

Report
Second High Level Forum on GGIM
Seminar on Regional Cooperation in Geospatial Information Management
The Courtyard Marriot Hotel, Doha Qatar
February 7, 2013

The Seminar on Regional Cooperation held on February 7 2013, was significant, in that it was the first time that 11 Member States (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates) in the Middle East met and discussed Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM). The seminar was attended by 27 representatives from the 11 Member States, five UN officials, four members from the regional groups of Europe and Asia and six observers (who did not attend the third closed session). The list of attendees is attached at Appendix 1.

The aim of the regional seminar was to promote the increased use of geospatial information and to influence the development of the geospatial information field in the ESCWA region. Specific objectives were to discuss the state of geospatial information management at a national level, provide an overview on international/regional cooperation and the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) initiative, and deliberate on the need to establish a regional UN-GGIM committee to coordinate geospatial information in the ESCWA region.

The meeting began with opening remarks followed by three sessions. The meeting agenda is attached in Appendix 2. Session one provided an overview of existing regional coordination efforts with presentations from UN-GGIM Asia-Pacific, UN-GGIM Europe, and an overview on GGIM as a global intergovernmental mechanism including its mandate, objectives and future plans. The Second Administrative Level Boundary (SALB) Project was introduced, as an example of a product (work in progress) of international cooperation on GGIM. The Member States attending were invited to participate in the SALB project.

Session two gave Member States the opportunity to share and discuss the status of national GGIM/SDI initiatives in the region. Here, Egypt, Qatar and Tunisia shared their work and achievements in the management of geospatial information. Bahrain's presentation was delivered the day before, during the High Level Forum and therefore already received by the attendees. Based on the discussions, presentations and a pre-seminar survey on GGIM in the region, it was found that the Member States are undertaking geospatial information activities; however the level of adoption, implementation and maturity are variable. Member States have applied geospatial information in a variety of areas ranging from census taking, health, water, emergency management to land use management, and all were supporting decision making activities and generating societal benefits.

The third session was chaired by ESCWA. It was emphasised during the opening remarks that the UN-GGIM Secretariat with the support of ESCWA would facilitate the start of a regional partnership on GGIM for the region and provide Secretariat support to develop effective strategies to build geospatial capacities, improve policy, institutional arrangements and frameworks to address global issues and contribute to collective knowledge. Attendees openly expressed the issues and challenges they

were experiencing in geospatial information management. The following is a list of challenges compiled from the discussion and from responses to the pre-seminar questionnaire.

- i. Lack of coordination and cooperation between geospatial data producers and users
- ii. The need to create a national geospatial information infrastructure with a common reference frame for all users, to facilitate the exchange of information between the partners and contribute to economic development
- iii. No high level body (government authority) to ensure that all parties are committed and follow the agreed policies.
- iv. Lack of geospatial standards e.g. (structure, geographical names etc).
- v. Data inconsistency and coordinate system mismatch of the data from various stakeholders.
- vi. Spatial data is often missing or incomplete or the same data was collected by different organizations
- vii. Cultural, institutional, financial and legal barriers prevent or delay the sharing of spatial data.
- viii. Data privacy and security need to be ensured for an individual's legal and physical wellbeing.
- ix. An increasing array of and changes in technologies creates the need to quickly determine requirements and keep pace of the changes
- x. The need to develop human resources to support GIS environments, in addition to being able to retain qualified persons.

At the end of the discussions, Member States present agreed and endorsed the need to establish a regional committee and implement an organized structure, with support from the ESCWA Secretariat, to discuss and progress the regional interests of GGIM.

UNSD, UN-GGIM and ESCWA were tasked to prepare the seminar report and the required documentation to begin the process of having the regional group on UN-GGIM created.



Attendees of Seminar on Regional Cooperation

APPENDIX 1
List of Attendees

| Country | Name of Person | Function Title | Institution, Department or Unit |
|--------------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Algeria | Mr. Arezki Kesraoui | General Director | National Institute of Cartography and Remote Sensing |
| Bahrain | Dr. Khalid Al-Haidan | Director | GIS Directorate |
| | Ms Seema Ahmed Al-langawi | Consultant | ProLand Consultants |
| Egypt | Nahla Seddik Mohamed Saleh | Director of GIS Unit | CAPMAS,IT Sector,GIS Department |
| Iraq | Mr. Fuad Mahmood | Director General | Survey Works, Ministry of Water Resources |
| Iraq Iraq | Mr. Yassin Ali | Expert Engineer | |
| | Mr. Mudher Al_Adhami | Senior Chief Engineer | State Commission on Survey |
| Lebanon | Mr. Amin El Khoury | Vice Director | Directorate of Geographic Affairs (DAG) |
| Lebanon | Mr. Ahmad El Jabi | Head of Photogrammetry Department | Lebanese Army-Directorate of Geographic Affairs |
| Morocco | Ms. Zahra Dafer | Director of Cartography | Agence Nationale de la Conservation Foncière, du Cadastre |
| Oman | Mr. Yaqoob Al-Toobi | Head of National Survey Authority | Ministry of Defence |
| | Mr. Saleem Al-Hashmi | SOI Production | National Survey Authority |
| Qatar | Dr. Mohamed Hamouda | GIS Consultant | Center for GIS, Qatar |
| | Dr. RCS Taragi | GIS Expert | Statistics Authority |
| | Amer Al Humaidi | Head of Planning and Projects | Centre for GIS, Qatar |
| | Mansoor Al Malki | Director of IT | Statistics Authority |
| Saudi Arabia | Mr. Nasr Al- Sahhaf | Director | Saudi Space Geodesy Center |
| | Mr. Morayyea Hassan Al Shahrani | GCS President | General Commission for Survey GCS |
| | Mr. Saad Al-Hamlal | Geospatial Information Center Director | General Commission for Survey GCS |
| | Mr. Bandar Almuslmani | Geodesy and Land Survey Director | General Commission for Survey GCS |
| | Mr. Talal Al-Shafaey | GIS Department Manager | General Commission for |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| | | | Survey GCS |
| | Mr. Sattam Al-Otaibi | Photogrammetry Department Manager | General Commission for Survey GCS |
| | Mr. Mohammed Al-Qarni | Cartography Department Manager | General Commission for Survey GCS |
| | Mr. Abdulatif Al-Shahrani | Presidents Office Manager | General Commission for Survey GCS |
| | Mr. Abdullah Aldoshan | Head of Mapping & GIS | Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs |
| Tunisia | AFI Sahbi | General Director | National Center of Mapping and Remote sensing (NCRM) |
| United Arab Emirates | Joseph Abdo | SDI Project | |
| OTHER ATTENDEES | | | |
| UN ESCWA | Mr. Juraj Riecan | Director | Statistics Division of ESCWA |
| UN ESCWA | Ms Neda Jafar | | Statistics Division of ESCWA |
| UN-GGIM AP | Mr. Yoon Jin-hwan | | UN-GGIM AP |
| Co-Chair UN- GGM | Ms. Vanessa Lawrence | Director General and Chief Executive | Ordnance Survey |
| UN-GGIM-Europe | Mr. Jevon Snell | | Ordnance Survey |
| UNSD, UN-GGIM Secretariat | Ms. Cecille Blake | Statistician | UN Statistics Division, DESA |
| UNSD, UN-GGIM Secretariat | Mr. Greg Scott | Inter-Regional Advisor | UN Statistics Division, DESA |
| UNSD, UN-GGIM Secretariat | Ms Cilla Ng | Associate Statistician | UN Statistics Division, DESA |
| UNCS, UN-GGIM Secretariat | Ms. Ayako Kagawa | Geographic Information Officer (GIO) | Cartographic Section, DFS |
| OBSERVERS | | | |
| | Sanghoon Lee | Deputy Director | NGII Korea |
| | Seung-weon shin | Officer | NGII Korea |
| | Mark Cygan | Industry Solutions Manager | Esri |
| | Timothy Trainor | Chief Geography Division | US Census Bureau |
| | Shigeru Matsuzaka | Executive Officer of International Observation | GSI, Japan |
| | Mei Maruyama | Cordinator UN_GGIM AP Secretariat | Japan Map Centre |

**APPENDIX 2
MEETING AGENDA**

AGENDA

THURSDAY, 7 February

- 8.30-9:00** **Registration of participants** – Venue: Courtyard Marriot Hotel
- 9.00-9.30** **Opening Remarks**
1. Ms. Cecille Blake, Representative United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)
2. Mr. Juraj Riecan, ESCWA Representative
- Introduction of Participants
- 9.30-10.30** **Session 1**
- International/Regional Coordination in Geospatial Information**
- Chair: Mr. Greg Scott, UNSD**
- Presentations**
1. Overview of GGIM, Ms. Vanessa Lawrence, Co-Chair of UN-GGIM
 2. The Asia-Pacific region mode of operation, Mr. Yoon Jin-hwan, UN-GGIM-AP
 3. European cooperation, Mr. Jevon Snell, UN-GGIM Europe
 4. Example of international cooperation: SALB project
 - a. General overview – Ms. Cecille Blake, UNSD, DESA
 - b. Technical matters – Ms. Ayako Kagawa, UN Cartographic Section, DFS
- 10.30-10.45** **Coffee Break**
- 10.45-11.45** **Session 2**
- National GGIM/SDI Situation**
- Chair:** Ms. Vanessa Lawrence, Co-Chair of UN-GGIM
- Country Presentations**
1. **Egypt**, Ms. Nahla Seddik, Director of GIS Unit, CAPMAS, GIS Department
 2. **Qatar**, Mr. Mohamed Hamouda, Head, Planning and Projects Division, Centre for GIS
 3. **Tunisia**, Mr. Sahbi El Afi, General Director, National Center of Mapping and Remote sensing
 4. **Bahrain**, Mr. Khalid Al Haidan, Director, GIS Directorate
- 11.45-13.00** **Session 3 (Closed)**
- Regional Cooperation in the ESCWA Region**
- Chair:** Mr. Juraj Riecan, ESCWA
- Open Panel Discussion**
- Summary and Decisions**
- Closing and Concluding Remarks:** UNSD Representative