

International Forum on Policy and Legal Frameworks
for Geospatial Information, 18-19 October 2016,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Policy and Legal Frameworks: The journey so far...

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Global Geospatial Information Management

Positioning geospatial information to address global challenges

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UN-GGIM: Aims and objectives

Reporting to ECOSOC, a formal inter-governmental
UN Committee of Experts to:

- Discuss, enhance and coordinate Global Geospatial Information Management activities by involving Member States at the highest level.
- Work with Governments to make joint decisions and set directions on the use of geospatial information within national and global policy frameworks.
- Address global issues and contribute collective knowledge as a community with shared interests and concerns.
- Develop effective strategies to build geospatial capacity in developing countries.
- To make accurate, reliable and authoritative geospatial information readily available to support national, regional and global development.



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UN-GGIM, 2012: Inventory of issues

1. Develop a national, regional and global strategic framework for geospatial information;
2. Establish best practices in institutional arrangements, legal and common frameworks;
3. Build capability and capacity, especially in developing countries;
4. Assuring the quality of geospatial information;
5. Promoting data sharing, accessibility and dissemination;
6. Embracing trends in information technology;
7. Promoting geospatial advocacy and awareness;
8. Partnering with civil society and the private sector; and
9. Linking geospatial information to statistics.



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<http://ggim.un.org/2nd%20Session/E-C20-2012-5%20Inventory%20of%20Issues%205%20July.pdf>

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UN-GGIM, 2013: Legal & policy issues

- UN-GGIM acknowledged that there are significant legal and policy challenges emerging for geospatial information, including issues related to the licensing, sharing, pricing, privacy, quality, liability, authority and security of data, and open data.
- Noted that legal and policy frameworks should be designed to promote, facilitate and enable the use and dissemination of geospatial information.
- Acknowledged the need to engage with lawmakers, policymakers and lawyers on geospatial technology requirements, data, open data, applications and processes, as well as the value of geospatial information management.



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UN-GGIM, 2015: Legal & policy issues

- Noted recent developments and the increased focus that could have an impact on legal and policy frameworks supporting geospatial information.
- The geospatial community needed to be more proactively engaged with issues relating to the collection, use, provenance and accessibility of data, such as privacy, licensing, quality and national security, as well as issues related to new disruptive technologies.
- Growing need for geospatial professionals to understand the legislative and regulatory processes and their implications for the entire geospatial community, and for the legal profession and legislators to understand the wider use and benefits of geospatial information.



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UN-GGIM, 2015: Legal & policy issues

- Agreed that a plan of action and strategy should be prepared in consultation with relevant Member States and other experts, in order to begin the advocacy and engagement process among relevant parties.
- Supported the convening of an International Forum on legal and policy issues and frameworks in 2016 with a view to taking a more proactive role in and facilitating a more informed dialogue on the identified issues, including national policies.
- This is that International Forum, and hosted by the Government of Malaysia!!



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Legal & policy issues

- Lack of consistent, transparent and rational legal and policy frameworks regarding geospatial technology and information.
- Laws and policies vary from country to country
- Geospatial technology has only recently moved into the mainstream.
- Many lawmakers, lawyers, and policymakers do not fully understand the technology or its value.
- Unique aspects of geospatial information in areas such as privacy and intellectual property rights.
- Government, industry and the crowd are often subject to different legal requirements.
- National security issues.



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Legal & policy issues

- New technologies will generate much more spatially-enabled information.
- New stakeholders interested in certain aspects of geospatial information, including regulators.
- Geospatial information being used in real-time decision-making - raises risk and expectations.
- More governments developing open data initiatives.
- Uncertainty in laws and regulations are having an impact:
 - Legislation in India.
 - Restrictions regarding the use of drones due to privacy concerns.
 - More lawsuits involving licenses and intellectual property rights in geospatial data



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Expected outcomes

The following outcomes from the International Forum are envisaged:

- Identification of potential challenges towards the collection and use of geospatial information at the local, national and international level.
- A closer interaction between national entities to address the legal/policy issues that presently restrict the sharing of geospatial information.
- A framework from which to identify the legal/policy challenges that will arise as new technologies are introduced that will facilitate the collection of geospatial information.



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