

# **Terms of Reference of the Subcommittee on Geodesy (SCoG) of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)**

## **Title 1: Recitals, background and context**

Whereas:

- (1) The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) aims to address global challenges regarding the use of geospatial information, including in the development agendas, and to serve as a body for global policy-making in the field of geospatial information management.
- (2) At its sixth session, held in New York in August 2016, the Committee of Experts resolved to commence the process of creating a permanent Subcommittee on Geodesy (SCoG)
- (3) At its seventh session, held in New York in August 2017, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 7/103, in which it welcomed the report by the Working Group on the Global Geodetic Reference Frame and endorsed the formal establishment of a Subcommittee on Geodesy to replace the Working Group on the Global Geodetic Reference Frame.
- (4) The Subcommittee on Geodesy comprises representatives of UN Member States with an equitable distribution from all geographic regions.
- (5) The Subcommittee on Geodesy takes into account the global agenda of the Committee of Experts, and that of other UN-GGIM Regional Committees, including their working groups on geodesy.
- (6) There is a long-standing tradition of cooperation on geodesy between Member States, academia (as represented by the International Association of Geodesy), and industry (as represented by the International Federation of Surveyors).
- (7) Formal contact points for the UN are the Ministries of Foreign Affairs or equivalent; nonetheless, effective communications will be required at an expert level.

## **Title 2: Form, name, purpose and activities of the Subcommittee**

### **Article 1 - Form and Name**

- 1.1. The Subcommittee will be called the UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy, hereinafter abbreviated to the UN-GGIM SCoG.
- 1.2. The UN-GGIM SCoG does not have separate legal personality. The UN-GGIM SCoG will aim to achieve consensus among members as far as possible when taking decisions.
- 1.3. The UN-GGIM SCoG operates within the scope of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

### **Article 2 - Purpose and Activities**

- 2.1. The UN-GGIM SCoG identifies geodetic issues and recommends necessary actions on them for the furtherance of the discussions within the Committee of Experts and the broader UN-GGIM architecture so that the economic, social and environmental benefits of geospatial information are both utilized and maximized.

2.2. While fully respecting existing national and regional frameworks and capabilities, in the context of geospatial information management, the UN-GGIM SCoG shall aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide an intergovernmental forum, with equitable regional representation, for cooperation and exchange of dialogue on issues relating to the maintenance, sustainability and enhancement of, and access to, the Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF);
- Provide governmental strategic leadership and vision on the management and development of geodetic strategy and policies;
- Develop an implementation plan for the GGRF road map;
- Develop, as part of the implementation plan, considerations for additional governance mechanisms in order to effectively enhance the implementation of the road map for the GGRF, particularly with respect to those governance mechanisms being owned and driven by Member States, with the aim of eventually implementing the proposed mechanism;
- Encourage open sharing of geodetic data and information that contribute to the implementation of global, regional and national reference frames, and their inter-relationships;
- Advocate for guidelines and standards to advance the interoperability of geodetic systems and data;
- Address various technical, institutional and policy issues related to the implementation of global geodesy;
- Maintain a dialogue between Member States and the non-government international geodetic community;
- Pursue the implementation of the GGRF road map in cooperation with the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG);
- Encourage and provide mechanisms for capacity development and knowledge transfer in the field of geodesy among Member States;
- Provide, through outreach, advocacy for the global geodesy as the basis upon which all spatial data and positioning activities should be founded; and
- Continue outreach and communication, particularly with appropriate regional initiatives and activities.

2.3. The UN-GGIM SCoG will build on initiatives being undertaken within the global geodetic community in developing its approach to achieving these objectives.

### **Title 3: Membership**

#### **Article 3 - Members**

3.1. Membership is open to Member States nominated by the executive of the UN-GGIM Regional Committees on a pro-rata basis to serve on the Subcommittee and to be reviewed every two years. The review will be based on actual participation and contribution from the members as demonstrated through national activity reports at the UN-GGIM Regional Committee meetings. Membership composition is as follows: Asia Pacific (10 members); America's (7 members); Arab States (5 members); Europe (9 members); and Africa (9 members); with a total of 40 members. In making the nominations, the Regional Committees should ensure appropriate inclusion of both developing and developed Member States.

- 3.2. In appointing their national delegates (representatives), Member States should seek to designate representatives with specific knowledge of and responsibility for global, regional, continental or national geodetic reference frames for positioning, navigation or timing applications. The Subcommittee will also seek to utilize Member State skills on management, administration and communications in delivering key elements of its work program. Consideration should also be given to how the national representatives coordinate inputs from all interested parties within their national system, including but not limited to national mapping agencies, national and international space agencies, and government research institutes.
- 3.3. The UN-GGIM SCoG Bureau may invite additional Member States (limited to 10 additional members), not currently nominated by the UN-GGIM Regional Committees, to become Members of the UN-GGIM SCoG. The selection of these additional members will be based on the need for expertise and contribution to the UN-GGIM SCoG work program.
- 3.4. Members States not nominated under Article 3.1 or 3.3 above, to become formal members of the Subcommittee, will have the right to participate in the UN-GGIM SCoG meetings as Observers without the right to vote.
- 3.5. Representatives from the International Association of Geodesy (IAG), and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) will be invited to participate in the UN-GGIM SCoG meetings and activities as Observers.
- 3.6. Additional Observers may be invited to meetings and to contribute to the work of the UN-GGIM SCoG, including from other institutions, professional, research and academic organizations or associations, which have an interest in geodetic programs. A request for Observer status should be made to the co-Chairs prior to participation in UN-GGIM SCoG activities.

#### **Article 4 - Rights and Obligations of the Members**

- 4.1. Each UN-GGIM SCoG Member State will be represented by a delegation with one or more representatives. A 'head of delegation' will be identified whom will be responsible for consulting with, and representing, relevant bodies in their country. A number of additional persons may be nominated by this representative as experts to attend meetings of the Subcommittee.
- 4.2. Members will endeavor to attend the UN-GGIM SCoG plenary meetings and take actions necessary and appropriate to develop and promote the aims of the UN-GGIM SCoG, and may, with the approval of the co-Chairs, represent the UN-GGIM SCoG in specific functions or at events.
- 4.3. Members can participate in all the activities of the UN-GGIM SCoG, can be elected as co-Chair, and vote in the plenary meetings of the UN-GGIM SCoG.
- 4.4. Each member will adhere to the Articles of the UN-GGIM SCoG and its Rules of Procedure, and work to their normal high professional standards in an open and transparent manner and in full cooperation with other members.
- 4.5. Each member participating in the UN-GGIM SCoG will have one vote. With the exception of changes to these articles, and Rule 15, decisions of the UN-GGIM SCoG will be taken by a majority of the representatives present and voting.
- 4.6. Each member should consider the recommendations from the UN-GGIM SCoG within the remit of, and as implemented in, the plenary meeting. The members will individually decide on implementation of the recommendations, dependent on circumstances such as a member's national rules, laws or administrative practices. If their national rules, laws and administrative practices permit, the members belonging to the UN-GGIM SCoG should consider promoting the recommendations from the UN-GGIM SCoG within their Member State.

## **Title 4: Bodies of the UN-GGIM SCoG: Co-Chairs, Bureau and Secretariat**

### **Article 5 - Co-Chairs**

- 5.1. The UN-GGIM SCoG will elect two (2) co-Chairs to serve for 4-year periods, with Chair elections occurring bi-annually, such that one new co-Chair is elected every two years in order to secure continuity. The co-Chairs will be selected from the members as defined in Article 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3, such that consideration of the equity between developed and developing countries occurs.

### **Article 6 - Bureau**

- 6.1. The UN-GGIM SCoG will be managed by the Bureau, which will have full powers to carry out the objectives of the SCoG members in that respect.
- 6.2. The Bureau is responsible for exercising the powers of the UN-GGIM SCoG in the management of the business and affairs only to the extent set forth in these Terms of Reference. Any actions are communicated to the UN-GGIM SCoG as soon as possible and reported and validated at the next Committee meeting. The Bureau comprises eight persons including the two co-Chairs.
- 6.3. Non-co-Chair Bureau members will be elected, by simple majority, for a 3-year term, at a Plenary meeting of the UN-GGIM SCoG, with consideration of the equity between developed and developing countries.
- 6.4. Elections for two non-co-Chair Bureau members will occur each year, such that continuity occurs within the Subcommittee. This election cycle will commence after the initial 3-year term of Bureau members, meaning that two of the initial Bureau members will serve 4 years and two will serve 5 years.
- 6.5. The Bureau will:
  - Plan and coordinate a programme of work which the members agree is needed to meet the objectives of the UN-GGIM SCoG;
  - Plan and manage the activities that the UN-GGIM SCoG undertakes for UN-GGIM in consultation with the UN-GGIM Secretariat;
  - Manage the continuing administrative affairs of the UN-GGIM SCoG;
  - Make recommendations to the UN-GGIM SCoG on objectives, activities and a work programme;
  - Prepare and submit reports on activities of the UN-GGIM SCoG to the Plenary meeting, UN-GGIM Secretariat, the Committee of Experts, and relevant international bodies;
  - Represent the interests of UN-GGIM in the world's geodetic community;
  - Promote UN-GGIM guidelines to the members of the UN-GGIM SCoG;
  - Take opportunities to give presentations to related bodies at conferences and other relevant events; and
  - Examine and approve arrangements for all the meetings organized or sponsored in the name of the UN-GGIM SCoG.
- 6.6. The Bureau will meet as often as necessary, and at least once a year. The date and place will be determined by the co-Chairs. Meetings may be virtual in nature. A majority of the Bureau must attend to form a quorum.
- 6.7. Depending on the meeting agenda, the co-Chairs may, at their discretion, invite third parties such as Observers or topic experts, to a Bureau meeting or appropriate part of it.
- 6.8. The Bureau will be assisted to carry out its function by a Secretariat.

## **Article 7 - SCoG Secretariat**

- 7.1. A member of the UN-GGIM SCoG will be granted responsibility for providing Secretariat support to the UN-GGIM SCoG by a majority vote of the members at a Plenary meeting of the UN-GGIM SCoG.
- 7.2. The responsibility for providing the Secretariat will not be tied to the position of Bureau membership.
- 7.3. The Secretariat will be responsible for secretarial, clerical, and administrative duties, maintaining records etc. including arranging meetings, taking minutes and collecting and circulating documents to support the effective and smooth operation of the UN-GGIM SCoG.
- 7.4. A member offering to fulfil the role of Secretariat will provide the UN-GGIM SCoG members with a proposal detailing how the service will be provided and its costs paid for.
- 7.5. The Secretariat will report to the Bureau as the Committee requires.
- 7.6. The Secretariat will adhere to the guidance provided by the UN-GGIM Secretariat.

## **Title 5: Plenary Meetings**

### **Article 8 - Timing, format, organization and key elements of the meeting**

- 8.1. The Plenary meeting of the UN-GGIM SCoG will be convened at a time and place convenient to the members. A Plenary meeting will normally be held each calendar year.
- 8.2. The co-Chairs, depending on availability, will Chair the UN-GGIM SCoG meetings. During meetings their primary responsibility is the role of Chair. To ensure that they are able to remain impartial, but to enable their Member State to still vote, the Chair may designate another from their national delegation to participate and vote in Plenary meetings in their place.
- 8.3. The Bureau, along with the member from the host Member State, will be responsible for organizing the Plenary meeting, including the agenda and identification of any invited speakers. The UN-GGIM Secretariat may provide administrative support, such as issuing invitations and publication of proceedings.
- 8.4. Key elements of the Plenary meeting include:
  - Receiving reports from:
    - the UN-GGIM SCoG members;
    - the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM;
    - other UN-GGIM Regional bodies;
    - the Bureau on activities since the previous meeting; and
    - observers including Member States not currently included in the SCoG membership, IAG, FIG and other interested organizations, notified in advance of the Plenary meeting to the co-Chairs.
  - Considering proposals for future work by the UN-GGIM SCoG;
  - Electing members of the Bureau and the co-Chair as appropriate;
  - Voting on an annual work plan and proposals:
    - for amendment of the Articles and Rules of Procedure;
    - for providing a Secretariat to the UN-GGIM SCoG; and

- to grant Observer status for organizations not representing a Member State.

## **Article 9 - Working Groups**

- 9.1. Working Groups may be established by the Bureau to meet specific objectives of the UN-GGIM SCoG.
- 9.2. Each Working Group will, where possible, be chaired by a member of the Bureau.
- 9.3. Working Groups will report to the Bureau on their activities, together with recommendations for consideration by the UN-GGIM SCoG.
- 9.4. Working Group Chairs are able to appoint coordinators for key activities within their work programme, and these coordinators will report to the Working Group Chair.
- 9.5. Procedures covering the day-to-day running of the Working Groups will be set out from time to time by the Bureau of the UN-GGIM SCoG.

## **Title 6: Financing, Funds and Expenses**

### **Article 10 - Costs**

- 10.1. Delegations and other representatives will bear all of their own costs for participating in all activities of UN-GGIM.
- 10.2. Expenses for arranging the UN-GGIM SCoG Plenary, Bureau and Working Group meetings will be borne by the host Member State where the meeting is held, except where a financial contribution is approved by the UN-GGIM SCoG Plenary meeting, including the identification of the proposed donor.
- 10.3. Arrangements for meeting the costs of the administration of the UN-GGIM SCoG will be approved by a Plenary meeting of the UN-GGIM SCoG on the basis of a proposal, or proposals, made by one or more member.
- 10.4. The Bureau will be responsible for the allocation of all and any funds of the UN-GGIM SCoG and its Working Groups.

## **Title 7: Supplementary**

### **Article 11 - Revision of the Articles**

- 11.1. The Articles may only be amended at a UN-GGIM SCoG Plenary meeting by a two-thirds majority of the Members present.

### **Article 12 - Dissolution of the UN-GGIM SCoG**

- 12.1. The UN-GGIM SCoG may be dissolved by the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts.
- 12.2. In the event of dissolution of the UN-GGIM SCoG, any funds remaining after settlement of liabilities of the UN-GGIM SCoG will be transferred to the UN-GGIM in such manner and amount as may be approved by the members.

### **Article 13 - Effective Date of Articles**

- 13.1. The Articles shall take effect from the date they are approved by the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts.

**Adopted by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management at its Eighth Session, UNHQ, New York on 03/08/2018**

# **UN-GGIM: SCoG RULES OF PROCEDURE**

## **I. OFFICERS**

### **Rule 1**

The co-Chairs will preside over the meetings of the UN-GGIM SCoG and its Bureau as agreed between them.

### **Rule 2**

If one of the Chairs is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, the other co-Chair shall preside.

## **II. SECRETARIAT**

### **Rule 3**

The Secretariat will act in the capacity of secretary in all plenary meetings of the UN-GGIM SCoG.

### **Rule 4**

The Secretariat will be responsible for making all necessary arrangements for meetings and generally will perform all other work that the Bureau and the UN-GGIM SCoG may require.

### **Rule 5**

If the member granted responsibility for providing the Secretariat is no longer able to fulfil their responsibility, they should give the Bureau a minimum of six months' notice of their withdrawal.

## **III. CHANGES TO THE ARTICLES**

### **Rule 6**

Any proposal for amendment of the Articles shall be submitted to the co-Chairs in time for inclusion in the notice of meeting and agenda, which should be sent to members not later than 4 weeks prior to a plenary meeting.

## **IV. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

### **Rule 7**

To be recognized as such the UN-GGIM SCoG meeting will comprise of at least half of its active membership.

### **Rule 8**

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon them elsewhere by these rules, the co-Chairs will declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the UN-GGIM SCoG, direct the discussion at such meetings, ensure observance of these Rules, grant the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. They will rule on points of order and, subject to these rules of procedure, will have complete control over the proceedings.

### **Rule 9**

The co-Chairs may, in the course of the discussions, propose to the meeting closure of the list of speakers or the close of the debate. They may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting or the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. They may also call a speaker to order if their remarks are not relevant to the matter under discussion.

**Rule 10**

The co-Chairs, in the exercise of their functions, remain under the authority of the UN-GGIM SCoG.

**Rule 11**

No one may address the UN-GGIM SCoG Plenary meeting without having previously obtained the permission of the co-Chairs. The co-Chairs will call upon speakers in the order in which they have signified their desire to speak.

**Rule 12**

Debates will be confined to the topic before the UN-GGIM SCoG, and the co-Chairs may call a speaker to order if their remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

**Rule 13**

Proposals and amendments will normally be introduced in writing and submitted to the Secretariat of the UN-GGIM SCoG, who will circulate copies to the Representatives not later than 4 weeks prior to a Plenary.

**Rule 14**

A proposal, amendment or motion may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before voting has commenced, provided that it has not been amended. A proposal or a motion thus withdrawn may be re-introduced by any Representative.

**Rule 15**

When a proposal or amendment has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered unless the UN-GGIM SCoG, by a two-thirds majority of the Representatives present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on the motion to reconsider will be accorded only to two speakers opposing the motion, after which it will be put to the vote immediately.

**V. VOTING****Rule 16**

The UN-GGIM SCoG will make best endeavours to ensure that its work is accomplished by general agreement and consensus.

**Rule 17**

Each Member participating in the official UN-GGIM SCoG meeting will have one vote, and the decisions of the meeting will be made by a majority of the representatives present and voting. The UN-GGIM SCoG will normally vote by show of hands. All elections will be held by secret ballot, unless otherwise decided by the UN-GGIM SCoG.

**Rule 18**

When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment will be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the UN-GGIM SCoG will first vote on the

amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment will not be put to the vote, if one or more amendments are adopted the amended proposal will then be voted on. A proposal is considered an amendment to another proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from or revises part of that proposal.

### **Rule 19**

In the case when two or more proposals relate to the same question, the UN-GGIM SCoG will, unless it decided otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they were submitted. The UN-GGIM SCoG may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.

### **Rule 20**

In the case when one person or one delegation is to be elected and no candidate obtained the required majority in the first ballot, a second ballot will be taken, which will be restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes in the first ballot.

### **Rule 21**

In the case when a vote is equally divided on matters other than elections, a second vote will be taken. If this vote is also equally divided, the proposal will be regarded as rejected.

## **VI. LANGUAGE**

### **Rule 22**

English will be the working language of the UN-GGIM SCoG.

### **Rule 23**

A speaker may use a language other than English if they provide for interpretation into English.

## **VII. MEETINGS**

### **Rule 24**

Attendance at meetings of the UN-GGIM SCoG will be by invitation. The UN-GGIM SCoG Plenary and Bureau meetings and those of the Working Groups will be open to members of all UN-GGIM regions and to others by invitation.

## **VIII. PARTICIPATION OF ADVISORS AND OBSERVERS**

### **Rule 25**

The co-Chairs may seek the opinions of Observers members and invited topic experts.