2025\\_161\\_CRP161\\_item3c.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/documents/GEGN.2_2025_161_CRP161_item3c.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> During its 2021 session, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) adopted Recommendation 1, addressing the adoption of the UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029 (SP&PoW). This recommendation was subsequently approved by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as decision 2021/69. The decision includes provisions for the periodic evaluation of its implementation, as well as updates and amendment as deemed necessary. In line with this decision, the 2023 session acknowledged the report on the implementation of the SP&PoW for the period of 2021-2023 (GEGN.2/2023/22) and recognized the progress achieved. Furthermore, the session reaffirmed that the SP&PoW would continue to serve as a guiding framework for the Group of Experts and for the standardization

Bureau, Working Groups, Coordinators and Divisions of the Group of Experts, and Member States had facilitated the implementation of the UNGEGN Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029, and in that regard called for the Group of Experts to accelerate its efforts in delivering a comprehensive and inclusive programme on the standardization of geographical names. The Group of Experts accepted several amendments to its Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029 and also decided to begin analyzing the current strategic plan and programme of work to inform the development of the next strategic plan and programme of work for discussion at the 2027 session.

#### **As a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council**

5. During the Economic and Social Council Coordination Segment<sup>3</sup>, convened at UNHQ on 6 - 7 February 2025, the Chair of the Group of Experts from France contributed to the Panel entitled “Conversation with Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions and Chairs of Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies on Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals including by leveraging the outcomes of the Summit of the Future” underscored<sup>4</sup> how “the standardization of geographical names is relevant to all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), so that everyone can benefit from sustainable solutions, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda and their national priorities”. This complemented contributions from the co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts, whereby the Co-Chair from Belgium noted<sup>5</sup> that “Geospatial is a foundation for evidence-based decisions, by grounding decisions and actions in science and spatially intelligent data” and the Co-Chair from Côte d’Ivoire highlighted that “by strengthening geospatial information policies and capacities, we are democratizing access to data and knowledge that enables governments to drive planning and manage resources effectively” further noting that “these efforts are essential to reducing the ‘digital divide’”.

6. In his remarks to ECOSOC at its Coordination Segment on 6 February, the Chair of the Group of Experts observed “the standardization of geographical names can only succeed if it is genuinely adopted by those for whom it is intended, be it the whole of a community, public officials subject to hierarchical power, or even just some of them... Therefore, it’s clear that the standardization of geographical names is relevant to all SDGs, so that everyone to advance sustainable solutions, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda and their national priorities”. The Chair continued to underscore the importance of collaboration across other bodies of the Council, as aligned with the recommendations of the 2022 review of ECOSOC, and noted that the Group of Experts has a strong relationship with the Committee of Experts, anchored by the UNGEGN and UN-GGIM Collaborative Project, but that the Group of Experts is also seeking broader engagement with the other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC, such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (when considering Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage and Indigenous Geographical Names) and the Statistical Commission (in support of its work on the unique identifier for cities).

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of geographical names among Member States (UNGEGN decision 3/2023/5)

<sup>3</sup> See: <https://ecosoc.un.org/en/what-we-do/ecosoc-coordination-segment/2025/2025-coordination-segment>

<sup>4</sup> See: [https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/UNGEGN\\_Conversation\\_ECOSOC\\_SubsidiariesEN5Feb2025.pdf](https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/UNGEGN_Conversation_ECOSOC_SubsidiariesEN5Feb2025.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> See: [https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/ECOSOC\\_UNGGIMcoordinationsegment\\_20250201VandenBergheENrev\\_clean.pdf](https://ecosoc.un.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/ECOSOC_UNGGIMcoordinationsegment_20250201VandenBergheENrev_clean.pdf)

### **III. The 2025 Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

7. The 2025 session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names<sup>6</sup> (UNGEGN) was convened from 28 April to 2 May 2025 on the theme “Advancing geographical names standardization through inclusive, culturally-informed and evidence-based solutions to support sustainable development”. In all, 227 experts representing 64 Member States across UNGEGN’s geographical and linguistic divisions and observers participated. 155 reports were tabled from 57 countries<sup>7</sup>, and 14 from its 24 geographical/linguistic Divisions<sup>8</sup>.

8. Opening the session, the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, Department of Economic and Social Affairs highlighted that less than five years remain to meet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and emphasized that standardized geographical names are essential to achieving the SDGs, observing that “far from being mere labels, place names underpin data collection, analysis, and decision-making that shape sustainable outcomes worldwide”.

9. Member States shared national progress in several “National Dialogues” thematically arranged segments<sup>9</sup>, sharing innovative good practices from Member States in geographical names management. These contributions demonstrated the breadth of national approaches to standardization, preservation, and innovation.

10. The Committee of Experts reaffirmed its strong collaboration with the Group of Experts, in recognising that geographical names as a Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Theme, acknowledging the work done as part of its “Collaboration Project: good practices of National Mapping Agencies and National Geographical Names Authorities” (as expanded upon below and in GEGN.2/2025/143/CRP.143<sup>10</sup>) and detailed progress and plans in the Committee’s work in enhancing activities in the area of global geospatial information management. Further, in its decision 2025/13, the Group of Experts took note of two reports covering progress on activities such as the establishment of a new and enlarged secretariat for the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, the establishment of United Nations global geospatial centres of excellence in China, Germany and upcoming in Saudi Arabia and welcomed the future publication of the compendium of good practices and recommendations for effective collaboration between mapping agencies and naming authorities within a country, and expressed its intent to actively support those recommendations.

<sup>6</sup> The website of the 2025 Session of UNGEGN:

[https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/)

<sup>7</sup> Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greenland, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Malaysia, Mauritania, Mexico, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Peru, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

<sup>8</sup> Africa Central Division, Arabic Division, Asia East Division, Asia South-East Division, Baltic Division, China Division, East Central and South-East Europe Division, Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia Division, Latin America Division, Norden Division, Pacific South-West Division, Portuguese-speaking Division, Romano-Hellenic Division, and the USA/Canada Division

<sup>9</sup> See: [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/#dialogue](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/#dialogue)

<sup>10</sup> See: Progress report on the Group of Experts and Committee of Experts collaborative project on shared good practices between national mapping agencies and national names authorities

[https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/documents/GEGN.2\\_2025\\_143\\_CRP143\\_item6\\_a.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/documents/GEGN.2_2025_143_CRP143_item6_a.pdf)

11. The Group of Experts' adoption of the concept of a Universal Unique Identifier for Cities<sup>11</sup> (see GEGN.2/2025/84/CRP.84) marked a significant advance in harmonising geospatial data infrastructure and updates on the World Geographical Names Database<sup>12</sup> (see GEGN.2/2025/21/CRP.21), highlighting how Member States can provide their geographical names to the United Nations in different languages and scripts. The Group of Experts noted and welcomed the elaboration and support of the United Nations Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, as detailed within its report<sup>13</sup> tabled at its 2025 session.

12. The Group of Experts' have previously reported to the Committee of Experts on its work on Exonyms. As reported in 2023, “the Group of Experts is deepening the discussions and decided in 2021 to find guidelines that reconcile its former views on exonyms and its recognition of them as part of the cultural heritage. Several ideas have already emerged from these discussions that could form the basis of re-issuing a decision based on current views. Firstly, any future recommendation on the use of exonyms should be considered as limited to international use or to those that require political sensitivity. On the other hand, safeguarding a linguistic heritage depends above all on its linguistic use within a community of speakers”.

13. In its 2023 – 2025 intersessional period, the Group of Experts, through its working group on Exonyms continued to discuss how to maintain the reduction of exonyms in international use, while safeguarding those comprising a part of the cultural heritage and reconciling the past decisions and recommendations of the Group of Experts and the past resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. In this regard, a draft decision on this topic was formulated<sup>14</sup> but following inclusive and participatory discussions, including at a side event at the 2025 session, it was decided, via its decision 2025/18, that further discussion was necessary. In this regard, the Group of Experts' looks forward to making further progress on this item in the coming biennial period, through further consultation with Member States and experts.

14. Interactive panel discussions<sup>15</sup> throughout the session addressed the cultural, linguistic, and developmental dimensions of geographical names, underscoring their role in fostering inclusive, culturally informed, and evidence-based development approaches. Further, a small side event programme<sup>16</sup> was convened, notably, two on “Geographical names as cultural heritage”, the first featuring a keynote by the, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and ex-President of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI - the representative body of the Nunavut Inuit), who emphasized protecting names as living expressions of identity within and across borders and generations. Another side event shared updates on the World Geographical Names Database and efforts to develop the concept for the Unique Identifier for Cities.

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<sup>11</sup> GEGN.2/2025/84/CRP.84 Concept of globally unique identifier for cities see:

[https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/documents/GEGN.2\\_2025\\_84\\_CRP84\\_item5b.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/documents/GEGN.2_2025_84_CRP84_item5b.pdf) and its annex

[https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/documents/ANNEX\\_GEGN.2\\_2025\\_84\\_item5b.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/documents/ANNEX_GEGN.2_2025_84_item5b.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> See GEGN.2/2025/21/CRP.21

[https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/documents/GEGN.2\\_2025\\_21\\_CRP21\\_item5b.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/documents/GEGN.2_2025_21_CRP21_item5b.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> E/CN.20/2025/13/Add.1

<sup>14</sup> GEGN.2/2025/72/CRP.72 See:

[https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/documents/GEGN.2\\_2025\\_72\\_CRP72\\_item8c.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/documents/GEGN.2_2025_72_CRP72_item8c.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> See: [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/#panel](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/#panel)

<sup>16</sup> See: [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/calendar.cshtml](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/calendar.cshtml)

15. On the emergent topic of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Group of Experts also convened a special session on “AI and the future of geographical names standardization” including discussions on generative AI applications for Arabic geographical names, underscoring the Group of Expert’s role in facilitating the consideration and agreement towards one romanization system for each non-Roman writing system. In this regard, the work of the Group of Experts is illustrating how emerging technologies can support consistency, romanization, linguistic respect, and national capacity development. The ongoing work presented at this session on the future geospatial information ecosystem, particularly as it relates to geospatially enabled artificial intelligence offers an opportunity to share mutual experiences of good practice and work towards the development of norms and standards, reducing duplication whilst enhancing impact in the relative areas of work.

16. From updates on national naming policies to deep dives into language recognition, cultural heritage, and the role of standardization in sustainable development, the 2025 session of the Group of Experts showcased the richness and relevance of geographical names. It also highlighted innovative tools, celebrated cross-country and interdisciplinary collaboration, and reaffirmed a shared global commitment to inclusive, culturally respectful, and evidence-based naming practices as part of a sustainable, evidence-based, and equitable future.

#### **IV. The collaborative project of the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts**

17. At its 2025 session, the Group of Experts received the report<sup>17</sup> of Indonesia and the United States of America as the Convenors of the “Joint Expert Group on Geographical Names and Geospatial Information Management”, which detailed the actions and steps taken to implement the collaborative project between our two bodies. This included detailing the development and execution of a 10-section questionnaire, anchored to the nine strategic pathways of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), as a basis towards the development of a compendium of shared good practices between national naming authorities and national geospatial information agencies. The questionnaire was promoted via the UNGEGN Information Bulletin #67<sup>18</sup> “Good practices emerging from relations between National Mapping/Geospatial Data Management Agencies and Geographical Names Authorities” and by letter to both communities.

18. In the background document to this report, the Joint Expert Group on Geographical Names and Geospatial Information Management of the collaborative project provides an analysis of the preliminary findings of the questionnaire. This is presented to the Committee of Experts to update on the progress of the collaborative project and to provide a basis for suggested actions for the forthcoming intersessional period, including the development of recommendations for enhancing the implementation of the ‘Geographical Names’ theme of the Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Theme.

19. To date, responses have been received from 73 responses from 62 countries, from across both communities, with a heavier weighting of contributions from National Naming Authorities (NNA). Initial findings underscore that geographical naming is broadly underprioritized at the policy level and that there is significant diversity in how NNAs are organized—ranging from centralized offices to committees or decentralized bodies—contrasted with the generally uniform structure of National Geospatial Information Agencies. Despite formal legal

<sup>17</sup> GEGN.2/2025/143/CRP.143. See:

[https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th\\_session\\_2025/documents/GEGN.2\\_2025\\_143\\_CRP143\\_item6\\_a.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/sessions/4th_session_2025/documents/GEGN.2_2025_143_CRP143_item6_a.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> See: [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/pubs/Bulletin/UNGEGRN\\_Bulletin\\_no.67.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/pubs/Bulletin/UNGEGRN_Bulletin_no.67.pdf)

frameworks existing in many nations, persistent challenges include inadequate funding and financial arrangements, a limited awareness of the value of geographical names, and fragmented institutional responsibilities. A notable gap is the absence of formal NGIA-NNA relationships in some countries, raising concerns about governance, policy and legal frameworks, data quality, and a lack of partnerships.

20. Initial recommendations call for the development of example policy and legal instruments, a focus on stronger advocacy for the strategic value of geographical names, investment in digital infrastructure, standardized engagement with Indigenous communities, and improved funding models that recognize the long-term benefits of coordinated mapping and naming efforts. Yet, these are still to be finalized.

21. In this regard, and in consideration that contributions from NGIAs could be further enhanced, the Convenors of the collaborative project invite further contributions from NGIAs until 26 September 2025. Following this, the Convenors would seek to finalize the report of its findings, providing a comprehensive analysis of the broad area in which both bodies are situated. Following this, the Convenors will initiate outreach to both communities via an online webinar to share findings and invite contributions to the forthcoming “Compendium of good practices and recommendations”, while inviting, via template, examples of good practice. Upon completion of these activities, it is anticipated that the recommendations and accompanying examples of good practice will form the basis of the Compendium. This Compendium will be circulated through a global consultation process involving both bodies, to ensure alignment with their respective work programmes and strategic priorities. Following this consultation, the finalized Compendium will be presented for adoption at the sixteenth session of the Committee of Experts, and subsequently submitted for endorsement by the Group of Experts at its 2027 session.

## V. Summary

22. The ‘Geographical Names’ theme of the Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes is a nexus point between both the Group of Experts and the Committee of Experts. The operationalization of this theme is a priority for the Group of Experts, as a practical step towards embedding toponymic data within national and global geospatial frameworks. This theme promotes interoperability and data governance across sectors, providing a foundation for collaborative efforts in capacity development, technical guidelines, and institutional cooperation between both bodies.

23. Enhancing the collaboration between and within national geospatial information agencies and national names authorities is a vital platform for bringing together the technical, cultural, and strategic dimensions of geographical naming. Crucially, this is also foundational for the work of the Committee of Experts, including its work on advancing the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), specifically, Strategic Pathway 4 “Data” but other elements of the anchor framework of the Committee also have a broad relevance to the overall work programme of the Group of Experts. For example:

- (a) The Group of Experts’ Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage, as part of its ongoing revitalization efforts, is seeking to re-establish its Focus Group on the Legislative and Policy-Driven Aspects of Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage. This Focus Group is anchored by the consideration that policy and legal issues are central to the protection, use, and dissemination of geographical names. Challenges such as naming controversies, intellectual property, and geopolitical sensitivities require coordinated

guidance. The Group of Experts will be seeking to develop and provide guidance that helps Member States navigate the legal dimensions of toponymy in a digital and changing world, but must not do this in isolation. In this regard, the working group aims to keep the Committee of Experts' working group on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management apprised of its efforts, and invites participation from interested expert members of the Committee;

- (b) The Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information has been instrumental in providing a framework for the integration of geographical names data for the World Geographical Names Database, as well as offering the Group of Expert's working group on Geographical Names Data Management a mechanism of review for its now adopted unique identifier for cities, presented to the Committee for endorsement in the report of the Expert Group at this present session (see E/CN.20/2025/13). In consultation with the Expert Group, and with the endorsement of the Committee at this session, it is intended that this concept is then presented to the Statistical Commission for their endorsement;

24. Through the ongoing work of the collaborative project, additional areas for collaboration can be identified, alongside the development of good practice recommendations for national geospatial information agencies, national names authorities, and other relevant national institutions. The collaborative project also underscores the need for both the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts to align their efforts across diverse national landscapes and provides an opportunity to leverage each other's frameworks to accelerate implementation. In reviewing other reports tabled at the recent Session, such as the status report (GEGN.2/2025/158/CRP.158) on the 24 divisions of the Group of Experts or decision 2025/6 to revitalize the Task Team for Africa, some questions emerge: Could enhanced engagement with the Committee's regional networks unlock new opportunities? How might our respective structures be mutually leveraged to promote global consistency and expedite the implementation of our separate mandates and work plans?

25. Accordingly, in the coming intersessional period, the Group of Experts is seeking to increase its efforts to collaborate across other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC. Past decisions and resolutions of the Group of Experts have recognized that language and cultural heritage lie at the heart of toponymy and that geographical names serve as living records of history, identity, and linguistic diversity. Their protection and standardization contribute directly to the preservation of intangible cultural heritage and promote inclusivity, particularly for indigenous peoples and linguistic minorities. In this regard, the work of the Group of Experts offers its support to the Committee of Experts as it seeks to implement its mandates, guided by ECOSOC resolution 2022/24 and seeks to identify further touchpoints whereby the Committee of Experts can support the Group of Experts in the implementation of its mandates.

## **VI. Points for Discussion**

### **26. The Committee of Experts is invited to:**

- (a) Take note of the report and the Group of Experts' efforts in the standardization of geographical names, including the outcomes of its 2025 session, held in New York from 28 April to 2 May 2025;
- (b) Express its views on the collaborative project, and encourage Member States to contribute their experiences to the questionnaire

**“Good Practices of National Mapping Agencies and National Geographical Names Authorities”;**

- (c) Raise awareness of, and contribute to, the forthcoming compendium that outlines effective institutional arrangements and operational practices between national geospatial information agencies and naming authorities, and support the expert group in finalising the compendium for ratification in 2027;
- (d) Encourage national contributions to the World Geographical Names Database;
- (e) Take note of and endorse the concept of the Universal Unique Identifier for Cities; and,
- (f) Encourage the participation, where relevant and appropriate, in the substantive programme and Divisions of the Group of Experts.

# Economic and Social Council

15 July 2025

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Fifteenth session

New York, 6–8 August 2025

Item 17 of the provisional agenda\*

### Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements

## Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present report contains the report of the Secretariat on enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements, prepared with the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/101, in which it requested the Secretariat to focus, in particular, on strengthening effective global coordination and governance arrangements for the United Nations global geospatial centres. The Committee welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in China and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence in Germany, as well as the advanced planning to establish the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Saudi Arabia.

The Committee noted that open and transparent management and coordination between the three United Nations global geospatial centres are key to their successes and effective resource utilization, and requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to develop a suitable common governance and operational structure for all United Nations global geospatial centres, including, for instance, international advisory committees with broad expertise and geographical representation, and to make available the terms of reference of the international advisory committees as background documents for the Committee of Experts.

In adopting decision 14/105, the Committee reaffirmed that the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework was a key umbrella for the many activities under the purview of the Committee of Experts, reiterated the importance of coordination, coherence and alignment in the work, efforts and activities of regional committees, functional groups, thematic networks, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and the High-level Group, and reiterated the importance of implementing the Framework together for the benefit of all. The Committee also urged the Centre to intensify its support to Member States to ensure the sustained adoption of geospatial information management capabilities and the operationalization of the Framework in accordance with national circumstances.

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\* E/C.20/2025/1.

In adopting decision 14/106, the Committee welcomed the reports of the Subcommittee on Geodesy and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence and their progress and activities, including their considerable and coordinated efforts to continue to implement General Assembly resolution [69/266](#). The Committee also expressed appreciation for the work of the Centre and the Subcommittee to strengthen evidence, awareness and understanding of the importance of the global geodesy supply chain as a vital foundation for critical national infrastructure and global economy and encouraged the Subcommittee and the Centre to continue to provide materials that could be used by Member States to influence decision makers.

In the report, the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence provides details on its activities during the intersessional period and the notable progress made in implementing its mandate. Also in the report, note is made of the publication of the first joint development plan on global geodesy, which is available in all six official languages of the United Nations and which contains an outline of the priority actions for Member States, the Centre and partners to strengthen the global geodesy supply chain. In line with the plan, the Centre prioritized the following: (a) the delivery of geodesy capacity-development training; (b) the development of policy-relevant evidence to raise awareness of the role of geodesy in economic and infrastructure resilience; and (c) the strengthening of governance arrangements. Capacity-development activities included regional workshops on modern geospatial reference systems that have been held in Europe, in Africa and in Asia and the Pacific, as well as forthcoming workshops on the same topic planned for the Americas and the Arab States. The Centre also advanced the multilateral memorandum of understanding on strengthening the global geodesy supply chain, which now has 40 participating entities. The report also provides information on the extension of financial support provided by Germany to the Centre until 2030.

Also in the report, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre provides details on the activities conducted during the intersessional period, including on its continued support to Member States in the implementation of the Framework as its overarching goal. The Centre also presents its first programme of work, provided as a background document, prepared in close consultation with its international advisory committee in January 2025 and aligned with its five main goals: (a) developing leadership; (b) addressing national priorities; (c) progressing geospatial knowledge; (d) enabling innovation; and (e) communication. The contribution of the Centre to events and annual meetings of the regional committees is also presented in the report. The report also includes details on capacity-development activities, including workshops and global forums on raising awareness of the benefits of geospatial information for national priorities and efforts to raise awareness, and promote the adoption and operationalization, of the Framework.

In the same report, the Secretariat provides updates on the advanced planning and preparatory activities relating to the establishment of the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Saudi Arabia.

## I. Introduction

1. In making decision [9/101](#) at its ninth session in August 2019, the Committee of Experts welcomed the efforts of the United Nations and the Government of China in developing a proposal to jointly advance the establishment, led by the United Nations, of a Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC) in Deqing, China, providing opportunities to build global geospatial capacity and capability and to improve and strengthen expertise on how to prepare for national geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries.
2. At its tenth session in August 2020, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), in making decision [10/104](#), welcomed and supported the offer by Germany to establish and host a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE) at the United Nations campus in Bonn, as the first centre of an envisioned federated approach to enhance global cooperation and coordination among Member States and relevant geodetic stakeholders, strengthen geodetic infrastructure and support Member States in improving their national contributions to the global geodetic infrastructure.
3. In July 2022, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), through its resolution [2022/24](#) entitled “Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements”, recognized the notable achievements of the Committee and reaffirmed the importance of strengthening its effectiveness in advancing the global geospatial agenda. In the resolution the ECOSOC recognized the sustained efforts of the Committee of Experts to establish the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China, and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany, each of which will, in an open, inclusive, participatory and transparent manner, provide opportunities to develop and expand global geospatial capacity, competence and capability, and to strengthen geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries.
4. In its decision [13/101](#), adopted at the ninth session in August 2023, the Committee welcomed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s commitment to host the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence (UN-GECE) in Riyadh, and encouraged the Bureau and Secretariat to collaborate with Saudi Arabia to define its scope and ensure alignment and complementarity with the existing Centres in Bonn and Deqing.
5. In its decision [14/101](#), the Committee noted that open and transparent management and coordination between the three United Nations global geospatial centres are key to their successes and effective resource utilization, requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to develop a suitable common governance and operational structure for all United Nations global geospatial centres, including, for instance, international advisory committees with broad expertise and geographical representation, and to make available the terms of reference of the international advisory committees as background documents for the Committee of Experts. The Committee of Experts established a new agenda item under its programme of work for the United Nations global geospatial centres to provide updates on their respective activities to strengthen and enhance geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries.
6. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the progress of the operationalization and establishment of the Centres of Excellence, express its views on the activities undertaken by the Centres and their advisory bodies, and provide guidance on the way forward, as appropriate. Points for discussion are outlined in paragraph 61.

## II. Mandates and substantive responsibilities

7. In making decision 14/101, the Committee of Experts welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in China and the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence in Germany as well as the advanced planning to establish the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Saudi Arabia. The United Nations global geospatial centres, established under the decisions of the Committee of Experts, aim to enhance effective geospatial information management across the world. Each Centre of Excellence have a specific substantive focus defined through a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the respective Member States where they are hosted and the United Nations. The substantive focus are as follows:

- (a) United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (Bonn, Germany)

Recognizing the importance of the global geodesy supply chain, assist Member States and geodetic organizations to coordinate and collaborate to implement A/RES/69/266 and to sustain, enhance, access and utilize an accurate, accessible and sustainable Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF) to support science, society and global development.

- (b) United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (Deqing, China)

Develop and promote the required knowledge, innovation, and leadership to strengthen the adoption of geospatial information to support the implementation of national development priorities and the SDGs, leveraging the UN-IGIF, and where Member States will have the ability to integrate and deliver national geospatial information policy, systems, services and capabilities into national government development policies, strategies, and arrangements.

- (c) United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) – *under establishment*

Support Member States and stakeholders in enhancing global geospatial information management with the aim to progress towards a future geospatial ecosystem where the global geospatial information community and stakeholders actively engage and contribute sustainable real-world solutions to humanity's many challenges, leveraging high-quality, timely and reliable location-based information and impactful geospatial analytics including advancements in geospatial technologies and artificial intelligence systems towards new geospatial approaches and capabilities.

8. In accordance with the decision of the Committee of Experts, the operational UN global geospatial centres of excellence provide an overview of the activities of their International Advisory Committees, current staffing and partnerships, and their respective operations aligned to their mandates and substantive responsibilities. The terms of reference of the International Advisory Committees, the Strategic plan, and latest operational work programme are also provided as background documents to the present report. Other background reports on specific substantive activities are detailed in the activities of the Centres.

### **III. United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE)**

9. The UN-GGCE vision is a future where all countries have strong political support for geodesy which enables them to – together – implement the United Nations General Assembly resolution [69/266](#), entitled ‘A global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development’ and accelerate the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals to derive social, environmental, and economic benefits.

#### **International Advisory Committee**

10. During the intersessional period, the UN-GGCE convened its third meeting of both the IAC and the Steering Committee (SC), alongside the fifth plenary meeting of the Subcommittee on Geodesy. These meetings were held from 10 to 14 March 2025 at the United Nations Campus in Bonn, Germany. The joint sessions focused on the continued implementation of the First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy, with discussions addressing geodetic governance arrangements, workforce sustainability, and supply chain resilience. The Steering Committee convened separately in a closed session as the final segment of the workshop to provide strategic oversight and direction. A summary of the outcomes has been made publicly available on the Centre’s page on the UN-GGIM website.

11. In addition to its annual in-person sessions held in 2023, 2024, and 2025, the UN-GGCE IAC continues to provide input through regular virtual consultations. These engagements ensure continuity in expert guidance and allow the UN-GGCE to remain responsive to evolving global geodetic priorities.

#### **Current staffing and partnerships**

12. As of July 2025, the UN-GGCE is comprised of three staff positions including the Head of Office, one geospatial professional and a general service staff.

13. The UN-GGCE also presently has secondments from France, Germany, Japan, Norway and Singapore. The UN-GGCE also benefits from contributions by 28 partner organizations.

#### **Activities of the Centre**

14. The activities of the UN-GGCE in the intersessional period are summarised below:

##### ***First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy***

15. The UN-GGCE published Version 1.0 of the First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy (The Plan) in all six UN languages on its website in January 2025. The Plan addresses the needs of Member States and partners described in the Global Geodesy Needs Assessment (background paper from 14th session) and articulates them as actions for Member States, partners and the UN-GGCE to carry out to strengthen the global geodesy supply chain.

16. The global geodesy supply chain includes:

- ground station observatories owned and operated by mapping agencies, space agencies, universities and research groups, who constantly observe the movement of the Earth and satellites;
- data centres operated by specialists who quality check, store, and archive the data from observatories and make it available to the global geodesy analysis community; and,
- analysis, combination and correlation centres and analysts who translate the raw data into geodetic products.

It is a *global* geodesy supply chain because no single country can fulfil all the requirements of accurately and reliably observing and analyzing the Earth and satellites. To measure the continuous changes, with the timeliness and level of precision required to produce the geodetic products satellites and users' demand, ground observatories and highly qualified people within governments and universities all around the world are needed.

17. The Plan outlines how to strengthen the supply chain in three phases. In Phase 1, Member States, partners and the UN-GGCE are urged to take action to avoid further degradation of the global geodesy supply chain. In Phase 2, Member States, partners and the UN-GGCE are encouraged to build a more reliable supply chain which enhances the reliability for geodetic products essential for Member States' operational requirements. Phase 3 looks to the future, and the next-generation supply chain requirements for improved accuracy of geodetic products required for assist in addressing scientific and societal challenges. The Plan is provided as a background document to this present report.

18. A key activity being led by the UN-GGCE is the design of a fit for purpose global geodesy supply chain. The UN-GGCE understands that for Member States to invest in the global geodesy supply chain they need a clear explanation of what a fit for purpose global geodesy supply chain is and an implementation plan which articulates how to develop it. To guide its work, the UN-GGCE is undertaking a maturity assessment of the current state of the supply chain across the following domains: Engagement and Collaboration, Governance and Strategy, Data Management, Data Products and Software, Asset and Infrastructure Management and Innovation and Development. The UN-GGIM community and scientific community will be consulted on the next steps of this maturity assessment later in 2025.

#### ***Raising awareness about the importance of the global geodesy supply chain***

19. The UN-GGCE has been consulting with GNSS providers who operate GNSS satellites to explain the weaknesses in the global geodesy supply chain and the potential impacts for satellite operations including GNSS.

- At the 18th International Committee on GNSS (ICG) meeting in Wellington, New Zealand (November 2024), a UN-GGCE representative highlighted weaknesses in the global geodesy supply chain; in particular, issues relating to the reliability of geodetic products such as Earth Orientation Parameters (EOP) and future realisations of the International Terrestrial Reference Frame which are essential to the operation of GNSS satellites. In a Joint Statement of the meeting, ICG members “openly acknowledged the risks highlighted by the UN-GGCE and recognized strengthening the global geodesy supply chain should be prioritised to ensure GNSS services are more robust.”<sup>1</sup>
- The UN-GGCE staff have also had targeted consultation sessions with representatives from the United States and the European Commission to discuss how Member States can work together to make the global geodesy supply chain robust. The major discussion topics are the reliability of the ground observatories, in particular Satellite Laser Ranging (SLR) and Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI), and the overreliance on universities and scientific institutions to perform the critical analysis work for geodetic products required to ensure satellites are operating accurately and reliably.
- At the United Nations Internet Governance Forum in Oslo, Norway on 23 June 2025, the Head of Office shared the stage with three government

<sup>1</sup> Joint Statement from the 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the International Committee on GNSS (2024).

Ministers to explain the importance of geodesy. The keynote presentation at the Forum was a great opportunity to raise awareness – in particular, the role geodesy plays to support critical infrastructure systems – to a number of high-ranking government officials from around the world. The key message was, “modern society is powered by satellites and therefore modern society is powered by geodesy.”

#### ***Policy briefs***

20. The UN-GGCE has released two policy briefs in the intersessional period:
  - ‘Geodesy is critical for climate science’ which outlines the ways geodesy is essential for climate science by enabling precise measurements to track sea level change, land motion, ice loss, ocean currents, and atmospheric dynamics. The brief provides evidence of how a weak global geodesy supply chain jeopardizes the accuracy of satellite data and limits the ability of scientists and policymakers to respond effectively to climate change. The brief urges countries to treat geodesy as critical infrastructure, improve governance, raise awareness, and increase investment in the global geodesy supply chain. The policy brief is provided as a background document to this report.
  - ‘Safeguarding VLBI Radio-Frequencies’ describes the essential role Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI) – a geodetic technique that uses global radio telescopes to achieve high-accuracy positioning by observing cosmic radio waves – plays in modern society. The brief explains that radio frequencies currently utilized for geodetic VLBI observations are not adequately protected under the existing radio regulations of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Member States are invited to take steps to safeguard geodetic VLBI through international regulatory frameworks and national policies. The policy brief is provided as a background document to this report.

#### ***Joining Land and Sea***

21. From 2 to 6 December 2024, the UN-GGCE implemented the International Workshop on the Integration of Terrestrial, Maritime, Built and Cadastral Domains “Joining Land and Sea” in collaboration with Badan Informasi Geospasial, Indonesia in Bogor, Indonesia. In this workshop, 81 participants including experts from the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), Expert Group on Land Administration and Management (EG-LAM), Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information (WG-MGI), Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks, Subcommittee on Geodesy, International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), Open Geospatial Consortium, and the UN-GGCE came together to discuss, and share ideas, on how to integrate data across terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains.

22. The participants from the workshop resolved to continue working together to develop guidance material for Member States on joining land and sea. This includes a guidance document aligned with the strategic pathways of the UN Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) and a technical document being developed by the UN-GGCE for geospatial professionals which outlines how to use geodetic datums to integrate geospatial datasets.

23. Furthermore, participants recognized the importance of the global geodesy supply chain as being a foundation for accurate and reliable land and sea data collection needed by governments to manage and mitigate climate change and natural disasters; the need to grow the next generation of geospatial professionals; the need to build awareness on the importance of strong geospatial foundations in terms that policymakers and the public can understand; and, the importance of connecting people together so they have a network of people to help them.

### ***Geodesy Capacity Development Workshops***

24. In the intersessional period, the UN-GGCE have designed, developed and implemented Geodesy Capacity Development Workshops on Transitioning to a Modern Geospatial Reference System (GRS). To date, the workshops have been undertaken in:

- Europe – 17 to 21 February 2025 (Bonn, Germany) (47 participants)
- Africa – 19 to 23 May 2025 (Nairobi, Kenya) (61 participants)
- Asia-Pacific – 30 June to 4 July 2025 (Bangkok, Thailand) (60 participants)

25. The workshop for the Americas will take place in Santiago, Chile from 3 to 7 November 2025 and the Arab States in February 2026 (TBD).

26. The workshops provide technical guidance on how to develop a ‘modern’ GRS, that is, one which is aligned with the reference frame of satellites. This enables Member States to make effective and efficient use of Global Navigation Satellite Systems and Earth Observation data. In addition to providing concrete steps on how to create, access, use and sustain a modern GRS, the workshops provide practical guidance on how to communicate the importance of geodesy to decision-makers to increase investment in geodetic infrastructure and establish governance structures to oversee and manage the modernization of a country’s GRS.

27. All presentations from the workshops are available on the UN-GGCE website and recorded presentations and discussions from the Africa and Asia-Pacific workshops are available on the UN-GGCE YouTube channel<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Efforts towards stronger governance for global geodesy***

28. The UN-GGCE developed and implemented the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MMOU) on Strengthening the Global Geodesy Supply Chain which became operative on 10 March 2025 at the Fifth Plenary Meeting of the UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy. As of 15 June 2025, the MMOU has 43 participants.

29. The MMOU is a shared recognition by Member State government departments and agencies, private sector companies, organizations, associations, and academic institutions, together with the UN-GGCE, that action is required to strengthen the global geodesy supply chain and make the foundations of positioning, navigation, and timing services reliable. The MMOU allows participants to demonstrate to leaders and policymakers that the global geodesy supply chain is dependent on international cooperation and collaboration, and there is an international 'coalition of the willing' who consider this to be a problem we must work on together. Participants are welcome to join the MMOU at any time. A copy of the MMOU is provided as a background paper to this report.

30. In recognition of the importance to strengthen governance arrangements for global geodesy, the UN-GGCE is developing an Options Paper exploring international governance models for a reliable global geodesy supply chain which includes (but is not limited to):

- On-going Member State financial and resourcing commitments,
- Resourcing for global basic geodetic network to support all people,

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/@UN-GGCE>

- Resourcing for the people who perform data collection and analysis roles,
- Open access to geodetic products to support operational government requirements.

31. The Options Paper will be made available to the UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy for consultation later in 2025.

#### **Next steps and recommendations**

32. Member States are encouraged to act on the proposed Member State activities in the First Joint Development Plan on Global Geodesy to take action to mitigate further degradation of the global geodesy supply chain. In particular, Member States should consider strengthening national geodetic engagement and coordination by establishing a national geodesy committee or working group which includes defence, science and policy representatives.

33. Member States are encouraged to take note of the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding and consider joining.

34. Member States are encouraged to consider the development of binding bilateral or multilateral agreements with other Member States. If Member States require guidance on how to undertake this, the UN-GGCE are willing and able to provide support.

35. Member States are encouraged to consider contributing to the UN-GGCE through either funding via trust funds, or secondments (in-person or virtual).

## **IV. United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC)**

### **International Advisory Committee**

36. In April 2024, ahead of the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts, the 2024 International Advisory Committee of the UN-GGKIC was focused on advancing the Strategic Plan and work programme of the Centre. The Strategic plan was adopted by the IAC in July 2024, soon followed by the endorsement of the Committee of Experts during the fourteenth session held in August 2024 at the United Nations Headquarters.

37. During the intersessional period, the UN-GGKIC continued to engage its IAC towards the preparation and approval of a first version of its operational workplan. The [work plan](#) was agreed to by the IAC in January 2025 as a guide for the operations of the UN-GGKIC for 2024-26, and beyond.

38. Owing to logistical challenges and the difficult overall financial prospect in the United Nations, the decision was taken to organize the annual meeting of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) through a two-step hybrid meeting with a virtual segment convened online on 7 and 8 May 2025 and an in-person segment to be convened, in the United Nations Headquarters on 3 August, on the margins of the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

39. During the online segment, the discussions focused on reviewing progress against the agreed work plan, identifying opportunities to enhance the Centre's visibility and communication, and refining the format and scope of the flagship "UN GeoNow" initiative. The IAC emphasized the importance of strengthening regional engagement and supporting innovation-driven capacity development.

40. The Steering Committee of the UN-GGKIC is tentatively scheduled for September 2025, conveniently after the IAC has taken place to continue providing its strategic advice concerning the activities of the UN-GGKIC, and reviewing annual progress reports and budgetary plan.

### **Current staffing and partnerships**

41. As of July 2025, the UN-GGKIC has a total of six staff located in Deqing, China. The recruited staff include the Head of Centre, a senior programme officer, three geospatial professionals and one general service staff. Two professional and one general service positions are still pending recruitment. The Centre also provides three staff positions at the United Nations Headquarters under the agreement for the operationalization of the UN-GGKIC.

42. The Centre is currently actively establishing consultancies to support the implementation of UN-IGIF and the development of Country-level Action Plan. The UN-GGKIC has also established a close relationship with the Centre for Spatial Data Infrastructures and Land Administration of the University of Melbourne in the context of the development of a geospatial leadership programme.

### **Activities of the Centre**

43. The activities of the UN-GGKIC in the intersessional period are summarised below:

#### ***UN Geospatial Knowledge & Innovation week, UN GeoNow in Deqing, China (October 2024)***

44. The Centre successfully convened the United Nations Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Week (UN GeoNow 2024), held from 21 to 24 October 2024 in Deqing, China. Under the theme "Geospatial IDEAS Benefiting Our World," the event featured a suite of knowledge-sharing and capacity development activities including the UN Geospatial Information Application Conference, the high-level policy dialogues under the "Moganshan Talks" series, the International Symposium on Leadership Development; and thematic workshops co-organized with ESCAP on disaster risk reduction and with UN DESA on digital governance. The event attracted over 1,000 participants from more than 50 countries, representing government, academia, the private sector, and the United Nations system.

#### ***Seventh High-Level Forum on UN-GGIM in Mexico City, Mexico (October 2024)***

45. The Centre actively participated in the Seventh High-Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, where it presented its contributions toward global capacity development through the implementation of the UN-IGIF, particularly in developing countries.

#### ***Regional committee meetings of Asia and the Pacific and Arab States in New Delhi, India (November 2024) and in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (February 2025)***

46. The Centre participated in the Third Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Asia and the Pacific in November 2024 and in the Fifth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States in February 2025, presenting its ongoing efforts to collaborate with regional committees and supporting the attendance of Member States to the regional committees. In New Delhi, the UN-GGKIC also provided extensive presentations on its implementation of the UN-IGIF towards the development of country-level action plans. In Jeddah, the UN-GGKIC also provided a detailed presentation of its work programme under its five main goals on developing leadership, addressing national priorities, progressing geospatial knowledge, enabling innovation, and enhancing communication and awareness.

***Expert Consultation and Meeting on the operationalization of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework in Deqing, China (November 2024).***

47. The meeting aimed to consolidate consultations and meetings focused on operationalizing the UN-IGIF at the country level. The primary objective was to review existing documents, guides, and resource materials, and to evaluate progress in efforts toward accelerating the implementation of the UN-IGIF by leveraging the United Nations' developed modality and approach to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements [E/RES/2022/24](#), particularly in developing countries. The consultation and meeting brought together the group of resource persons and consultants whom the United Nations Statistics Division and SDG Data Alliance had engaged since 2019 for the development and operationalization of the UN-IGIF at the country level, along with a few geospatial leaders and substantive officers from the Secretariat, to map out feasible practical next steps and to identify needed refinements and improvements to the UN-IGIF and its suite of documents and resource materials. This collaborative effort aimed to support the sustained adoption of geospatial information management capabilities and the effective operationalization of the UN-IGIF according to national circumstances.

***Expert consultation and meeting on enhancing geospatial information management arrangements and accelerating the implementation of the SDGs with the Sub-regional Workshop on UN-IGIF in Fiji (November 2024) and Mozambique (March 2025)***

48. In November 2024, the Centre contributed a sub-regional consultation and training event for Pacific Island countries and territories, focusing on capacity building and geospatial governance challenges specific to Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The event was organized in close cooperation with the SDG Data Alliance, the Pacific Community (SPC), Pacific Geospatial and Surveying Council (PGSC), and Secretariat. In March 2025, the Centre also co-organized an expert consultation and regional workshop on UN-IGIF implementation in Maputo, Mozambique, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the SDG Data Alliance, national partners and the Secretariat. The workshop targeted Member States in Southern Africa, including Small Island Developing States and Land-locked Developing Countries (LLDC).

***Fifth plenary meeting of the High-level Group on the UN-IGIF and the meeting of the Bureau and its Expanded Bureau, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (February 2025)***

49. In February 2025, the Centre presented its Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2025 at the Fifth Plenary Meeting of the High-level Group on the UN-IGIF, held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The presentation introduced the vision, mission of UN-GGKIC and emphasized the Centre's alignment with the strategic priorities of the Committee and its role structured on empowering Member States, implementing the UN-IGIF, and promoting knowledge and innovation. The presentation also noted the role of UN-GGKIC as a platform for innovation, partnerships, and implementation support for Member States.

***Geospatial Leadership training and Global Forum for the Next Generation of the Sustainability Agenda in Melbourne, Australia (April 2025)***

50. The event brought together over 200 participants and featured 12 technical sessions and 35 presentations by experts from over 50 countries. The event focused on geospatial knowledge and innovation and explored the role of geospatial intelligence in tackling global sustainability challenges, with a strong emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event also aimed to accelerate the deployment of geospatial solutions for climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable resource management. The event was also part of the

ongoing effort of the UN-GGKIC to exchange and scope the development of a geospatial leadership capacity development programme, in accordance to its workplan.

***Seminar on Spatiotemporal Intelligence in Geospatial Information and National Governance in Deqing, China (June 2025)***

51. In June 2025, the Centre co-hosted the Seminar on Spatiotemporal Intelligence in Geospatial Information and National Governance in Deqing, China, in partnership with UN-GGIM: Asia and the Pacific, drawing over 70 participants and featuring 19 expert presentations, the topics included exploring digital transformation in land surveying, urban governance, disaster response, smart agriculture, and SDG monitoring.

***High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York, USA (July 2025)***

52. During the 2025 session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the UN-GGKIC contributed to a high-level side event highlighting the power of geospatial information towards monitoring and advancing the implementation of the SDGs. The use case taken from China's innovative approach showcased how a variety of data can be used for monitoring globally to locally leveraging data disaggregation opportunities offered from Earth observation and geospatial data, including for sustainable urban development.

**Next Steps and recommendations**

53. In the coming period, the UN-GGKIC intends to organize the following activities for furthering the implementation and adoption of the UN-IGIF:

54. **UN-IGIF Workshop at regional committees:** in close partnership with the Secretariat and the regional committees, the UN-GGKIC intends to convene UN-IGIF workshops at the annual plenary of regional committees in the latter half of 2025. These efforts aim to raise awareness and share knowledge on developing geospatial strategies to address national priorities and to assist Member States in advancing the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), while reinforcing geospatial information management and accelerating progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals.

55. **UN-IGIF Workshop in subregional and groups of countries:** in close partnership with the Secretariat and the regional committees, the UN-GGKIC intends to convene UN-IGIF sub-regional workshops in the latter half of 2025, in efforts to advance and operationalize the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) and developing Country-level Action Plans, fostering regional cooperation.

56. **UN GeoNow 2025:** the event will be held in October 2025, serving as a global forum promoting advanced geospatial applications and stimulating sustainable development, digital governance, and industry integration. UN GeoNow 2025 aims to build a collaborative environment involving government, industry, academia, and research sectors. Designed as an annual event, future iterations of GeoNow will be complementary of other UN-GGIM events and foras such as the World Geospatial Information Congress or High-level Forums. UN GeoNow 2025 supports the mission and goals of the UN-IGIF to raise awareness at senior level and serves as a high-level international platform for sharing practical experiences, technologies, and partnerships, helping countries develop country-level action plans, develop national geospatial leadership, and showcase successful use cases of geospatial benefits for the Sustainable Development Goals.

**57. Geospatial applications for national priorities:** The Centre is dedicated to promoting the real-world application of geospatial information to address pressing national and global challenges. In close collaboration with its strategic and international partners, the Centre will develop a demonstration and showcase of integrated Earth observation (EO), geospatial, statistics and big data into geospatial knowledge hubs to facilitate decision-making, knowledge exchange and capacity development. These real-world examples of data and technology for monitoring can be used as a template for national implementation and will focus on topics such as smart agriculture, environment assessment, food security, early warning and policy planning. Once fully developed, the policy briefings, use cases and applications platform will be made openly available to Member States, reinforcing the Centre's commitment to inclusivity, innovation, and the operationalization of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF).

**58. Knowledge sharing and capacity development:** In the coming period, the Centre intends to strengthen the relationship with the UN-GGIM thematic networks, including UN system entities, and beyond with local and international strategic partners to organize more capacity development activities. These activities aim to raise awareness on the use of a variety of data including satellite and Earth observation, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), and geospatial information for the SDGs such as coastal zone management, cultural heritage, or environmental assessment. The list of upcoming workshops and seminar (webinar) is being prepared for the intersessional period.

**59. Empowering the UN System with geospatial information:** the Centre aims to deepen collaboration with UN system entities to deliver innovative, geospatially enabled solutions that strengthen operational effectiveness in domains across the UN system including agriculture, environment, peacekeeping, humanitarian, climate and disaster risk reduction, ultimately supporting Member States through the capacity development activities of its offices, departments and specialized agencies. These activities and collaboration aim to embed geospatial knowledge as a core asset in the UN system. Anchored in its guiding philosophy, “Geospatial knowledge benefiting our world”, the Centre remains steadfast in advancing data-driven, collaborative solutions for global impact.

## V. Background Documents

60. The following documents are provided as background documents to the present report:

- UN-GGKIC Strategic Plan and Logical Framework;
- UN-GGKIC Annual Work Plan;
- UN-GGKIC Capacity Building Workplan;
- UN-GGCE First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy;
- UN-GGCE Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding;
- UN-GGCE Policy brief on “Geodesy is critical to climate science”;
- UN-GGCE Policy brief on “Safeguarding VLBI Radio-Frequencies”.

## VI. Points for Discussion

**61. The Committee of Experts is invited to:**

- (a) Take note of the present report, of the work and progress of the United Nations Global Geospatial Centres of Excellence, including capacity

**development activities and events to implement ECOSOC resolution 2022/24 entitled 'Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements';**

- (b) Take note of the background documents related to the governance, workplan and activities related to the operationalization of the United Nations Global Geospatial Centres and provide guidance on the critical orientation and activities the Centres should undertake in line with their substantive focus;
- (c) Take note of the efforts of the United Nations Global Geospatial Centres of Excellence to raise awareness, enhance the understanding and importance of advancing global geospatial geospatial information for Member States, including through implementing the UN-IGIF and strengthening the global geodesy supply chain;
- (d) Provide guidance in advancing global geospatial knowledge, innovation, technology and infrastructure through the UN-GGKIC to advance the SDGs, the implementation of the UN-IGIF, and bridge the digital divide;
- (e) Take note of the First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy and provide views on how the UN-GGCE could best support Member States with implementation efforts; and
- (f) Take note of the need to strengthen global geodetic governance and provide views on: (i) the development of bilateral or multilateral Memorandums of Agreement, and (ii) take steps towards the establishment of an international organization.

**Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management**  
**Fifteenth session New York, 6 - 8 August 2025**  
**Item 20 of the agenda**

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**Report of the Committee of Experts on its fifteenth session**  
**Informal paper containing draft decisions (Part I) 7 August 2025**

**15/101 Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

- (a) Welcomed the comprehensive report of the Bureau and the Secretariat and commended the significant efforts in implementing strategic and practical actions to strengthen and enhance global geospatial information management arrangements in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2022/24 of 22 July 2022;
- (b) Endorsed its strategic framework for 2025 - 2030, providing the required strategic direction and approach to guide the programme of work of the Committee of Experts including for the new global political agenda post-2030; and further requested the Bureau to work with the Secretariat on developing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the delivery of the strategic objectives and priorities of the Committee, including a coherent global capacity development programme;
- (c) Urged the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in the context of the UN80 initiative, to safeguard all the geospatial information management positions dedicated to the Committee's normative and implementation work on global geospatial information management and the achievement of its operations; and in this regard, requested the Bureau to convey the need to safeguard and fill these geospatial information management positions;
- (d) Expressed serious concerns of the impact of the UN80 initiative on the Committee's normative and implementation work, and in the Secretariat's efforts to facilitate and coordinate the operations of the United Nations global geospatial centres, further emphasized the need for effective oversight, coherence and coordination of the mandates, roles and responsibilities of these offices away from Headquarters;
- (e) Expressed its appreciation to the Government of Mexico for the successful convening of the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management held in México City in October 2024; further welcomed the offer from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to host the Third United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in late 2026;
- (f) Welcomed the proposal to establish a 'world geospatial day' to raise awareness of the pressing need to advance geospatial information for social, economic, and environmental benefits, and entrusted the Bureau and the Secretariat to develop a consensus-based draft resolution for submission to the General Assembly at an appropriate date;
- (g) Welcomed a translation task team under the auspices of the Bureau to support the translation, particularly into United Nations official languages, of vital reference documents and resources of the Committee of Experts; and
- (h) Appreciated the many contributions and extrabudgetary funding from Member States and urged additional efforts including from the Secretary General of the United Nations, to mobilize additional resources, including through the means of trust funds, expert secondments and other sources, as appropriate, to support the activities of the Committee of Experts.

## **15/102 Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda**

- (a) Expressed appreciation to UN-GGIM Americas in coordinating the preparation of the report jointly prepared by the five regional committees that provided an overview on their implementation of global geospatial frameworks in their regions, and for supporting regional and inter-regional activities, as a means to exchange and share knowledge, and in this regard, noted the importance of strengthening the inclusive interregional dialogue series initiated ahead of the session, and extending them to the inter-sessional periods;
- (b) Welcomed efforts in deepening regional and inter-regional cooperation including participation in each other's plenary meeting, contributing to exchanges of knowledge, experiences, and expertise; further noted the dates of plenary meetings of respective regional committees, and in this regard, urged Member States to participate and contribute to these plenary meetings;
- (c) Noted the persistent challenges of participation by Member States to the annual plenary meetings of regional committee and recognized the need to mobilize resources to support the participation of Member States, particularly from developing countries, in these plenary meetings and regional capacity development activities;
- (d) Requested regional committees to actively contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee of Experts, in particular as relates to its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and to explore collaborative partnerships to strengthen and enhance regional and inter-regional cooperation and initiatives, including the proposed hybrid global hub on effective land administration proposed by UN-GGIM Europe; and
- (e) Noted the critical role of the regional committee in enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements, called on the support of the operational United Nations global geospatial centres and the thematic networks of the Committee to identify and disseminate good and innovative practices, current perspectives and emerging trends, and support national capacity development activities, particularly the most vulnerable and developing countries.

## **15/103 Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda**

- (a) Welcomed the report compiled by the Secretariat (see E/C.20/2025/6) together with background documents prepared by the four thematic networks, appreciated their contributions, participation, research, education and capacity-development activities during the intersessional period, the inter-network exchanges and collaboration including with regional committees and functional groups of the Committee of Experts, particularly the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and the promotion of innovative technologies such as geospatial artificial intelligence, Earth observation, and data platforms for national priorities, progress and global agenda;
- (b) Encouraged the thematic networks to deepen their cooperation and expand efforts to: support the development of coordinated training and educational programmes, especially for developing countries, pursue innovative approaches to sustainable development and capacity development, and enhance communication and outreach, ensuring that the benefits of advances in geospatial information management are inclusive and widely recognized;
- (c) Appreciated the role of the thematic networks in advancing their respective workplans and in demonstrating the value of geospatial information management and innovation to address for the Sustainable Development Goals and national priorities, and in this

context, noted that the UN Geospatial Network and its constituent entities should further collaborate with the UN global geospatial centres to raise awareness and more effectively demonstrate the benefits of geospatial information; and

- (d) Encouraged the thematic networks to advance the proposed next steps outlined in the report on the future geospatial information ecosystem (E/C.20/2024/8/Add.1) and its related background document, and further encouraged the networks develop a coordinated series of policy, insight, and research documents to serve as comprehensive knowledge resources for the global geospatial community, while focusing and aligning their work of the broader global geospatial information agenda;

#### **15/104 Future geospatial information ecosystem**

- (a) Commended the considerable efforts and activities under the leadership of the Bureau and its writing team including the global webinar, survey and the preparation of the paper on *Positioning the future geospatial information ecosystem*;
- (b) Acknowledged the need for the geospatial community to continue its journey to preparing itself for a dynamic and rapidly changing digital landscape and to contribute bridging the digital divide; and recognized that the positioning of the future geospatial information ecosystem was a strategically important activity to remain agile and adaptable to technological changes in data science, artificial intelligence and machine learning, and to contribute effectively to international frameworks including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Digital Compact, and future global agendas;
- (c) Noted the successful convening of global webinar and its broad engagement with a variety of stakeholders and cross-cutting themes from the wider digital ecosystem providing innovative and inclusive perspectives from across sectors, disciplines, technologies and regions;
- (d) Considered that the next steps outlined in the paper *Positioning future geospatial information ecosystem* should guide the development of coordinated periodic series of foresight, policy and research documents that can serve as a comprehensive knowledge resource on future trends and enable Member States identify emerging opportunities and challenges impacting the digital ecosystem; and in this context requested for regional committees, functional groups and thematic networks to advance these next steps and the proposed periodic series documents; and
- (e) Agreed that having successfully achieved its objectives, the activities of the writing team are now concluded, and that the activities under the agenda on the future geospatial information ecosystem be entrusted with the overall coordination and guidance of the Bureau supported by the Secretariat, and aligned with the strategic framework 2025-2030 of the Committee.

#### **15/105 United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

- (a) Welcomed the report of the High-Level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and commended the High-Level Group for improving the visibility and sustaining the adoption of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework with its strategic leadership, priorities, and progress for enhanced coordination, coherence, alignment of activities and synergies with regional committees, the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre, Thematic Networks and other implementing partners;
- (b) Encouraged all Member States to implement the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework as a foundational element for geospatial information management to address national priorities, and to share their country-level action

plans widely to the through the website to foster knowledge, good practices, dialogue and promote collective progress on implementing the Framework;

- (c) Welcomed the communication materials developed by the High-Level Group noting their importance in raising awareness and supporting global capacity development efforts, and further encouraged Member States to contribute to the development of case studies demonstrating the successful benefits of the implementation of the Framework;
- (d) Welcomed the sustainable funding guide as a critical resource to support countries to prepare budget assessments, economic evaluation models, and business case strategies to support long-term, country-led investment towards the implementation of the Framework, and further noted the upcoming global webinar on this subject;
- (e) Recommended that the Global Survey on implementation of the Framework be conducted, if possible, annually as a consolidation of regional surveys, and be conducted by the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre under the guidance of the High-Level Group and in close collaboration with regional committees and other relevant partners; and
- (f) Appreciated the support of the translation task team to support the accessibility of the Framework suite of documents to the wider community and agreed to transition its role under the auspices of the Bureau to support the translation, particularly into United Nations official languages, of vital reference documents and resources of the Committee of Experts.

#### **15/106 Global geodetic reference frame**

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Subcommittee on Geodesy and appreciated the progress and activities undertaken, including the substantial and coordinated efforts with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to advance the implementation of General Assembly resolution 69/266;
- (b) Appreciated the work of the Subcommittee to raise awareness and strengthen evidence on the importance of geodesy as a vital foundation for satellite services, in particular, timing and time synchronization services, which support critical infrastructure, national economies and national security, and encouraged the Subcommittee to continue working with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence to consult with policy makers and communicate the importance of geodesy using real-world use cases which demonstrate tangible benefits;
- (c) Appreciated the agreement of Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding which provided an opportunity for Member States to raise awareness of the importance of the global geodesy supply chain within their governments, and as a mechanism to help establish country-level working groups on to address frequency specturm;
- (d) Requested the Subcommittee, with support from the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence, to assist Member States establish bilateral or multilateral arrangements to strengthen geodetic cooperation and address critical gaps, with considerations of fit-for-purpose governance to address the operational, cybersecurity, and strategic misalignment risks stemming from the fragmented management and operation of the global geodesy supply chain;
- (e) Appreciated the work of the Subcommittee and the Centre to raise awareness of the importance of geodetic observations, in particular from Very Long Baseline Interferometry, to create geodetic products needed for satellite operations, and welcomed the establishment of a Subcommittee Working Group on Frequency Protection for Geodetic Observations;

- (f) Requested the Subcommittee Working Group lead a collaborative and coordinated approach with national spectrum management agencies and the International Telecommunications Union to safeguard geodetic observations through national policies and international regulatory frameworks;
- (g) Appreciated the work of the Centre in conjunction with the Subcommittee on the First Joint Development Plan on Global Geodesy and encourages partners to join on its implementation;
- (h) Expressed its appreciation of the capacity development training provided by the Centre in conjunction with Subcommittee and welcomed further forums to consider the mitigation of risks including software, cybersecurity, and scientific workshops, conducted with partners related to GNSS analysis and challenges related to joining land and sea datasets; and
- (i) Welcomed proposed organization of the sixth plenary meeting of the Subcommittee together with the meeting of the international advisory committee of the First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy during the upcoming intersessional period.

#### **15/107 Geospatial information for sustainable development**

- (a) Welcomed the report jointly prepared by the Secretariat and the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and the many efforts to strengthen the use of geospatial information and statistical data in addressing the needs of the 2030 agenda, the sustainable development goals, and other global development agendas;
- (b) Welcomed the paper ‘Rescuing the SDGs: How geospatial information can transform the production, measurement, monitoring and dissemination of SDG indicators’ and called for its wider dissemination and the provision of capacity development activities that enable Member States to implement the recommendations contained therein, as the instruments provide concrete support to help close the data gaps, particularly in the national context with limited capacities such as developing countries and SIDs;
- (c) Supported decision 56/105 on the Statistical Commission on the Global Indicator Framework for SDGs and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (d) Welcomed the enhanced cooperation with SDG Custodian Agencies to produce examples of good practices across the SDGs on how geospatial information can strengthen the production, measurement, monitoring and dissemination of geospatially integrated indicators, in including the intersection of gender and access to land ownership and on the environment and biodiversity;
- (e) Noted the many good practices and resources shared by the Committee of Experts, including Storymaps, national experiences and other related initiatives, and in that regard, urged increased dialogue and participation among, and between, regional and global initiatives that support the use of geospatial information for sustainable development; and
- (f) Recognized that advancing geospatial integration in the SDG's monitoring requires strengthened infrastructures, knowledge sharing and developing capacity among stakeholders and called for efforts and activities that promotes geospatial data literacy, foster collaboration across sectors, and technical cooperation among countries.

#### **15/108 Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience**

- (a) Welcomed the reports of the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience and the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management, and the efforts made by the task team to further position the Committee of Experts to

address climate resilience with integrated geospatial information, and the efforts of the working group to collaborate across the international community of disaster risk management, and encouraged the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters;

- (b) Welcomed the paper “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges” and its compendium of national experiences prepared by the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience; as well as the activities undertaken to advocate for and raised awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience, and further agreed that having successfully achieved its objectives, the activities of the task team are now concluded;
- (c) Welcomed awareness raising activities of the Working Group on Geospatial Information for Disaster Risk Management including with the wider United Nations system, agenda and frameworks and agreed to follow this model on the broader domains of climate, environment and resilience, and encouraged the continued collaboration among national disaster and geospatial agencies;
- (d) Emphasized that demonstrating the value for geospatial information management on the topics of climate, environment and resilience remained an urgent imperative for the Committee of Experts and that it was critically important to advocate for and raise awareness on its potential for a broad range of topics;
- (e) Considered the importance of comprehensive and joined up approach of activities including on a variety of topics including climate, resilience, environment, disasters, early warning, risk management, marine and costal management, or ecosystem development; and encouraged all Member States and stakeholders to contribute to a joined up approach; and
- (f) Agreed to the preparation of a comprehensive holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and resilience are considered holistically, while anchoring geospatial information management into the broader frameworks of the United Nations, with the view to present the holistic report to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

#### **15/109 Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information**

[forthcoming]

#### **15/110 Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management**

[forthcoming]

#### **15/111 Integrated marine geospatial information**

[forthcoming]

#### **15/112 Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies**

[forthcoming]

### **15/113 Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community**

- (a) Welcomed the report of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the Open Geospatial Consortium and their complementary ongoing efforts to meet the Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable (FAIR) principles and provide a strong foundation of an authoritative global geodesy supply chain and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;
- (b) Encouraged standards bodies to collaborate closely with the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence to maintain an authoritative ISO Geodetic Register containing Member States' geospatial reference system metadata, and further the collaboration to continue supporting Member States in contributing their data to the Register;
- (c) Welcomed the IHO's progress in advancing its Universal Hydrographic Data Model, including the operational release of S-100 standards for electronic navigational charts, bathymetric surfaces, water levels, and surface currents, which are now available for use, and recognized the valuable contribution of these standards to disaster preparedness efforts, particularly for small island developing states;
- (d) Acknowledged the importance of, and encouraged Member States to actively participate in international geospatial standards development, processes and meetings, and to adopt the best practices offered by the three organizations to meet the practical needs of Member States including national development programs and social inclusion, particularly in vulnerable areas by enhancing access to essential services; and
- (e) Acknowledged, when possible, Member States should implement open standard policies as a default for geospatial and location information programs to encourage data sharing and minimize duplication.

### **15/114 Standardization of geographical names and collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

[forthcoming]

### **15/115 Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

- (a) Welcomed the report of the operational United Nations global geospatial centres, acknowledged the activities undertaken to implement Economic and Social Council resolution 2022/24 and enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements, and commended the efforts of the Secretariat in facilitating and coordinating the establishment and operationalization of the centres;
- (b) Expressed concerns over the lack of resources in the Secretariat to ensure adequate oversight, supervision and coordination across the operations and activities of the centres, and further expressed the need for effective and clear internal oversight and supervision mechanisms and to ensure coherence and coordination of the mandates, roles and responsibilities of these offices away from Headquarters;
- (c) Requested, during the intersessional period, that the workplan of these centres be reviewed together with the Bureau and assessed against the priorities of the

Committee, in particular, those of the High-Level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Subcommittee on Geodesy;

- (d) Appreciated the substantial efforts of the United Nations global geospatial centres in developing capacity through the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the strengthening of the global geodesy supply chain, and requested for sustained capacity development and training opportunities tailored to national operational needs and circumstances, and aligned with the Committee's Strategic Framework 2025 - 2030;
- (e) Acknowledged the progress made by the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in finalizing its workplan, appreciated its alignment with the strategy of the High-Level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and urged the Centre and the Secretariat to focus on assisting Member States with practical, results-driven support for national implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;
- (f) Appreciated the First Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy, provided by the United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence in all official languages of the United Nations, as practical guidance for Member States to strengthen the global geodesy supply chain, and requested to the Subcommittee on Geodesy working with the Centre to support Member States with their implementation efforts, including development of policy briefs and guidance materials, together with efforts for spectrum protection for geodetic observations;
- (g) Encouraged all government departments and agencies in Member States, private sector, academia and civil societies to participate in the Multilateral Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening the Global Geodesy Supply Chain, and to advance stronger international governance for global geodesy.

#### **15/116 Programme management report**

**Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management**  
**Fifteenth session New York, 6 - 8 August 2025**  
**Item 20 of the agenda**

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**Report of the Committee of Experts on its fifteenth session**  
**Informal paper containing draft decisions (Part II) 8 August 2025**

**15/101 Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/102 Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/103 Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/104 Future geospatial information ecosystem**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/105 United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/106 Global geodetic reference frame**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/107 Geospatial information for sustainable development**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/108 Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/109 Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report and progress of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (see E/C.20/2025/12), encouraged Member States to continue their efforts to implement and operationalize the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, and commended the Expert Group on its approach and contributions to the work programme of the Statistical Commission, including its efforts to include the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and geostatistical techniques in the fourth revision of the ‘Principles for Population and Housing Census’ document;
- (b) Endorsed the second edition of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, recognizing its alignment with the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and called upon Member States to support its translation into the six official languages of the United Nations and to mobilize resources to support its implementation, particularly in developing countries.
- (c) Welcomed the paper ‘The Benefits of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for the Statistical Domain’, invites Member States and regional bodies to

share national experiences of how elements of the UN-IGIF are used to support national and regional statistical systems and encourages their participation in future global consultation on this paper.

- (d) Supported the Expert Group's Strategic Plan and Vision for 2030 and its Work Plan 2025-2027, as a means of reinforcing the coordination of activities for operationalizing and implementing the GSGF and encourages relevant stakeholders to mobilize additional resources to accelerate the implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework. Furthermore, welcomed decision 2025/8 of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on a universal unique identifier for cities, recognizing the importance of the integration of unique identifiers and cross-referencing systems for standardization;
- (e) Encouraged national geospatial information agencies to collaborate with their national statistical offices as a means of enhancing the management of geospatially integrated statistical data towards building more coherent national data ecosystems, and urged the Expert Group to promote and raise-awareness of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework to various statistical domains, including the environment, agriculture, social, and demographics.
- (f) Welcomed the many offers to support implementation of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and urged the continued development of guidance relating to the production and dissemination of geospatially integrated statistical data, and the disaggregation of statistics by geography, as a means of sustaining momentum to support the production of high quality, geospatially enabled statistics for the 2030 Agenda and future global development frameworks.

#### **15/110 Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management and its ongoing efforts to communicate and raise awareness of the importance and benefits of effective land administration at all levels and acknowledged the need to strengthen advocacy, awareness and provision of guidance for the implementation on the Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) alongside the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN IGIF), in accordance with national circumstances;
- (b) Noted the compilation report and future priorities identified by the Working Group including the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, aligned with the strategic framework 2025-2030, recognizing its value for addressing climate change, resilience, blue economy development, coastal management, protection of ecosystem, and the land-sea interface; and noted a second part of the Compilation Report is forthcoming.
- (c) Noted with appreciation the progress made by the Expert Group in implementing its workplan, including activities across its five defined focus areas, and the continued coordinated, inclusive, innovative, adaptable and cross-cutting approach for promoting efficient land administration; appreciated the preparation of the Compilation Report on Land–Sea Integration (Part I), developed through collaborative efforts, which synthesizes global good practices and lessons learned, and recognizing the importance of integrated domain management—aligned with the UN IGIF strategic pathways—for sustainability and resilience; and further noted that a second part of the report is forthcoming;
- (d) Noted the growing expectations for capacity development, knowledge sharing, application of innovative technologies and standards for the integration of terrestrial,

maritime, built and cadastral domains, addressing the land-sea interface; and welcomed the Expert Group to further explore the proposed hybrid global hub on effective land administration including its related governance and modalities and report back to the sixteenth session;

- (e) Commended the Expert Group's growing engagement with regional committees, thematic networks, and other international partners, including its considerations on further collaboration — particularly with Indigenous peoples and local communities — to strengthen awareness, capacity development, and implementation of Framework for Effective Land Administration; and
- (f) Acknowledged the leadership transition within the Expert Group, thanked Singapore for its contributions as outgoing Co-Chair, and welcomed the Netherlands as incoming Co-Chair.

#### **15/111 Integrated marine geospatial information**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information and the continued leadership to provide practical guidance and raise awareness to Member States, to sustain the efforts to implement the UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro in accordance with national circumstances
- (b) Established the UN-GGIM & IHO Joint Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information bringing together the UN-GGIM working group on marine geospatial information and the IHO's marine spatial data infrastructure working group, noted its terms of reference and working modalities; and in this context noted further the consolidation will optimize resources and enhance global coordination
- (c) Noted the workplan, compilation report and future priorities identified by the Working Group including the integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains, recognizing its priority to address the land-sea interface and develop integrated national strategies addressing climate resilience, blue economy, coastal development, biodiversity, protection of ecosystem, disaster risk management; and noted a second part of the Compilation Report is forthcoming;
- (d) Emphasized the importance of capacity development and strengthened partnerships to support UN-IGIF-Hydro implementation through Member States, regional committees, UN entities, the IHO, and other organizations, and
- (e) Noted the need to address the operational requirements and share good practices of all Member States, in particular for developing and most vulnerable countries.

#### **15/112 Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report and background document of the working group on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management and expressed its appreciation for the progress addressing relevant and complex policy and legal issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies;
- (b) Endorsed the paper "Authoritative Data for Crises" as an important reference document supporting Member States in leveraging authoritative geospatial data during crises and disasters, as a practical guidance in identifying governance gaps and ensuring transparency, accessibility, and accountability in high-stakes environments;

- (c) Noted the updated paper “Data for Public Good in the Digital World”, which aligns with the objectives of the Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact, and provides considerations for formulating geospatial policies that serve society, protect rights, and enable innovation;
- (d) Endorsed the “Rallying Statement to the Geospatial Sector on the Development of a Legal and Regulatory Framework for AI,” and the “International Regulations on AI in Geospatial Applications”;
- (e) Noted the concept paper “Addressing the Implications of the Developing Legal and Regulatory Framework on AI for the Geospatial Sector,” and emphasized the importance to engage with regulators and stakeholders to ensure policies are targeted, effective, and proportionate for AI governance for the geospatial domain; and
- (f) Noted the Working Group’s Workplan for 2025–2027, which outlines new areas of focus; and welcomed the upcoming in-person meeting of the Working Group to be held in Riyadh, 7–9 October 2025, and encouraged active participation.

**15/113 Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/114 Standardization of geographical names and collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and the outcomes of its 2025 session, including its efforts to advance the standardization of geographical names and implement its 2021–2029 Strategic Plan and Programme of Work;
- (b) Acknowledged the progress of the collaborative project between the Committee and the Group of Experts, commended the leadership of Indonesia and the United States of America to develop “Good Practices of National Mapping Agencies and National Geographical Names Authorities”, and recognized the need continued efforts to enhance collaboration and coherence between National Geospatial Information Agencies and National Name Authorities;
- (c) Endorsed decision 2025/8 of the Group of Experts regarding the concept of the Universal Unique Identifier for Cities and encouraged national contributions to the World Geographical Names Database, recognizing these as critical elements for enhancing interoperability and the integration of geographical names at the global and local levels;
- (d) Noted the important role of geographical names in supporting sustainable development and inclusive, evidence-based decision-making; and in this context reiterated the importance of implementing the ‘geographical names’ data theme of the Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Theme to be in alignment with prevailing UNGEGN standards and guidelines, including those related to cultural heritage, indigenous and linguistic diversity; and
- (e) Encouraged the continued collaboration between the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts, including with the geographical and linguistic divisions of the Group of Experts and working groups to support the standardization of geographical names.

**15/115 Contribution of United Nations global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements**

[Provided under Part I]

**15/116 Programme management report**

- (a) Welcomed the oral report delivered by representatives of the Secretariat on the programme management of the Committee of Experts;
- (b) Welcomed the presentation by the General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on their plans and preparation for the third congress in 16 – 19 November 2026 at the Hilton Riyadh and further welcomed the early and well-considered preparatory efforts undertaken for the congress and appreciated the thoughtful approach in laying a strong foundation for its successful organization.