



## Sixth High Level Forum on UN Global Geospatial Information Management Changing the World - Geospatially

20-22 April 2020

Royal Holloway College, University of London, Windsor, United Kingdom

### Concept Note

#### Background

The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), in collaboration with the Government of the United Kingdom, through the Ordnance Survey, will convene the **Sixth High Level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management at Royal Holloway College, University of London, Windsor, United Kingdom from 20-22 April 2020**. This sixth edition of UN-GGIM's High Level Forums will have the substantive support from each of the five Regional Committees of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM: Americas, UN-GGIM: Asia Pacific, UN-GGIM: Africa, UN-GGIM: Arab States and UN-GGIM: Europe), as well as the UN-GGIM Private Sector Network, the UN-GGIM Academic Network and the UN-GGIM Geospatial Societies.

The Sixth High Level Forum is being staged in pursuance of the mandate from the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to convene global forums to promote comprehensive dialogue on global geospatial information management with all relevant governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The event will continue the discussions and consultations from previous High Level Forums, and the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, provide follow-up on issues from the inter-governmental meetings of the Committee of Experts, and provide Member States and geospatial stakeholders with the unique opportunity to share and learn from each other, new ideas, methods and strategies based on the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and emerging trends in technology, policy, innovation that further the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

With an overarching theme '**Changing the World – Geospatially**', the Sixth High Level Forum will be a truly global event bringing together all stakeholders at the highest level to address and ensure that geospatial information has its widest and fullest use in service of social, economic and environmental development. The aim of the Forum is to provide a convening, participatory and inclusive environment to enhance the communication, understanding, knowledge and application of geospatial information management, and discuss the policy relevance, challenges, and role of geospatial technology and innovation to address local, regional and global challenges. The Forum will focus on delivering positive social, economic and



environmental outcomes through the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, whilst considering how the rapidly changing geospatial environment gives opportunities to accelerate progress towards delivering the 2030 Agenda.

## Context

As the implementation of the 2030 Agenda gains momentum and the world begins to consider in more detail, and with more urgency, how to plan, deliver, measure, and report progress on the SDGs and their associated targets and indicators, Member States and the global community are now also beginning to understand better the commensurate prospects for using geospatial information as fundamental inputs for realising the 2030 Agenda. As noted by UN-GGIM at its seventh session in August 2017, achieving sustainable development will require transformative change, not only in delivering on such a broad and ambitious agenda, but also in how the right data is brought to bear to measure and monitor progress. The professional geospatial and related data communities should be ambitious and aspire to have the data that is needed – social, economic and environmental. These data themes are fundamental and include, amongst other aspects, ensuring that the world can ‘count’ everyone and leave no one behind. This is at the core of sustainable development for all countries.

The importance of a global framework to help develop the case for effective geospatial information capabilities, and promote their use, has led to the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. The Eighth Session of the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM adopted the overarching strategic framework of this Framework as a forward-looking and practical global guide for countries to reference when developing and strengthening their national and subnational geospatial information management systems. At the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress in November 2018, Ministers and other high-level decision-makers challenged the global community to ensure that geospatial information and location enablement is recognised and underpins the SDGs at national levels through using the Framework as a fundamental and enabling methodological tool for creating greater social, economic and environmental benefit.

The Seventh Session of the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM further noted that the global geospatial information environment is dynamic and innovative, with the emergence of new technologies, methods and processes. In August 2018 the Committee noted the intention to further revise the current Report on Future Trends in geospatial information management, taking into account new and emerging technologies, and welcomed the offers by Member States to contribute towards updating the report. It is intended that the revised Report is released at the Sixth High-Level Forum, giving opportunity to consider how the trends identified in its findings might further support the achievement of sustainable development globally.

## Forum Outcomes

The Sixth High Level Forum offers the opportunity for the global geospatial information community to pay particular attention to the role of emerging geospatial technology and innovation in implementing the SDGs and aims to substantively help to improve and strengthen the national geospatial information management capacities of all countries, to enable them to use evidence-based policy and decision making to implement the 2030 Agenda. Bringing all stakeholders together, the Forum will provide Member States and geospatial stakeholders with the unique opportunity to share and learn from each other, new ideas, methods and strategies to support local to global sustainable development with geospatial technology and innovation.



Objectives of the Forum will be to discuss the integration of geospatial knowledge, platforms and services to facilitate informed decision making, empowering people for better sustainable management and development of the Earth's finite resources, drawing on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the revised Future Trends report. This will better enable and drive national government agencies, the commercial sector, multilateral and international development organizations, academia and civil society to pursue sustainable development using geospatial knowledge and services. It will also continue to raise political awareness and highlight the importance of these technologies to decision makers.

## Forum Programme

The Sixth High Level Forum will extend over three days (20-22 April 2020). The third day will be a joint day with the Cambridge Conference, the quadrennial meeting of national mapping, geospatial and cadastral agency leaders that takes place 22-24 April 2020. Provision will be made for global and regional meetings over the weekend 18-19 April. Organisers will consider diversity in speakers a top priority, while the venue, at one of the United Kingdom's first women's higher education establishments, provides further motivation for this priority. Furthermore, and following the success of the Young Geospatial Professionals Summit at the World Geospatial Information Congress in November 2018, it is intended that this High Level Forum extend the UN-GGIM approach to diversity by encouraging and ensuring that young professionals are included in the speaker programme.

The overall programme for the High Level Forum is shown in the table below.

	Mon 20 <sup>th</sup> April HLF Day 1:	Tue 21 <sup>st</sup> April HLF Day 2	Wed 22 <sup>nd</sup> April HLF Day 3, CC Day 1	Thu 23 <sup>rd</sup> & Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> April: CC Days 2 and 3
Focus	<b>Geospatial Policy and Trends to Achieve the Global Development Agendas</b>	<b>Implementing the Global Development Agendas - Geospatially</b>	<b>Leadership Focus: Global Urbanisation – a National Challenge</b>	<i>Cambridge Conference Programme</i>
0900-1030	Opening Session and Keynote	5 Parallel Sessions: Framework pathways and emerging trends that ease implementation	Urbanisation challenges: transport, land and housing, X-nation impacts	<i>Leaders of national mapping, geospatial and cadastral agencies focus on solving their challenges on role, communicating their benefit, and capitalising on changing technologies</i>
1100-1230	The Geospatial Landscape	Achieving Economic Impact	Urbanisation impacts National Executives Discussion	
1330-1500	Integrated Geospatial Information Framework	Impacting Social Development	Urban Solutions: Geospatial approach to Urbanisation in a national context	
1530-1700	Future Trends	Improving our Environment	Closing Session and Windsor Declaration	
Evening	Reception	Cultural Visit		

Notes: HLF: High Level Forum; CC: Cambridge Conference;



## Monday, 20 April

---

### Geospatial Policy and Trends to Achieve the Global Development Agendas

Global development agendas are highly dependent on geospatial information and enabling technologies as the primary data and tools for relating people to their location and place, to measure 'where' progress is, or is not, being made, particularly at sub-national and local levels and to help plan and deliver progress. The success of key functions of all national governments – the development of policy, the setting of rules and processes, and the delivery of services – is similarly dependent on access to high quality, timely and reliable information that is becoming more geographic and location-based in composition. However, in the pursuit for sustainable development, countries also face specific institutional challenges; from the provision and exploitation of new data needs, information systems, analytics and associated enabling tools and technologies to support the timely and reliable implementation of the SDGs, to strategic leadership, understanding and awareness of national geospatial information policy, frameworks and associated implementation roadmaps – which continue to inhibit development progress for developing countries in particular.

After an opening session and keynote speaker, the day will start by considering progress in achieving a geospatial landscape that is embedded in, and contributing to, all aspects of society and community, globally. Drawing on the UN-GGIM regional committees, the Forum will consider whether geospatial is considered fundamental, embedded into national policy processes, institutions and businesses, and delivering on the global development Agendas. In two separate sessions, the day will then consider how we coordinate, develop, strengthen and promote the effective sharing of geospatial information for policy formulation, decision-making and innovation, drawing upon the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and revised Future Trends report.

## Tuesday, 21 April

---

### Implementing the Global Development Agendas – Geospatially

Part 2 of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the Implementation Guide, will be released at the High Level Forum, providing the specific guidance and actions to be taken in implementing the Framework and thus supporting the 2030 Agenda and wider sustainable development. The first session of Day 2 will see 5 parallel technical panels examining the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework Pathways and Action Plans, allowing greater insight into aspects of the Framework and, where relevant, related emerging trends.

The day continues with three plenary sessions. The 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It recognises that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. It takes the bold and transformative steps to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. Sustainably achieving the three pillars of development; social, economic and environmental, sees a need for greater use of trusted data. This is a global issue, applicable to all regions and whatever national prosperity.

The plenaries will examine the role of geospatial information and technologies in enabling each of these pillars. Each of three sessions will focus on one pillar and include a cross-cutting panel that examines specific goals and challenges of the pillar, the need for data to achieve progress and the consequent priorities and



partnerships for the geospatial community. This thematic approach allows geospatial leaders to consider how aspects of the Framework will need to be progressed to meet national priorities within that pillar.

## Wednesday, 22 April

---

### Leadership Focus: Global Urbanisation – a National Challenge

With cities already generating 80% of global economic activity this could grow over forthcoming years. 70% of the global population is likely to live in cities by 2045, making urbanisation a particularly important theme in developing countries. Urbanisation is likely to enhance economic and social development but may also lead to pressure on infrastructure and the environment which could contribute to social tensions within the urban population, a growing number of which could live in slums and peri-urban areas. Urbanisation, and the effects of climate change, are likely to result in an increase in the magnitude of humanitarian crises, particularly since the majority of urban areas will almost certainly be either on, or near the coast, making these cities vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

The growth of cities can also lead to imbalance nationally. Urbanisation often results in increasing requirements for energy, water and food, and rural areas can suffer economically as populations move to cities. Sustainable and smart urbanisation equally requires focus on the wider nation, so that no-one is left behind.

Day 3, combined with the Cambridge Conference, provides the platform for discussing priority policy and geospatial data issues related to advancing sustainable urbanisation in a national context. The sessions will focus on the three challenges of integrated transport, land and housing, and, at senior national executive/major city mayor level, ensuring the whole nation benefits from urbanisation – leaving no-one behind. Discussion will feature global smart society leaders, from developed and developing countries, as they envision how urbanisation can be 'location' enabled to ensure effective and efficient planning, development, management, and resilience, followed by speakers at the cutting edge of delivery.

The Sixth High Level Forum is therefore largely focused on solutions enabled by geospatial technologies, people and thinking. In doing so it will be informed by both the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and Future Trends documents.

### Summary and issuing of the Windsor Declaration

