



Mexico City Declaration Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: The Role of Geospatial Technology and Innovation

We, the participants of the Fifth High Level Forum on UN Global Geospatial Information Management held in Mexico City, Mexico from 28 to 30 November 2017, having met in the context of United Nations initiatives to enhance the role of geospatial technology and innovation in implementing the SDGs, and to substantively improve and strengthen the national geospatial information management capacities of countries, particularly developing countries, towards implementing the 2030 Agenda, hereby issue this Mexico City Declaration on Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: The Role of Geospatial Technology and Innovation;

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/24, of 27 July 2011 which established the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) to provide a forum for coordination and dialogue among Member States, and to hold regular high-level, multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information, including through the convening of global forums, with a view to promoting a comprehensive dialogue with all relevant actors;

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/27 entitled 'Strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management' of 27 July 2016, in which the Council acknowledged the considerable achievements of the Committee over its first five years including: its contribution to the strengthening of geospatial information management capacities and utilization in developing countries; the efforts to streamline the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council in the field of geospatial information management; and its role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework, and other global development agendas within the purview of the United Nations;

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 70/1 entitled 'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' of 25 September 2015, which recognizes the need for new data acquisition and integration approaches to improve the availability, quality, timeliness and disaggregation of data, and the use of a wide range of data, including earth observations and geospatial information, to support the implementation of the new development agenda at all levels, while ensuring national ownership in supporting and tracking progress;

Acknowledging the Co-Chairs' summary from the 2017 United Nations multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals that, in today's world, data and information increasingly augment material resources as critical capital for economies, and collecting and securing data in a responsible manner will be critical to solving problems;¹

Recognizing decision 7/109 of the Seventh Session of the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM in which the Committee recognized that the combined geospatial and statistical expertise of the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), positioned it appropriately to facilitate and support a 'data ecosystem' that leveraged an accessible, integrative and interoperable local-to-global information system for measuring and monitoring the SDGs and tracking annual progress;

Recognizing further decision 7/109, of the Seventh Session, the Committee of Experts acknowledged that the global geospatial information environment was dynamic and innovative, with the emergence of new technologies, methods and processes, and agreed that data availability and quality remained one of the

¹ E/HLPF/2017/4

biggest challenges for Member States and that data, when available, must also be accessible, consistent and sustainable for the production of indicators to provide information on the agreed goals and targets, in accordance with national priorities and needs;

Noting that data demands for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs are unprecedented and will require coordinated efforts at the global, regional and national levels, and new data sources and technologies for data collection are to be explored, through public-private partnerships with the private sector, industry, academia and civil society;

We therefore resolve to:

1. Affirm that to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is an urgent need to accelerate the collaboration, coordination and building of public-private partnerships across government sectors, academia, industry, the private sector, and civil society to create and improve data, tools and methodologies to ensure access to reliable, unbiased, accurate, timely, accessible and disaggregated information to inform decision-making, enable action and measure progress, and ensure that everyone is counted;
2. Noting that the 2030 Agenda has generated great expectations from global citizens to make real development progress, we confirm our duty and role to ensure that these expectations can be met with easily accessible and affordable geospatial technologies, digital transformation and innovation, including enabling developing countries to have universal access to these fundamental capabilities, and to ensure that we can progress the economic pathways for all, towards achieving a 'digital global record' for the SDGs;
3. Appreciate that while the challenges are immense, the geospatial technology, innovation, platforms, data and solutions that are available today, and facilitated by strong and growing public-private partnerships, allow the necessary means to strengthen countries' geospatial and statistical information capabilities towards integrative national information systems that enable an evolving 'data ecosystem' that leverages an accessible and interoperable local to global system-of-systems;
4. Advocate and communicate to political decision makers the importance and impact of geospatial technologies, including Earth observations, in informing policy, and that tech savvy, flexible and open leadership is fundamental to establishing and sustaining data innovation and its associated creation, systems and services, sharing and management to support the measurement and monitoring of the SDG's;
5. Commend UN Statistics Division and Esri on its joint research exercise, and endorse the concept of a federated system of open SDG Data Hubs as a practical means for enabling technologies and capabilities to strengthen the ability of the national and global statistical systems to manage and share data and good practices for the SDGs, and allow countries to strive for better data interoperability and integration, to enhance relationships between national and global data, and to measure, monitor and report on the SDGs in a geographic context;
6. Encourage the continued and productive integration of geospatial and statistical information and the improvement of institutional coordination between National Statistical Offices and National Geospatial and Mapping Agencies and, in the context of the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs and global indicator framework, and the 2020 Round of Censuses, to seize opportunities from ongoing digital transformation to innovate, exploit science and research, and leverage emerging technologies;
7. Agree that geospatial technologies and innovation have been unequally adopted and that there is an urgent need to effectively democratize and transfer these technologies and associated data through the enabling global mechanism of the 2030 Agenda, in such a way that they are easily reachable and useable

by all countries, but especially developing countries, as they not only bring data together but also people, processes and results;

8. Confirm the importance of the UN-GGIM – World Bank collaboration to develop and operationalise an overarching geospatial framework that countries could reference when developing their national and sub-national spatial data infrastructures, and that strengthens the production and use of timely and reliable geospatial data and information which meet the needs of national implementations of the 2030 Agenda, enables policy relevance, and provides government users, decision makers and researchers with data, tools and methods to make appropriate and evidence-based decisions;
9. Urge and assist developing countries, particularly African countries, least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, to strengthen the capacity of National Statistical Offices and National Geospatial and Mapping Agencies through national data systems that ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data;
10. Request UN-GGIM, its regional committees, thematic groups and partners to provide guidance and support to Member States particularly from developing countries in identifying and sharing existing and available geospatial data to support their SDG implementation efforts and to support the development of policies and capacities in applying standards, collection, management, analysis, and dissemination of data.

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