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Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial agenda

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Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present paper contains the report of the Secretariat on the contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial agenda for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

The report provides information on the contribution and achievements of the following six regional and thematic groups: the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States; and the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies. The reports of the regional committees and thematic groups contain information on their activities and achievements since the fourth session of the Committee of Experts, held in New York from 6 to 8 August 2014. The reports also provide an overview of the work of the regional committees and thematic groups in the following areas: (a) contributions to United Nations activities on global geospatial information management; (b) legal and policy issues; (c) administrative arrangements; (d) capacity development; (e) publicity and outreach; (f) partnerships; (g) regional and international collaboration (h) technical issues; (i) priority issues and challenges; and (j) future plans. In its report, the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa invites the Committee to endorse its formal establishment.

I. Report of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific

1. Summary

1. This report highlights the activities carried out by the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific (UN-GGIM-AP) since the last report submitted to the Fourth Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) held in New York, United States from 6-8 August 2014.

2. Introduction

2. UN-GGIM-AP was established on 1 November 2012 replacing the Permanent Committee on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific (PCGIAP), in accordance with the Resolution adopted at the Nineteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP) from 29 October - 1 November in Bangkok, Thailand.

3. Objectives

3. UN-GGIM-AP inherits exactly the same missions and membership as those of PCGIAP and aims to promote globally the unique needs and interests of the region as the representing body of the National Geospatial Information Authorities (NGIAs) of 56 countries and regions in Asia and the Pacific, while cooperating with other regional and global entities.

4. Activities

a. Contribution to UN-GGIM Activities

4. UN-GGIM-AP has contributed to UN-GGIM activities mainly through the works conducted by the working groups.

5. Working Group 1 on Geodetic Reference Framework for Sustainable Development has been closely involved and supported UN-GGIM by assisting with the adoption of the General Assembly resolution, A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development, in February 2015.

6. Working group 3 on Place-based Information Management for Economic Growth assisted with the investigation on the Status of Mapping in the World; the joint work conducted by UN-GGIM and the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS).

7. In addition, the UN-GGIM-AP Secretariat supported the development of the UN-GGIM knowledge base by reviewing the contents and providing relevant materials to be uploaded to the knowledge base.

b. Working Group Activities

8. **Working Group 1 on Geodetic Reference Framework for Sustainable Development** is chaired by Dr. John Dawson (Australia) and tasked to facilitate cooperation in geodetic data sharing amongst national agencies, in order to build a common geodetic reference framework across the region. The main activities led by WG1 include: Asia Pacific Reference Frame Project (APREF), Asia Pacific Regional Geodetic Project (APRGP), Asia Pacific Regional Height System Unification Project (APRHSU) and Asia-Pacific Geodetic Capacity Building Project (APGCB).

9. WG1 continues its efforts on improving access to the global geodetic reference frame while also supporting regional geodetic cooperation within Asia and the Pacific Region. In addition to the ongoing projects mentioned above, WG1 continues its efforts for regional capacity building on geodesy by holding technical workshops and supporting inter-agency collaborations.

10. **Working Group 2 on Data Sharing and Integration for Disaster Management** is chaired by Mr. Peyman Baktash (Iran). WG2 conducts projects to support data sharing for disaster management, including research to identify user requirements associated with risk assessment, preparedness planning, rescue and recovery.

11. In its efforts to design and implement a regional geoportal for disaster management, WG2 in cooperation with the Secretariat has released the WG2 proto-type geoportal within the domain of UN-GGIM-AP.¹ After the Nepal earthquake struck on 25 April 2015, InSAR-derived crustal deformation data using ALOS2 data and Global Map data for elevation and land cover of central Nepal were shared through the geoportal.

12. **Working Group 3 on Place-based Information Management for Economic Growth** is chaired by Dr. Jiang Jie (China) and conducts projects to encourage national geospatial information authorities in the region to utilize and share geospatial information through web/cloud based platforms and other smart based services as well as to support the development of a legal framework required to support the integration, sharing, access to and dissemination of this emerging place-based data.

13. In its efforts on investigating the status of mapping of the world, further funding has been provided by the ISPRS for the year 2015. WG3 continues its efforts for rapid data acquisition projects for Australia and Malaysia while also conducting ongoing projects on smart services for the delivery of geospatial information, capability to deliver and use geospatial information, and case study on web-based distributed geo-data management and online services in China.

c. Publicity and Outreach

14. News articles and announcements including press release on the first United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the GGRF have been published through the committee's website². In addition, the summary of the third UN-GGIM-AP meeting was released on the top page of the UN-GGIM website³.

15. UN-GGIM-AP supported and participated in several international events including the Third High Level Forum on UN-GGIM, the 39th Plenary Meeting of ISO/TC 211, Symposium

¹ <http://geoportal-prototype.un-ggim-ap.org/unggim/>

² <http://www.un-ggim-ap.org/>

³ <http://ggim.un.org/>

on Application of Geospatial Technology in Urban Disaster Management, and the International Workshop on National Spatial Data Infrastructure and its Applications.

d. International Workshop on National Spatial Data Infrastructure and its Applications

16. Aimed to strengthen the capacity of National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI), UN-GGIM-AP and the Administration of Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography (ALAGaC) of Mongolia organized the international workshop on NSDI and its Applications in Terelj, Mongolia on 9 June 2015. Best practices and experiences from the member countries were shared under the 3 sessions: NSDI policy planning and the legal framework; Framework data of NSDI, standardizations and its architecture; and NSDI applications. The workshop adopted “Terelj Declaration on National Spatial Data Infrastructure and its Applications⁴” which recommends actions to contribute to the development and utility of an effective and efficient NSDI of the member countries in close cooperation with UN-GGIM-AP and relevant international organizations.

5. Partnership, Regional and International Collaboration

17. UN-GGIM-AP actively worked to seek and maintain partnership with regional and international organizations including United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), UN-GGIM regional entities, UN-Habitat/Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM), and ISO/TC 211.

6. Regional Priority Issues and Challenges

18. The survey on priority issues of the Asia-Pacific region were distributed to the member countries in March 2015. Based on the survey results, core issues for Asia and the Pacific Region were identified as follows:

Geodetic Reference Framework

- Need for NGIAs of each country to encourage support from their government and decision makers of UN General Assembly Resolution on GGRF.
- Need to develop capacity along with the roadmap developed by UN-GGIM WG on GGRF. They include enhancing technical support and improvement of infrastructure on geodetic observation and development.

Capacity Building

- Need for more capacity building opportunities through forums and workshops to strengthen the capacity of NGIAs while also improving the capacity of users and decision makers to utilize geospatial information.

19. UN-GGIM-AP requests those issues to be taken up by the Committee of Experts.

7. Future Plans

20. The 20th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP) will be held from 5-10 October 2015 on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea with the main theme of Geospatial Information for the Global Development Agenda.

⁴ http://www.un-ggim-ap.org/Document/NSDI_WS_150609.html

21. The conference will have invited papers under the following sub- themes: I. Geodetic Reference Frame, II. Disaster Management with Geospatial and Earth Observation Data, III. Regional SDI and Services, and IV. Land Administration and Management.

22. The fourth Plenary Meeting of the UN-GGIM-AP will follow immediately after the 20th UNRCC-AP. Based on the resolution adopted at the conference, new working groups will be established. Also a new Chair/Vice Chair of the working groups and Board Members to serve for the term 2015-2018 will be elected.

8. Conclusion

23. UN-GGIM-AP has successfully worked to address key issues and challenges of the regions while supporting the activities of UN-GGIM. Together with the liaisons and partners, the committee will continue its efforts to meet the needs and challenges of the regions while seeking alignment with the work of UN-GGIM.

24. In this connection, UN-GGIM-AP will continue to contribute to the work of the UN-GGIM and take necessary actions upon requests by the Committee of Experts.

Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific (UN-GGIM-AP)

Report by: Mei Maruyama Secretariat, UN-GGIM-AP

Report reviewed by: Hiroshi Murakami, Secretary, UN-GGIM-AP

II. Report of the of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas

1. Activities, Areas of Work and Achievements

a. Contribution to UN-GGIM activities

25. According to the resolutions of the Tenth United Nation Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas (UNRCC-A) the following Working Groups (WG) of the Regional Committee were created:

1. WG on geospatial data collection and management
2. WG on access and use of geospatial information for disaster risk reduction and climate change
3. WG on Standards and Technical Specifications
4. WG on Promotion and Consultancy of Spatial Data Infrastructure.
5. WG on International Coordination and Cooperation

26. During the First Session of the Committee in September 2014 in Mexico City, the working groups' coordinators led sessions with their new members to give continuity for planning objectives, steps and responsibilities distribution. One of the main results was the creation of a single questionnaire for the Diagnosis on Geospatial Information Management for the 38 member countries. The combined questionnaires prepared by each group focused on its particular subject.

27. In order for the Regional Committee to continue to be aligned to the global agenda of UN-GGIM, and with the relevance of the topic of the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, the decision was made to change the name and objectives of the WG on Geospatial Data Collection and Management to, Working Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information. All National Statistical Institutes of the member countries were invited, of which the following responses of acceptance were obtained by Statistical counterparties: IBGE Brazil, INE Chile, ONEI Cuba, Department of Statistics and Censuses of El Salvador, ONE Dominican Republic, and ABS/GBS Suriname.

b. Legal and Policy

28. To date, the UN-GGIM Americas website has been operated by the SNIT of Chile, is currently under migration, and it is expected that in July 2015, the site: <http://www.un-ggim-americas.org/> will be administered by the INEGI in Mexico.

29. In March, the Minister of National Assets of Chile, informed the Committee that Mr. Galvarino Melo left his position as SNIT Executive Secretary, pledging continuity of the Vice-Presidency by the nomination of the new Executive Secretary Mr. Alvaro Monett.

c. Administrative Arrangements

30. The PAIGH supported the UN-GGIM Americas project with \$ 6,500 USD for 2015 which will be used for carrying out the Second Session of the Regional Committee in Mexico City in November 2015.

31. From the support of \$ 4.5 million USD from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, through the Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), 2015 project activities were aimed at strengthening the Geodetic Network and Capacity Building with an investment of \$1.3 million USD.

32. For the second time UN-GGIM: Americas will host the second session of the Committee during the Latin America Geospatial Forum 2015 in Mexico City in November, and financing assistance will be provided for 20 members of the Regional Committee.

d. Capacity Development

33. Under the frame of the Capacity Building stage of the Project for Strengthening of the Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) in the Caribbean the first training course on Geodesy, taught by Dr. Keith Miller, Professor of the University of the West Indies (UWI), which was conducted in Aguascalientes, Mexico, from 8-12 December 2014.

e. Publicity and Outreach

34. The Regional Committee has international presence with the participation of the President of the Committee, Mr. Rolando Ocampo in international forums.

f. Technical

35. The Caribbean Project is divided into three main actions: Diagnosis, Capacity Building and Infrastructure Acquisition. Regarding the second phase of the Project, as mentioned in paragraph 30, the Geodesy Course was conducted and the one on Standards will be carried out in New York in August 2015. For the third stage of the project, there are plans to purchase equipment for the strengthening of the geodetic network in the region, in addition to the construction of a Land Cover Map, for which satellite imagery was acquired and donations received from the National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation of China.

36. It was decided that a diagnosis of the geospatial information management across the Americas should be conducted. The coordinators of each working group prepared a module for a joint questionnaire, which will be distributed for response in June 2015.

2. Partnerships and Regional and International Collaboration

37. The Collaboration Agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico (SRE) through AMEXCID and INEGI has been the framework for collaboration between the two institutions to develop the Project for Strengthening the Spatial Data Infrastructure in the Caribbean.

38. Under the Caribbean Project framework, a Technical Committee with the following entities ACS, INEGI, AMEXCID, Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) Caribbean Chapter, the University of Guyana and University of West Indies, St Augustine was created. In March 2015, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine and it was agreed that they would host the data center for the Caribbean Project.

39. Mr. Ocampo has made several tours of duty in the Caribbean region, where he delivered satellite images to the Foreign Affairs Ministers of Barbados, Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago.

40. A joint meeting with representatives of PAIGH, SIRGAS, GeoSUR and UN-GGIM: Americas was held in November 2014, where a Commitment Document was signed. Its objectives are to strengthen, harmonize and accelerate, in a coordinated and effective way SDI development in the Americas.

3. Priority Issues and Challenges

41. One of the priority issues is to continue to integrate the activities of the Caribbean Region to those of UN-GGIM and UN-GGIM: Americas, through the continuity and sustainability of the Caribbean Project. Another important objective of the Regional Committee is to encourage the active participation of member countries in Working Group activities.

42. The main challenges of the Regional Committee are to ensure continuity and active participation of representatives of member countries, their political support and the financial support for meetings of the Committee and its Working Groups.

4. Perspectives and Future Plans

43. The immediate plan of action for the Regional Committee is to carry out the activities within the framework of the Fifth Session of UN-GGIM in New York, including a training course on standards for Caribbean countries and two side events of the Regional Committee.

44. On 11 and 12 November 2015 the second session of UN-GGIM: Americas will be held in Mexico City. The program includes the progress and activities of 2015; regional and international cooperation; working groups' progress; future plans for the Regional Committee, among others.

45. The Caribbean Project work program includes future training courses and the purchase of computer equipment for the creation of geomatics solution that allows for a Digital Map of the Caribbean. In addition, 14 geodetic stations are to be acquired for strengthening the Caribbean Geodetic Network.

46. The coordinators of the Working Groups of the Regional Committee will analyze and use the results of the questionnaire to create a joint diagnosis of Geospatial Information Management within the Americas.

5. Conclusions

47. The Regional Committee is in a consolidation phase in which the support of all Member States is needed, they have made great strides in a short time and the main challenge is to keep pace and achievements as a region.

48. The key players, regional and international agencies and the Government of Mexico through AMEXCIDM are to be acknowledged for the support and encouragement provided to the Caribbean Project, which has enabled the exponential growth experienced by UN-GGIM: Americas. Within the Committee, the Vice-President of the Regional Committee, represented by Álvaro Monett has played a fundamental role, and has served as an active coordinator of the Working Group's tasks and key to the development of the region's General Diagnosis.

49. UN-GGIM Americas recognizes and is appreciative of representatives of member countries that have been active, with highly responsible activities, including the coordinators of the Working Groups, representatives of Geographic Institute Agustín Codazzi and the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia; Geographic Institute and the National Registry of El Salvador; National Territorial Information System of Chile; and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico.

Report by: Monica Aguayo González, Executive Secretary of UN-GGIM: Americas
Report reviewed by: Rolando Ocampo Alcántar, President of UN-GGIM: Americas

III. Report of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa

1. Introduction and Background

50. This report outlines activities carried out by the Africa region with regard to geospatial information management since the Fourth Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM). The report includes actions taken as a follow-up of resolutions adopted by UN-GGIM and other activities considered as being of interest to Member States and partners.

2. Objectives

51. The main objective of the African cluster of UN-GGIM is to strengthen by aligning specific needs and interests of Africa with international mechanisms. A further aim of UN-GGIM: Africa is to encourage and facilitate the integration of statistics with geospatial information. UN-GGIM: Africa will be organized around the following key pillars:

- The African Geodetic Reference Frame (AFREF project, to develop a regional geodetic reference frame, aligned with the Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF).
- The Second Administrative level Boundaries (SALB) project, to build authoritative and accurate second administrative level boundary's databases with validated datasets from member States.
- The GeoNyms project, to create an African gazetteer populated with Member State data and input from the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN).

3. Activities, Areas of Work and Achievements

52. The region organized the inception meeting of the African cluster of UN-GGIM. The primary objective of the meeting was to discuss, adopt and endorse a regional body charter to coordinate geospatial information management activities in Africa. The meeting was attended by over 30 participants: delegates from 11 African countries, and observers from international organizations including the African Union Commission, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the United Nations Secretariat, and the private sector.

53. The UN-GGIM: Africa inception meeting agreed on the establishment of a transitional bureau to steer the initiative during the coming year. The meeting further agreed to set up four executive working groups themes and convenors to deal with specific key areas relevant to the continent.

UN-GGIM: Africa elected a transitional bureau, composed as follows:

- Chair: Ethiopia
- Co-Chairs: Burkina Faso, South Africa, Tunisia
- Secretariat: (ECA)

UN-GGIM: Africa Working Groups with their convenors:

Working Group	Convenor
WG1: African Geodetic Reference Frame	Ethiopia
WG2: Fundamental Datasets	South Africa
WG3: Institutional and Legal frameworks	Algeria
WG4: Capacity and capability development	Cote d'Ivoire

4. Contribution to UN-GGIM Activities

54. The Africa region participated in the following UN-GGIM related events and activities:

- The Fourth Session of the Committee of Experts of GGIM, held in New York in August 2014. The meetings offered the opportunity to raise awareness within the international community and initial discussions were held with African Member State representatives in preparation for the inaugural Africa meeting,
- The Third High Level Forum of UN-GGIM in Beijing, China in October 2014. Opportunity was given to have dialogue with several high profile international geospatial community members who might assist in the establishment and sustainability of UN-GGIM: Africa, and
- The expanded strategic UN-GGIM Bureau Meeting in Hangzhou, China.

5. Capacity Development

55. In terms of capacity building and outreach, the region has continued to collaborate and coordinate activities with its partners to organize seminars and workshops, to raise awareness and share knowledge on the importance of using geospatial technology for Africa's development agenda. The region successfully contributed to the organization of the African Association of Remote Sensing (AARSE) 2014 conference. The AARSE international conference is conducted biennially across Africa, alternately with the AfricaGIS conference, and is the premier forum in Africa for research on remote sensing technologies and geospatial information science, gathering leading scholars from the remote sensing and related communities.

6. Technical

56. The activities carried out in this area aim at increasing the number of information and knowledge resources and services developed at the regional, subregional and national levels to improve availability and use of spatially-enabled information for development in Africa. The activities also encompass promotion of common and interoperable tools and standards.

Second Level Administrative Boundary (SALB): The project was revitalized in 2014 by UNSD and UNCS with ECA as the African focal point. Datasets have recently been received from Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire and Ethiopia.

African Reference Frame (AFREF): The Region continued the effort to develop the continent's unified geodetic reference frame. The standard processing strategy for official computations of an African reference frame is now validated and the region has adopted the first official static coordinates for AFREF.

7. Priority Issues and Challenges

57. Currently the priorities issues are two-fold:

- Ensure the recognition of UN-GGIM: Africa by the global UN-GGIM and subsequent endorsement by member States and,
- Funding availability for travel, meetings, missions to Member States to assist in policy workshops, among other activities.

8. Perspectives/Outlook, Future Plans

58. First meeting of UN-GGIM: Africa: The region plans to organise the first meeting of UN-GGIM: Africa to formally endorse the initiative by member States. The meeting is tentatively scheduled on 1-4 December 2015.

UN-GGIM: Africa Action Plan: The road toward the establishment of a UN-GGIM: Africa Action Plan was endorsed at the inception meeting in December 2014 and relied upon common frameworks, standardization and capacities. The action plan will be finalised and formally adopted by Member States during the first meeting to be held in 2015.

9. Conclusion

59. Having set the stage for the development and implementation of UN-GGIM: Africa, the continent has fixed a key milestone as a visible sign that Africa will be a strong supporter in developing the United Nation Global Geospatial Information Management regional entity for Africa. The region expects that as part of the larger global organisation, this will enable direct transfer of geospatial standards and policy to be implemented at the continental and national level. The region expects that the development and coordination of UN-GGIM: Africa will gain consensus of African Member States as well as support from partners in the common implementation of the programme.

10. Recommendation

60. To the Fifth Session of UN-GGIM.

We, delegates from African Member States, representatives from regional organisations, partners and observers in Africa, met, agreed and resolved:

- To create the African cluster of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, hereafter referred to as UN-GGIM: Africa.
- To designate the Economic Commission for Africa of the United Nations as the cluster's Secretariat.
- To request the formal endorsement of the UN-GGIM: African cluster by UN-GGIM at its fifth session.

11. Acknowledgement

61. The report was compiled and finalised thanks to the following contributors:

- Andre Nonguierma (UNECA) - UN-GGIM: Africa Secretariat
- Sultan Mohammed (Ethiopia) - Chair UN-GGIM: Africa Transitional Bureau
- Derek Clarke (South Africa) – Co-Chair UN-GGIM: Africa Transitional Bureau
- Abdoulaye Belem (Burkina Faso) - Co-Chair UN-GGIM: Africa Transitional Bureau

IV. Report of the of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe

1. Summary

62. This report provides an overview of the activities carried out by the European Regional Committee of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information (UN-GGIM: Europe) following the inception of the regional entity on 1 October 2014.

2. Introduction

63. Following a preparatory phase, UN-GGIM: Europe was formally established on 1st October 2014 in Chisinau Moldova thereby replacing the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe with the Regional Committee of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information for Europe.

3. Objectives

64. In line with the other regional bodies UN-GGIM: Europe aims to identify regional issues relevant to geospatial information management, and recommend necessary actions so that the economic, social and environmental benefits of European geospatial information are maximized.

65. UN-GGIM: Europe fully respects existing European regional and national frameworks and capabilities in the context of European geospatial information management. UN-GGIM: Europe aims to encourage the implementation of the recommendations of UN-GGIM.

66. UN-GGIM: Europe also supports capacity building, donor funding and other measures for the development of geospatial information and spatial data infrastructure development in Europe.

67. UN-GGIM: Europe aims to cooperate in the development of a European geospatial information infrastructure which supports the integration of statistics and avoids duplication of cost, effort and data.

4. Activities, Areas of Work and Achievements

a. Contribution to UN-GGIM Activities

68. UN-GGIM: Europe welcomed and supported the resolution for a global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development and actively, and successfully, encouraged European United Nations Member States to co-sponsor the resolution when it was brought before the General Assembly on 26 February 2015.

69. Europe believes in the importance of geospatial and statistical information for measuring, monitoring and achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs). UN-GGIM: Europe therefore finds it encouraging that in the recently published zero draft of the outcome document for the United Nations Summit to adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda, geospatial information is specifically mentioned in paragraph 39. The regional committee feels that it is important to ensure, not only that the text remains in the final document but also to strengthen the understanding of the importance of geospatial and statistical information for measuring,

monitoring and achieving the SDGs. As a result, UN-GGIM: Europe has encouraged its members to support and reinforce the importance of geospatial and statistical information in the zero draft Post 2015 outcome document during the negotiation rounds.

70. At its fourth session, held in August 2014, the Committee of Experts agreed that global fundamental geospatial data themes need to be determined, integrated and harmonised from national to global levels. UN-GGIM: Europe, which has a Regional Working Group that is investigating a definition and use of core data (fundamental data), considers this a priority global issue. As a result UN-GGIM: Europe is presenting a report, 'Determining global fundamental geospatial data themes', for the attention and consideration of the Committee of Experts at its fifth session.

b. Legal and Policy

71. As a region Europe has a number of European wide frameworks, policies, legislation and initiatives which have an impact on the management of geospatial information; an overview was included in the Preparatory Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe's report presented to the Committee of Experts at fourth session Committee of Experts.

72. The Digital Single Market Strategy, which was adopted by the European Commission in May 2015, aims to achieve: better access for consumers and businesses to digital goods and services across Europe, the right conditions and a level playing field for digital networks and innovative services, and maximising the growth potential of the digital economy.

73. Good progress has been made in implementing the European Location Framework (ELF) as one of the Interoperability Solutions for European Public Administrations to provide up-to-date, authoritative, interoperable, cross-border reference geospatial information for use by the European public and private sectors.

c. Administrative Arrangements

74. UN-GGIM: Europe is governed by the Articles and Rules which were adopted at the inaugural meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe. The Articles and Rules of procedure are publicly available.

75. UN-GGIM: Europe is coordinated and managed by an Executive Committee which was nominated and approved during the inaugural meeting on 1 October 2014. The term of the Executive Committee is of three years.

76. The Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe is assisted by a Secretariat to carry out its functions. The Netherlands is responsible for providing the secretariat to UN-GGIM: Europe. The function of the Secretariat of UN-GGIM: Europe is carried out by EuroGeographics through a Service Level Agreement with Kadaster Netherlands.

d. Capacity Development

77. UN-GGIM: Europe supports various initiatives that foster knowledge sharing and capacity development across and within the region. These initiatives are led, funded or initiated either through cooperation between Member States or formally funded programmes. A few examples are included below.

78. One of the objectives of UN-GGIM: Europe is to build harmonised reference data for Europe, in order to contribute to the sustainable development goals. While European Union (EU) member countries, through the INSPIRE Directive, have a legislative platform through which this can be achieved, this is not true for the wider European United Nations Member States. *INSPIRING National Spatial Data Infrastructures Development in Eastern Europe*, a workshop in April 2015, focused on how to provide successful data infrastructures in Eastern Europe, and raise awareness about legal, technological and organisational aspects related to the establishment of the pan-European data infrastructure through implementation of the INSPIRE directive. Ukraine and Moldova were the beneficiaries of this initiative that was supported through the EU's Enlargement and Integration programme in collaboration with the World Bank, which already funds National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) projects in these countries. The workshop complemented another 'Spatial Data Infrastructure - contributing to economic and social development in Ukraine' organised jointly by EuroGeographics and the ELF project.

79. The four year *Impuls project*, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is led by Sweden in cooperation with Croatia. It supports Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, to implement the INSPIRE Directive in the region, to create interoperable content and services to support the development of e-governance in each country and contribute to economic development, transparency of ownership and anti-corruption processes. The project will provide the capacity and knowledge for how technical interoperability can be achieved, how authorities should disseminate geospatial data in an electronic format via services and how to share geospatial data with other public authorities within and across countries.

80. EuroGeographics, the membership association of the European National Mapping, Cadastre and Land Registry Authorities, is an Observer Organisation of UN-GGIM. The association hosts eight *Knowledge Exchange Networks* which bring together experts from the national mapping and cadastral authorities to provide forums for the exchange of best practice, sharing knowledge and experiences and directly contributing to the capacity development of the European NMCAs. The networks are dedicated to different topics that are relevant to NMCAs, these include business and quality issues relevant to geospatial data, GNSS positioning in Europe, cadastre and land registry, state boundaries, Copernicus, INSPIRE and European policy. The Knowledge Exchange Networks also interact with other stakeholders in the geospatial community in order to ensure a wider platform for the exchange of knowledge and best practice.

e. Publicity and Outreach

81. UN-GGIM: Europe believes that the wider geospatial community in Europe has a lot to offer to UN-GGIM as observer organisations and actively engages with relevant professional, research and academic organizations and associations. At the inaugural meeting of the regional entity, the European Environment Agency, EuroGeographics, EuroSDR and Eurogi were admitted as Observer Organisations to UN-GGIM: Europe. The European Commission was granted observer status in the Articles.

82. Over the course of the year, other organisations have expressed an interest in participating as Observer Organisations; they will be formally proposed for admittance at the second Plenary Session of UN-GGIM: Europe, which is planned in Belgrade, Serbia on 7 October 2015.

83. UN-GGIM: Europe has formulated a communications plan, which is managed and coordinated by the UN-GGIM: Europe Secretariat. The communications strategy includes traditional press releases to the geospatial media publicising regional and global UN-GGIM

activities and achievements. The regional entity maintains a [website](#) that provides information of the activities, news and documents of UN-GGIM: Europe. In addition UN-GGIM: Europe has a twitter account which has over 130 followers from the regional and international geospatial community.

84. As a region, Europe has a number of geospatial events and activities happening throughout the year. UN-GGIM: Europe has provided active participation in some of these events in order to raise awareness of the UN-GGIM objectives and to engage with the wider geospatial community and relevant stakeholders. These include:

- i. [Joint UN-GGIM: Europe and ESS](#) meeting held in Luxembourg, 3 March 2015
- ii. [EuroGeographics: from INSPIRE Directive towards the European Location Framework](#) held in Kiev, Ukraine in March 2015,
- iii. [INSPIRING National Spatial Data Infrastructures Development in Eastern Europe](#) held in April 2015, Chisinau, Moldova,
- iv. [FIG Working Week](#) in Sofia in May 2015.
- v. UN-GGIM: Europe Workshop held at the INSPIRE/GWF 2015, 28 May 2015

f. Technical

85. One of the outcomes from the initial phases of the Preparatory Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe was to make an inventory of the situation of geospatial information management in Europe and, within the framework set by the UN-GGIM inventory of issues and the derived European focus points, propose priority areas for work under UN-GGIM: Europe. Following presentations from the Preparatory Committee at the inaugural Plenary Session of UN-GGIM: Europe it was agreed to focus on the two most important issues of European geospatial information management:

- i. Increasing data interoperability and harmonisation by proposing core geospatial data which meet essential user needs;
- ii. Enabling integration of core geospatial data with statistical and other data in order to foster further usage.

(i) Core Data - Work Group A

86. Work Group A “Core Data” (WG A) is coordinated by France. Currently fifteen European United Nations Member States and three Observers are participating in this work group. It aims at increasing data interoperability and harmonisation by proposing core geospatial data which meet essential user needs.

87. In terms of a concept, core data can be seen as the authoritative, harmonised and homogeneous framework data which both national and international users need to either fulfil their requirements or to geo-reference and locate their own thematic geospatial data. In the latter case, core data may be used as a framework on which other richer, more detailed, thematic geospatial and statistical data would rely. Besides, core data should follow a bottom-up approach from authoritative data of member states. Core data would be produced once for national uses with maximum resolution, and would then be provided to international users through generalizing and aggregating processes.

88. In terms of methodology, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) have been taken as the basis by WG A to structure uses by identifying three major usages themes: 1) Technological and natural hazard prediction; 2) Availability of natural resources and maintenance of biodiversity; and 3) Sustainable economy and facilities. WG A focuses on

using INSPIRE specifications and analyses for specifying core data. The INSPIRE subset which meets user requirements for core data will be selected; Quality criteria for this subset will be defined further than current INSPIRE specifications in order to foster data homogeneity. The methodology also requires the member states participating in WG A to present respective national conceptions of core data.

89. WG A divided its work into three sub-groups. It has analysed user requirements for the three respective major usages, by assessing the required geospatial data in terms of specifications and accuracy, by justifying such assessments through existing legislations and by comparing national core data specifications. From this user requirements analysis, WG A has outlined core data scoping for the needs of “technological and natural hazard prediction” usages by drafting a list of core data.

90. The specific issue of the core data addressing the requirements of National Statistics Institutes (NSIs) is still to be investigated by WG A, in cooperation with Work Group B. These requirements are twofold: 1) Core data should include core features and attributes able to link statistical information; 2) Core data should allow National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) to introduce location in their statistical data production processes, as NSIs need to geo-reference many sources to produce statistical data.

(ii) Data Integration - Work Group B

91. Work Group B “Data Integration” (WG B) is chaired by Germany and deals with the integration of geospatial data (including cadastral parcels) with other information. Currently there are 15 European United Nations Member States comprising 20 National Mapping and Cadastral Authorities or NSI’s participating in WG B.

92. It is understood by WG B that a global vision, with the focus on Europe, should be envisaged for all tasks and deliverables. Strategic and political papers for “evidence based decision making” are needed rather than technical ones.

93. WG B takes into account the global recommendations from UN-GGIM such as of the United Nations Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information as well as of other relevant United Nations and global initiatives.

94. WG B distributed its work into three sub-groups, each focusing on one of three main tasks: 1) definition of the priority user needs for combinations of data, 2) recommendation for methods implementing the prioritised combinations of data, and 3) recommendation on how to manage side-effects induced by data combinations.

95. The main focus of WG B this year has been on delivery of the initial task, providing use cases and user needs relevant for policy makers and politicians. Showing how evidence based decision making can benefit from geospatial information in combination with other information on the European, national and sub-national level, reflecting the United Nations and the European goals (e.g. United Nations sustainable development goals and EU top 10 political priorities and challenges). The resulting user needs report with various recommendations and use cases can be found on the UN-GGIM: Europe website.

96. The future focus of WG B will include a review of current European Interoperability Frameworks and geospatial and statistical integration projects, and an investigation of any side effects induced by data combinations which may result in unavailability, non-usability and misuse of data and the services provided.

5. Partnerships, Regional and International Collaboration

97. UN-GGIM: Europe welcomed the establishment UN-GGIM: Arab States, sending a letter of welcome and congratulations on the formal establishment of the regional entity in February 2015. Further cooperation was extended by the participation of UN-GGIM: Europe Member States at the second Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States in Algiers, Algeria on 10-11 June 2015.

98. The Secretariat of UN-GGIM: Europe collaborated with Denmark and its Permanent Mission to the United Nations, the UN-GGIM Secretariat, and the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) in co-organising an event during the April Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The event, *Unleashing the Power of 'Where' to Make the World a Better Place*, was designed to highlight the vital role of geospatial information in measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

99. UN-GGIM: Europe participated in the Expanded UN-GGIM Bureau Meeting held in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China on 4-6 May 2015. The Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe recognises and welcomes the opportunities for further global and inter-regional coordination and cooperation presented by the Expanded UN-GGIM Bureau Meetings, and suggests that these are held on a regular basis.

100. UN-GGIM: Europe has a continuous, proactive and positive engagement with the National Statistical Institutions, and National Mapping and Cadastral Authorities of the European United Nations Member States through its collaboration and communication with EuroGeographics and Eurostat.

6. Priority Issues and Challenges

101. The Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe consider that some of the priority issues for the coming period include:

- i. Joint geospatial-statistical information systems: achieving strong cooperation between NMCAs and NSIs thus unlocking the potential of statistical and geospatial information crucial for informed, evidence-based decision making
- ii. Sustainable Development Goals: ensuring that Governments and policy and decision makers realise and recognise the importance of geospatial and statistical information for measuring, monitoring and achieving the SDGs.
- iii. Fundamental Data: achieving a shared appreciation and understanding of the importance and availability of geospatial fundamental data.

7. Perspectives/Outlook, Future Plans

102. The planned review by ECOSOC of UN-GGIM is a key issue for the global initiative and UN-GGIM: Europe is dedicating efforts towards a positive review by ECOSOC in 2016. The timetable of the work plan of the regional entity is therefore envisaged to give tangible results in time for the ECOSOC evaluation.

103. Work Group A - Core Data, which is working towards increasing data interoperability and harmonisation by proposing core geospatial data which meets essential user needs, will supply the following three deliverables:

- i. Specifications of core data (End 2015)

- ii. Report on suitable economic model for production and distribution of core data (End 2016)
- iii. Report on political and financial frameworks to support core data availability (Mid-2017).

104. Work Group B - Data Integration, which is working towards enabling integration of core geospatial data with other data in order to foster further usage, will supply the following three deliverables:

- i. Definition of the priority user needs for combinations of data (Delivered).
- ii. Recommendation for methods implementing the prioritised combinations of data (Mid-2016)
- iii. Recommendation on how to manage side-effects induced by data combinations (Mid-2016).

105. The future meetings of UN-GGIM: Europe until the end of 2015 are planned as follows:

- i. The second Plenary Meeting, 7 October 2015, Belgrade, Serbia
- ii. Executive Committee Meetings planned for 6 October 2015 and November/December 2015.

106. UN-GGIM: Europe plans to participate actively in the following future events:

- i. European Forum for Geography and Statistics Conference, 10-12 November 2015, Vienna, Austria
- ii. 1st International Cartographic Association European Symposium on Cartography, 10-12 November 2015, Vienna, Austria
- iii. Joint UN-GGIM: Europe-ESS Meeting, March 2016.

8. Conclusion

107. The Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe will continue to actively contribute to the work of the UN-GGIM.

9. Acknowledgements

108. This report was compiled through the contributions of:

François Chirié	Acting Chair of UN-GGIM: Europe Work Group A	France
Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu	Acting Chair of UN-GGIM: Europe Work Group B	Germany
Carol Agius	UN-GGIM: Europe Secretariat	EuroGeographics
Dave Lovell	UN-GGIM: Europe Secretariat	EuroGeographics

V. Report of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Arab States

1. Summary

109. This report highlights the activities carried out by the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Arab States (UN-GGIM-AP) since the Fourth Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), held in New York, 6-8 August 2014.

2. Introduction

110. The establishment of the UN-GGIM: Arab States came in fulfilment of Decision 4/111 of the fourth session of United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM). It is in line with UN-GGIM's mandate to promote cooperation and dialogue among countries and regional and international organizations, as well as the use of geospatial information in support of sustainable development.

3. Objectives

111. The UN-GGIM Arab States plays its role as the regional coordinating mechanism in geospatial information and the formal Arab chapter of the UN-GGIM initiative, while cooperating with other regional and international entities.

4. Activities

a. UN-GGIM: Arab States First Meeting in Riyadh

112. The first meeting, held in Riyadh from 24 to 25 February 2015 and attended by 32 representatives of 11 Arab countries, was organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), in collaboration with the General Commission for Survey of Saudi Arabia. Also in attendance were two representatives from the Centre for the Cooperation Council for the Arab Countries of the Gulf (GCC-Stat), as well as the co-Chair of the UN-GGIM and a representative from the United Nations Statistics Division, UN-GGIM Secretariat. The purpose of the meeting was to facilitate the process of the formal creation of the regional Committee, the UN-GGIM: Arab States, by adopting its rules of procedure and organizational structure, with the election of its Executive Committee, and the establishment of the Working Groups that will carry out its work programme for the next years.

113. A review of national experiences showed that the Member States are aware of the importance of geospatial information and the use of geospatial methodologies and technologies, as well as the variation in national geospatial information infrastructures among Arab countries.

114. The meeting witnessed the formation of four Working Groups:

- **WG1: Institutional Arrangements, Legal and Policy Issues, Awareness and Capacity Building.**
- **WG2: Fundamental Data and Geo-Standards.**
- **WG3: Geodetic Reference Frame**
- **WG4: Integration of Geospatial & Statistical Information.**

115. Elections were held for the roles of Chair and Vice-Chairs of UN-GGIM: Arab States to lead the Executive Committee. The Region appointed Saudi Arabia as their Chair and Algeria and Jordan to be Vice-Chairs. The General Commission for Survey of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia accepted the proposal to assume the Secretariat responsibilities of the Committee.

116. Participants were invited by H.E Al-Shahrani, the UN-GGIM Arab States Chair-Elect, to the Second meeting UN-GGIM: Arab States to be held in Algeria, from 10 to 11 June , 2015.

b. UN-GGIM: Arab States Second Meeting in Algiers

117. The second meeting, held in Algiers from 10 to 11 June 2015 and attended by 32 representatives of 10 Arab countries, was organized by United Nations Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management for Arab States (UN-GGIM: Arab states) Secretariat, in collaboration with the National Council for Geospatial Information of Algeria. Also in attendance were the UN-GGIM Co-Chair and the United Nations Statistics Division/UN-GGIM Secretariat representative and three invited speakers.

118. The purpose of the meeting was to facilitate the process of the formal setting of the regional Committee, the UN-GGIM: Arab States, by adopting its Statutes and organizational structure, with the election of its Working Groups' Chairs and Vice-Chairs as well as the identification of their functions that will carry out its work programme for the next years.

119. After an opening speech by His Excellency, the President of the National Council of Geographic Information in Algeria, Chair of UN-GGIM: Arab States H.E Al-Shahrani took the floor with an address in which he highlighted the most important objectives of the Committee and its efforts in developing cooperation among the member countries and taking initiatives for the advancement of geographical work to support decision making.

120. Following welcoming speeches, the UN-GGIM: Arab States Secretariat opened the floor for deliberations on the committee statutes. Member country representatives unanimously voted in favour of the statutes.

121. After an update of the UN-GGIM by Vanessa Lawrence, Co-Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, sessions were dedicated to discuss the scope of work of the four Working Groups, and the election of their chairs and vice-chairs. For Working Group 1, the United Arab Emirates was selected as a chair and Morocco as a Vice-Chair. For Working Group 2, Tunisia was selected as a Chair and Qatar as a Vice-Chair. For Working Group 3, Algeria was selected as a Chair and Lebanon and Saudi Arabia as Vice-Chairs. And for Working Group 4, Oman was selected as a Chair and Egypt and Kuwait as Vice-Chairs.

122. United Arab Emirates has graciously offered to host the third meeting of the UN-GGIM: Arab States. The time of the next meeting is to be decided by the member countries during the Fifth Session of UN-GGIM in August 2015.

c. Web Site

123. The Secretariat of the UN-GGIM: Arab States has developed a website for its Committee:
<http://www.un-ggim-as.org/>

5. Conclusion

124. After completing the process of its formal organization, the UN-GGIM: Arab States is looking forward to continue its efforts to meet the needs and challenges of the Arab region while seeking alignment with the work of UN-GGIM. In this connection, UN-GGIM Arab States will continue to contribute to the work of the UN-GGIM and take necessary actions upon requests by the Committee of Experts.

VI. Report of the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies

Executive Summary

125. The Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies (JBGIS) is a coalition of the Presidents, Secretaries-General or equivalent office bearers or their nominees that lead recognized international organizations involved in the coordination, development, management, standardization or regulation of geospatial information and related matters. These organizations are:

- i. Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) Association
- ii. IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS)
- iii. International Association of Geodesy (IAG)
- iv. International Cartographic Association (ICA)
- v. International Federation of Surveyors (FIG)
- vi. International Geographical Union (IGU)
- vii. International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)
- viii. International Map Industry Association (IMIA)
- ix. International Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS)
- x. International Steering Committee for Global Mapping (ISCGM)

Highlights worthy of note are summarized below according to organization.

GSDI

126. GSDI has representation on the UN Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG) and Special Consultative status with the UN ECOSOC Office for Support and Coordination since 1 May 2014. GSDI promotes the open data principles of GEO/GEOSS, and is involved in SDI capacity building activities in many developing nations via the GSDI Small Grants Program and training activities. In January 2015 the Association also began contributing to the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) Marine SDI Working Group, especially in capacity building activities.

127. Project oriented work is underway for two GSDI Projects, one focusing on producing a Geoinformation Legal Interoperability Map of the World (GLIM), started in 2014 under the leadership of Bastiaan van Loenen, TU Delft, and is continuing in 2015 led by Joep Crompvoets of KU Leuven. Managing the GSDI Small Grants Program has also become a GSDI Project, led by Brigitta Urban-Mathieux, USGS.

128. In April, GSDI conducted a workshop on Marine/Coastal SDI Best Practice in Cape Town, South Africa, as part of the CoastGIS 2015 Conference. The Association is also represented on the Steering Group of the UNESCO IOC IODE International Coastal Atlas Network (ICAN) Project.

GRSS

129. As well as being an active member of the JBGIS, GRSS is working with international agencies including UN-SPIDER and GEO and with regional and country organisations to

improve access to remotely sensed data. Through its Globalisation Initiatives Program GRSS assists scientists and engineers in Africa, Latin America and Asia to become more proficient in information extraction from space imagery in order to help meet the needs for community based mapping, monitoring and for environmental assessment, disaster mitigation, planning and human management.

130. The annual International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium (IGARSS) is the flagship conference of the Society and attracts over 2200 participants each year. The next IGARSS will be held in Beijing, China, in July 2016. GRSS also co-sponsors more than twenty international Symposia on an annual or biennial basis.

IAG

131. On 26 February 2015 the United Nations General Assembly adopted its first resolution recognising the importance of a globally-coordinated approach to Geodesy. It was acknowledged that Geodesy plays an increasing role in people's lives, from finding disaster victims to finding directions using a smart phone. The General Assembly resolution, a Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development, outlines the value of ground-based observations and satellite remote sensing when tracking changes in populations, land use, ice caps, oceans, the atmosphere, and the environment over time.

132. The IAG is one of eight Associations of the IUGG. The 26th IUGG General Assembly was held in Prague, Czech Republic, 22 June - 2 July. A new leadership team was installed for the next quadrennial period. The new IAG President is Dr. Harald Schuh, the Vice President is Dr. Zuheir Altamimi, and the Secretary-General is Dr. Hermann Drewes.

ICA

133. ICA has been endorsed by UN-GGIM in its meeting 2014 to organise the International Map Year 2015/16. The main idea of the International Map Year (IMY) is a worldwide celebration of maps and their unique role in our world. The IMY will be officially opened at the ICA conference in Rio de Janeiro in August 2015 and then continue until December 2016. ICA has installed a Working Group to coordinate the activities. National Committees in several countries have been established. Map exhibitions, children map competitions, workshops, map seminars, cartographic conferences are taking place or are in preparation.

FIG

134. New FIG publications during last year: Publication 60: Fit-For-Purpose Land Administration, joint FIG/World Bank publication, 2014; Publication 61: CADASTRE 2014 and Beyond, 2014; Publication 62: Ellipsoidally Referenced Surveying for Hydrography, Commission 4 WG4.1, 2014; Publication 63: The Africa Task Force, 2014; Publication 64: Reference Frames in Practice Manual, Commission 5 WG5.2, 2014; Publication 65: The Surveyor's Role in Monitoring, Mitigating, and Adapting to Climate Change, Task Force on Surveyors and Climate Change, 2014; A Review of the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) Phase II, Summary Report May 2014; Publication 66: FIG Statutes & Internal Rules, FIG Regulations, 2015.

135. The FIG Working Week 2015 was held in Sofia, Bulgaria 17-21 May 2015, with almost 1000 participants. The Working Week offered around 350 presentations within the various fields of surveying during the three conference days.

136. At the World Bank Conference 2015 the FIG organized a side event. In January 2015 a kickoff event took place in Athens, Greece to mark the change of the leadership in the FIG. FIG Commission 7 Annual Meeting 2014 was organized in cooperation with FIG's membership in Canada and the FGF (Fédération des géomètres francophones) in Quebec City, and held on the sideline of the GeoConference 2014. The FIG Commission 3 Annual Meeting and 2014 Workshop with the overall theme "Geospatial Crowdsourcing and VGI: Establishment of SDI & SIM" was held in Bologna, Italy.

137. At the FIG Congress 2014 the new leadership was elected, and the new President, Chryssy Potsiou, together with her Council took over the leadership of FIG on 1 January 2015. For the 2015-2018 time period the FIG Council agreed on an overall theme for the next period of office: "*Ensuring the Rapid Response to Change, Ensuring the Surveyor of Tomorrow*".

IHO

138. The principal shortcoming in the hydrographic domain remains the lack of depth measurements and related hydrographic information for most of the world's seas and oceans coupled with the limited resources being made available to address the problem. The lack of a comprehensive, detailed global bathymetric dataset is a major constraint on the safe, cost effective and sustainable development of the blue economy. The IHO maintains IHO Publication C-55 - *Status of Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide*.

ISPRS

139. As of next year there will be five commissions: Commission I Sensor Systems; Commission II Photogrammetry; Commission III Remote Sensing; Commission IV Spatial Information Science; Commission V Education and Outreach.

140. In autumn 2014, the second round of the ISPRS Scientific Initiative was launched with a budget of 33.000,- CHF, resulting in the funding of seven scientific projects over the next 12 months. Topics range from benchmark tests on multi-platform photogrammetry to a project on the assessment of learning pedagogy in GeoInformatics.

141. The XXIII ISPRS Congress is to be held in Prague from 12-19 July 2016.

ISCGM

142. Global Map data (national and regional version) were released for 111 countries and eight regions from the ISCGM web site⁵ or from those of some participating organisations as of 1 June 2015. These data correspond to 65% of the total land area of the Earth. Participating countries and regions are steadily increasing and now total 167 countries and 16 regions. This represents 96% of the whole land area of the Earth.

⁵ <http://iscgm.org/>

143. The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Sendai-City, Miyagi-Prefecture, Japan from 14-18 March 2015. As a pre-event of the Conference, the ISCGM and Geospatial Information Authority of Japan co-organised the symposium on Application of Geospatial Information Technology in Urban Disaster Management on 13 March.

144. The 22nd meeting of the ISCGM will be held in New York on 4 August 2015.

VII. Points for Discussion

145. The Committee is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the reports, and express its views on the operation and achievements of the regional committees and thematic groups;**
 - (b) Following the endorsement of the ICA's International Map Year 2015-2016 by the Committee at its fourth session, the Secretariat seeks the approval of the Committee to stage a map exhibition focusing on Sustainable Development in August 2016 during the Committee's sixth session in recognition of the year of celebrations;**
 - (c) Encourage Member States to contribute to the map exhibition which will be on a larger scale to the one that is being done this year; and**
 - (d) Endorse the formal establishment of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa).**
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