



United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

**Report on the first session
(26 October 2011)**

**Economic and Social Council
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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft decision for adoption by the Council

1. The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on its first session and provisional agenda and dates for the second session of the Committee

The Economic and Social Council:

(a) Takes note of the report of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on its first session;

(b) Decides that the second session of the Committee of Experts shall be held in New York from 13 to 15 August 2012;

(c) Approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the second session of the Committee of Experts as set out below:

Provisional agenda for the second session of the Committee of Experts

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

Documentation

Provisional agenda and annotations

Note by the Secretariat on the organization of the work of the session

Rules of procedure

3. Strategic considerations of technological and substantive advances in geospatial and interrelated information infrastructure.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the visioning group on technological and substantive advances in geospatial and interrelated information infrastructure

4. Contribution of the Committee to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and implications of the outcomes of the Conference.

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on the contribution of the Committee to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Report of the Secretary-General on the implications of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

5. Inventory of issues to be addressed by the Committee at future sessions.

Documentation

Report of the Working Group on an inventory of the issues to be addressed by the Committee at future sessions

6. Special reports on thematic and regional activities.

Documentation

Report by regional entities and thematic groups

7. Provisional agenda and dates for the third session of the Committee.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat containing the draft provisional agenda for the third session of the Committee

8. Report of the Committee on its second session.

B. Decisions brought to the attention of the Council

2. The following decisions adopted by the Committee are brought to the attention of the Council:

1/101

Terms of reference

The Committee of Experts noted that Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/24 establishing the Committee contained detailed terms of reference in its annex. The Committee therefore adopted its terms of reference, as contained in the Economic and Social Council resolution and as reflected in document E/C.20/2011/2.

1/102

Rules of procedure

The Committee of Experts adopted its provisional rules of procedure, as contained in document E/C.20/2011/3. Upon receiving advice from the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the Committee will consider possible amendments to be discussed at future sessions.

1/103

Contribution to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

The Committee of Experts:

- (a) Stressed the need for an appropriate geospatial information infrastructure at all levels (local, national, regional, global) that can provide a solid information base for accurate description, sound analysis and evidence-based decision-making

on the state of the environment and ecosystems, as well as the changes resulting from human activities and natural events;

(b) Recognized the importance of highlighting the recent developments in geospatial information management, in terms of tools and methodologies, and the support they can provide to countries for the monitoring of goals and targets on sustainable development;

(c) Decided to create a task force to prepare a written contribution to the Rio+20 Conference;

(d) Took note of the Member States and international organizations that volunteered to be part of the task force.

1/104

Inventory of issues

The Committee of Experts:

(a) Expressed its views on the major issues to be further discussed and provided inputs for the inventory;

(b) Highlighted the underpinning goal in defining this inventory, i.e., to develop a short-, medium- and long-term work programme for the Committee of Experts, engaging thereby not only the member countries, but also the international organizations and the private sector;

(c) Affirmed close cooperation of the Committee of Experts in all aspects of its work programme with the existing permanent and regional committees, such as the Permanent Committee on Geographic Information System Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific, the Permanent Committee for Geospatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas and the Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology, with the European Commission, as well as with European organizations, such as EuroGeographics and the European Umbrella Organization for Geographic Information (EUROGI); it thereby noted that the regional permanent committees may want to consider rebranding and aligning their names with the Committee of Experts to emphasize the high degree of coherence with the Committee work;

(d) Decided to establish a working group in order to elaborate a detailed inventory of issues, as well as a proposed workplan of actions to be implemented in the next five years for the Committee's consideration at its second session.

Chapter II

Items for discussion and decision

A. Contribution of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

1. The Committee considered item 5 of its agenda at its meeting on 26 October 2011. It had before it a report on the Committee's possible contribution to the Rio+20 Conference, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 (E/C.20/2011/4).

2. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Italy, Australia, Japan, Brazil, India and the observers from the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping and the International Organization for Standardization Technical Committee for Geographic Information/Geomatics.

3. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Committee

4. At its meeting, on 26 October, the Committee adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 1/103).

B. Inventory of issues

5. The Committee considered item 6 of its agenda at its meeting on 26 October 2011. It had before it a note by the Secretariat proposing to establish an inventory of the issues to be addressed by the Committee at future sessions (E/C.20/2011/5).

6. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, the United States of America, Italy, Japan, Norway, Canada, Brazil, Bahrain, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Pakistan, China, Jamaica, Zimbabwe, El Salvador and the observers of the European Commission and the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies.

7. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the Statistics Division made concluding remarks.

Action taken by the Committee

8. At its meeting, on 26 October, the Committee adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 1/104).

Chapter III

Items for information

A. Review of the High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management

Action taken by the Committee

1. The Committee considered item 7 of its agenda at its meeting on 26 October 2011. The Committee received, for its information, an oral report from the Chair of the High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, which summarized the main findings and recommendations of the Forum, held from 24 to 26 October, in conjunction with the Committee meeting (available at <http://ggim.un.org/forum1.html>).
2. At the same meeting, the Committee took note of the oral statement of the Chair of the High-level Forum and the Seoul Declaration adopted at the Forum (available at <http://ggim.un.org/forum1.html>).

B. Consultation on United Nations maps

Action taken by the Committee

3. The Committee considered item 8 of its agenda at its meeting, on 26 October 2011. It had before it a report of the Secretary-General on the UNmap project, carried out by the Cartographic Section of the Department of Field Support (see E/C.20/2011/6).
4. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Japan, South Sudan, the Sudan, Nigeria and the observers from the World Meteorological Organization, the International Cartographic Association and the International Hydrographic Organization.
5. At the same meeting, the Committee took note of the report by the Secretary-General on the UNmap project (E/C.20/2011/6).

Chapter IV

Provisional agenda and dates for the second session of the Committee

1. The Committee considered item 9 of its agenda at its meeting on 26 October 2011. It had before it the provisional agenda and documentation for the second session of the Committee (E/C.20/2011/L.2).
2. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Italy, Finland, Iraq, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Croatia, Australia, Brazil and China and the observers from the International Steering Committee for Global Mapping and the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

Action taken by the Committee

3. At its meeting, on 26 October, the Committee approved the provisional agenda for its second session and entrusted the Bureau with streamlining and finalizing it. The Committee also decided to recommend it to the Council for approval (see chap. I, sect. A).
4. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that its second session be held from 13 to 15 August 2012 (see chap. I, sect. A).

Chapter V

Report of the Committee on its first session

1. The Committee considered item 10 of its agenda at its meeting on 26 October 2011.
2. At the same meeting, the Director of the Statistics Division provided explanations on the process of preparing the formal Committee report, in particular the focus on decisions taken.

Action taken by the Committee

3. At its meeting, on 26 October, the Committee entrusted the Rapporteur, assisted by the Secretariat, with finalizing the report in consultation with the Bureau.

Chapter VI

Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Committee held its inaugural session on 26 October 2011 at Coex Convention and Exhibition Center in Seoul. The Director of the Statistics Division opened the session.

B. Attendance

2. The session was attended by 280 participants from 88 Member States; 43 representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations were present. The list of participants is contained in document E/C.20/2011/INF/1.

C. Election of officers

3. At its meeting, on 26 October 2011, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation:

Co-Chairs:

Vanessa Lawrence (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Seong-An Leem (Republic of Korea)

Rapporteur:

Esteban Toha Gonzalez (Chile)

4. At its meeting, on 26 October 2011, the Committee supported the proposal that the elected Bureau (2 Co-Chairs and 1 Rapporteur) may consult with the respective regional committee chairs and the President of the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies as deemed appropriate.

D. Credentials

5. At its meeting, on 26 October 2011, the Committee invited the following organizations, which do not have consultative status with a relevant United Nations body, to participate as observers at its first session: Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies, Open Geospatial Consortium, Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association, EUROGI, EuroGeographics and the Group on Earth Observation. The Committee also invited some representatives from the private sector to attend the meeting as observers.

E. Languages

6. At its meeting, on 26 October 2011, the Secretariat requested the Committee's agreement that for the first session only simultaneous interpretation into English, French and Spanish would be available. In line with regular practice, key non-technical documents had been prepared in all languages. The Secretariat

assured the Committee that for the planned second session of the Committee at United Nations Headquarters in August 2012, full simultaneous interpretation into all the official languages of the United Nations would be available.

F. Agenda and organization of work

7. At its meeting, on 26 October 2011, the Committee adopted its provisional agenda, as contained in document E/C.20/2011/1. The agenda read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Adoption of the terms of reference of the Committee.
4. Rules of procedure of the Committee.
5. Contribution of the Committee to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.
6. Inventory of the issues to be addressed by the Committee at future sessions.
7. Review of the High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management.
8. Consultation on United Nations maps.
9. Provisional agenda and dates for the second session of the Committee.
10. Report of the Committee on its first session.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the organization of the work of the session, as orally presented (E/C.20/2011/L.1).

G. Documentation

9. The documents before the Committee at its first session are available from the website of the Statistics Division at http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html.

