

# **Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management**

**Report on the eighth session  
(1-3 August 2018)**

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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 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 Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on its eighth session and provisional agenda and dates for the ninth session of the Committee**

The Economic and Social Council:

- (a) Takes note of the report of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on its eighth session;<sup>1</sup>
- (b) Decides that the ninth session of the Committee of Experts shall be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 7 to 9 August 2019;
- (c) Approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the ninth session of the Committee of Experts as set out below:

#### **Provisional agenda for the ninth session of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management**

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Strengthening geospatial information management.
4. Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda.
5. Integrated Geospatial Information Framework
6. Global geodetic reference frame.
7. Geospatial information for sustainable development.
8. Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information.
9. Application of geospatial information related to land administration and management.
10. Marine geospatial information.
11. Geospatial information and services for disasters.
12. Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data.
13. Global fundamental geospatial data themes.

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<sup>1</sup> [E/2018/46-E/C.20/2018/18](#).

14. National institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management.
15. Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community.
16. Collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.
17. Review of United Nations activities in geospatial information management.
18. Programme management report.
19. Provisional agenda and dates for the tenth session of the Committee of Experts.
20. Report of the Committee of Experts on its ninth session.

## **B. Decisions brought to the attention of the Council**

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

### **8/101**

#### **Strengthening geospatial information management**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Secretariat and the Expanded Bureau, and their efforts in continuing to take practical and strategic actions to strengthen geospatial information management for Member States in line with the broadened mandate given by ECOSOC;
- (b) Welcomed the provision of extra-budgetary resources to support efforts to improve and strengthen national geospatial information capacity-building in developing countries, and in this regard expressed its appreciation for the valuable and continuing Trust Fund contributions by the People's Republic of China; the contribution by GSDI to support capacity development initiatives; and for other regional assistance, such as Mexico's Caribbean Project;
- (c) Noted the updated 2018-2022 Strategic Framework and the suggestions to ensure that the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework remains aligned to the Strategic Framework, as a reference point for coordination, coherence and prioritizing the work programmes and activities of the Committee;
- (d) Commended the initiative of the UNSD/Esri research exercise in a number of pilot countries to establish a federated information system of national and global data hubs for the SDGs, to facilitate collaborative data integration and interoperability, and to improve national to global data flows and reporting; and encouraged national geospatial information authorities and national statistical offices to continue to collaborate and develop this valuable initiative further;
- (e) Agreed to take a more prominent and strategic leadership role in guiding the geospatial aspects of the federated information system for the SDGs, taking into account the existing work achieved in National Spatial Data Infrastructures (NSDIs), and the need for flexibility in national development of geospatial information;
- (f) Requested all regional committees of UN-GGIM to continue to explore practical steps towards greater coordination and collaboration between the Committee of

Experts, the regional committees and thematic networks, partner organizations such as the Group on Earth Observations and EuroGeographics, and particularly with each of the UN Regional Commissions;

- (g) Expressed continued commitment and support for the forthcoming United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, to be convened in Deqing, China in November 2018, as a milestone global event that will continue to grow the coherence and coordination of global geospatial information for Member States;
- (h) Welcomed the convening of the Sixth High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management in the United Kingdom in April 2020, to be hosted by Ordnance Survey of Great Britain on behalf of the United Kingdom;
- (i) Noted with appreciation the United Kingdom's leadership, led by Ordnance Survey, towards the revision of the Future Trends report over the coming 18 months, taking into account new and emerging technologies, and welcomed the offers by Member States to contribute to the updating of the report;
- (j) Acknowledged the urgent need for the further mobilization of extra-budgetary resources for the Committee's and the Secretariat's operations, and to support and sustain real long-term capacity and capability development, including to cover the cost of participation by developing countries in the annual Committee sessions.

#### **8/102**

#### **Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Commended the progress of the five regional committees of UN-GGIM, including the convening of their annual plenary meetings during the intersessional period, and the successful international thematic technical seminars and workshops in the pursuance of the objectives of the Committee of Experts for Member States;
- (b) Expressed its appreciation for the continuing and valuable contributions of the three UN-GGIM networks to the Committee's programme of work, in particular with regard to efforts to support the subcommittee, expert and working groups of the Committee, and in expanding their affiliations and knowledge within the regional committee processes;
- (c) Noted the work and contribution of the UN-GGIM Academic Network to adjust the Cadastral Template 2.0, an information and reference database tool on land registration systems in over 50 countries around the world, to support the implementation of the SDGs;
- (d) Welcomed the continuing efforts towards ensuring greater coordination among, and alignment with, the activities of the Committee of Experts, the regional committees, the thematic networks, and the UN Regional Commissions; and in this regard, the importance of sharing guides, frameworks standards and data, particularly in support of the implementation of the SDGs, and aligned with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework as a mechanism to focus these efforts for the benefit of Member States;
- (e) Noted with appreciation that plenary meetings for all five regional committees of UN-GGIM will be convened over the coming intersessional period, and encouraged all Member States and stakeholders to participate and contribute as appropriate;

- (f) Urged Member States to consider tangible ideas, strategies and mechanisms, including funding sources and collaborative partnerships, the Committee may leverage to ensure that adequate resources become available to foster the sustained engagement of developing Member States to participate to their fullest extent in regional meetings.

**Decision 8/103****Global geodetic reference frame**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Subcommittee on Geodesy and congratulated the Co-Chairs for their leadership in advancing the elaboration of mechanisms and possible solutions to organize, strengthen and sustain the Global Geodetic Reference Frame;
- (b) Endorsed the revised terms of reference for the Subcommittee to provide clearer modalities and working procedures, subject to minor amendments provided from Member States;
- (c) Commended the Subcommittee on the considerable progress made in the completion of the Road Map Implementation Plan, and endorsed the plan as the third step in the process of improving the sustainability and enhancing the quality of the Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF);
- (d) Noted with interest the initial work and progress made on the Position Paper on Governance as a detailed discussion paper to address the need for filling the current gaps in governance arrangements for the GGRF, including the possible creation of a convention on geodesy and mechanisms for the GGRF's financial sustainability via a UN Trust Fund;
- (e) Further noted that, given the difficulty in developing an appropriate governance structure, the Position Paper on Governance is envisaged as an aspirational medium to long-term means towards engaging commitment from Member States, and now requires careful consideration in looking at the different options available and the need to better understand the importance of this work through broad consultation and agreement;
- (f) Suggested that the consultations for an international organization, convention, and associated financial resources should be considered along with the wider mandate, scope and modalities of the Committee of Experts, and guided by Member States;
- (g) Requested that the Subcommittee initiate and undertake broad and detailed consultations on the Position Paper on Governance over the intersessional period, and provide an update to the Committee at its next session in 2019;
- (h) Noted the next meeting of the Subcommittee on Geodesy will be convened on the margins of the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress in Deqing, China in November 2018, and encouraged broader participation in the activities of the Subcommittee, particularly from African countries.

**Decision 8/104**

**Determination of global fundamental geospatial data themes**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report prepared by the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe (UN-GGIM: Europe) on behalf of the working group on global fundamental geospatial data themes, and their efforts in supporting the further progression of the 14 global fundamental geospatial data themes;
- (b) Acknowledged the contributions provided by the Working Group, regional committees, subcommittee and expert and working groups of the Committee of Experts, as inputs into the global review to compose the theme descriptions, including capturing SDGs that can be supported for each of the 14 global fundamental geospatial data themes;
- (c) Commended the Working Group in the promotion, marketing and communication efforts that have raised awareness of the 14 global fundamental data themes, including the development of theme icons that should be a permanent reference for all working groups of the Committee of Experts, and dedicated story maps that were piloted through international workshops in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in April and at the UN-GGIM: Europe plenary meeting in Belgium in June;
- (d) Welcomed the opportunity for UN-GGIM: Europe to work with the Secretariat and other groups to continue to promote, communicate and raise awareness of the 14 global fundamental geospatial data themes widely across the global geospatial information and statistical community, UN-GGIM regional committees, the wider United Nations system, and within the broader global geospatial ecosystem, noting the need for the themes to remain technical in nature so as to not raise political concerns;
- (e) Noted the suggestions to describe in greater non-technical detail the data themes so that they may be harmonized at national and regional levels, and to ensure easier national implementations; and in this regard, for the Committee of Experts to consider the possible formulation, implementation and adoption of standards for the 14 global fundamental geospatial data themes;
- (f) Acknowledged the alignment of the 14 global fundamental geospatial data themes within the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and encouraged the inclusion of the themes within the national development of geospatial information activities.

**Decision 8/105**

**Trends in national institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Trends in National Institutional Arrangements, and noted that it is presently seeking to refocus and realign its current activity of work with the interests and national institutional arrangements requirements of Member States;
- (b) Noted that the work plan for 2018 – 2019 contained one major task, the preparation of an easy-to-understand guide that will elaborate on each of the seven structural and six managerial instruments in the context of geospatial information management, based on the framework ‘National Institutional Arrangements: Instruments, Principles and Guidelines’;



- (c) Asked for the Working Group to coordinate and integrate with the broader activities of the Committee of Experts, including the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Compendium on Licensing of Geospatial Information, and for the Bureau and the Working Group to arrange for the organization of the future work.

**Decision 8/106****Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Legal and Policy Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management, and supported the Working Group's work plan for the biennium 2018–2019, with the focus to systematically address complex legal and policy issues in geospatial information management;
- (b) Noted that the Working Group seeks to have broad expertise and geographic representation in its composition, including from diverse stakeholders, and in this regard, welcomed interest from Member States to participate in the Working Group;
- (c) Commended the Working Group on its activities and significant progress, including to improve the capacity to address legal and policy matters, and for successfully convening two international workshops and one mini-workshop that facilitated regional and sub-regional learning and capacity development;
- (d) Applauded the Working Group for its efforts, including a global consultation process, that allowed the finalization and endorsement of the Compendium on Licensing of Geospatial Information as contained in document E/C.20/2018/9/Add.2;
- (e) Noted that the Compendium is a comprehensive document on the licensing of geospatial information, and able to assist Member States to understand legal and policy considerations that impact the collection, use, storage and dissemination of geospatial information, and can serve as a foundation document for several other initiatives, including developing good practices in the future;
- (f) Noted the suggestions to translate the Compendium to facilitate better understanding for Member States to address legal and policy matters in geospatial information management, and in this regard, appreciated offers to translate the Compendium into languages other than English;
- (g) Requested the Working Group to contribute its subject matter expertise towards the preparation and development of the strategic pathway on legal and policy in the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and in this regard, welcomed the support offered by Member States.

**Decision 8/107****Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community.**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report on the implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community, and expressed its appreciation to the technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), and the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC), for their continuing support and valuable work;

- (b) Commended the contributions made by the three standards development organisations including: the proposed establishment of the OGC Statistical Domain Working Group; supporting the international standard on land administration; its focus on developing the S-100 suite of standards including the S-121 standard; and the standard for classifications systems for land cover;
- (c) Appreciated the revision to the “Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management” and its “Companion document on Standards Recommendations by Tier” and commended the three standards development organisations for their efforts and resources in updating these documents following wide international consultation with Member States and the professional geospatial information community;
- (d) Encouraged the regional committees and thematic groups of UN-GGIM to continue raising awareness, engagement, and the promotion of internationally agreed standards, including IHO’s S-121 standard;
- (e) Encouraged Member States to participate in the proposed OGC Statistical Domain Working Group, and in the revision of the ISO standard 19152 - Land Administration Domain Model, and in this regard, address the desire for broader engagement and involvement, and to enable interoperability of any new standards and approaches.

**Decision 8/108**

**Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, and noted the valuable progress being made to further elaborate, promote and disseminate the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) through the principle task teams as a means to create, disseminate and utilize geospatially enabled statistics;
- (b) Noted with appreciation the recently completed paper ‘Global Statistical Geospatial Framework: Linking Statistics and Place’ outlining the current status and plans, including case studies, for the development of the GSGF, and its role in supporting the wide range of implementation and adoption already occurring within countries and across all regions;
- (c) Supported the directions and six key areas of focus for the current activities of the Expert Group, including to: grow geospatial community engagement and understanding; further elaborate the five principles of the GSGF and provide supporting material; work to enhance interoperability; promote and support implementation of the GSGF; and work on statistical-geospatial integration and coordination, particularly pertaining to the SDGs and 2020 Round of Population Censuses;
- (d) Welcomed the proposed establishment of the OGC Statistical Domain Working Group, and encouraged the Expert Group to work with this Group on the development of technical standards and related efforts, such as the Discrete Global Grid System, and for both the statistical and geospatial communities to contribute to this work in support of the implementation of the GSGF and to overcome technical interoperability challenges;
- (e) Endorsed the short and longer-term statistical-geospatial interoperability projects identified by the Expert Group, and encouraged Member States and other stakeholders, including standards experts, to participate and contribute to delivering these important elements of the Expert Group’s programme of work;

- (f) Noted the balanced representation of geospatial and statistical experts in the Workshop on the Integration of Geospatial and Statistical Standards, jointly convened by UN-GGIM: Europe and the Economic Commission for Europe in November 2017, and that the interoperability projects recommended at the Workshop reflect the increased and direct collaboration and partnerships between the two professional communities;
- (g) Acknowledging the broader need for geospatial and statistical integration in areas of relevance, including disaster and climate related statistics, encouraged the Expert Group to consider establishing relationships with other relevant experts and processes in these important areas.

**Decision 8/109**

**Application of geospatial information related to land administration and management**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management and its continuing efforts to advocate and raise awareness on the merits and benefits of effective and efficient land administration and management by formulating an overarching policy guidance that can be referenced by Member States;
- (b) Encouraged the Expert Group to consider within the overarching policy guidance: interoperability and sustainability; application of geospatial information; importance of existing internationally agreed standards; historical records; economic benefits; and value; of effective and efficient land administration and management systems;
- (c) In this regard, asked the Expert Group to make use of existing appropriate globally accepted concepts and approaches, such as existing guidelines, best practices and standards, to effectively and efficiently link people to land, documenting, recording and recognizing people to land relationships in all their forms, and to secure land and property rights for all;
- (d) Welcomed the Expert Group's next meeting on 26 and 29 September 2018, hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources of China, in Deqing, Zhejiang Province, China, and convened in conjunction with the International Seminar on Effective Land Administration from 27 – 28 September 2018 at the same venue.

**Decision 8/110**

**Geospatial information for sustainable development**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, and noted the activities and significant progress to ensure that the contribution of the global geospatial information community to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains relevant and rigorous, makes the best possible use of existing initiatives, avoids duplication of efforts, and is country owned and country led;
- (b) Encouraged the Working Group to work effectively with the subcommittee, expert and working groups of the Committee of Experts to address the availability and accessibility of reliable and timely geospatial information to measure and monitor SDGs progress;

- (c) Supported the Working Group's revised workplan for the biennium 2018–2019 with a focus on developing and providing guidance on: i) disaggregation by geographical location and on aggregation of geocoded unit-level data; and ii) appropriate approaches to leverage production-ready earth observation time series data made available by space agencies;
- (d) Acknowledging that geospatial information and earth observations are not yet sufficiently leveraged in the statistical production processes, requested that the Working Group continue to develop and provide expert advice and guidance on the application of geospatial information and its management to achieve national development priorities and the global targets of the SDGs, and to do so with a degree of urgency whilst ensuring the robustness of the advice and guidance provided;
- (e) Noting the importance and crucial role of the Working Group in engaging with national governments, welcomed the initiatives by Member States to develop national reporting platforms within a federated system of data hubs to gather and disseminate geospatial information for SDG indicators, and the efforts to share these platforms, technology developments, data, including data-cube projects, experiences, and good practices;
- (f) Encouraged Member States to embark on initiatives to gain a comprehensive overview of the current situation and main issues related to data integration, including with statistical and global satellite data, for measuring and monitoring the SDGs; and in this regard, consider the approaches initiated by UN-GGIM: Europe focused on the regional cooperation between the geospatial and statistical communities seeking better integration processes for monitoring the global indicators;
- (g) Supported the suggestion for 'centers of excellence' to serve the demands for reliable, timely, accessible and sufficiently disaggregated data for Member States, and to engage and coordinate with willing and ready partner institutions, including the Academic Network and Group on Earth Observations, in determining appropriate modalities, to address the availability and accessibility of geospatial information for the production of SDG indicators;
- (h) Welcomed the convening of the fifth meeting of the Working Group in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2018 hosted by the Global Urban Observatory Unit of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat).

**Decision 8/111**

**Geospatial information and services for disasters**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters and commended the work and effort of the Working Group under the leadership of the Philippines and Jamaica;
- (b) Congratulated and welcomed the resolution 'Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters' adopted by ECOSOC on 2 July 2018, as a guide for Member States to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality geospatial information and services across all phases of disaster risk reduction and management;
- (c) Noted that ECOSOC, in its resolution, invites Member States, and their relevant government bodies, UN system, international organizations, donors, the private sector, academia and NGO's with responsibility for disaster risk reduction and management, in accordance with their mandates, to adopt the Strategic

Framework, recognizing that disaster risk reduction and management requires the commitment and cooperation of all stakeholders;

- (d) Commended the efforts of the working group in the development of a simple and practical assessment tool to assist Member States and the regional committees of UN-GGIM to evaluate and develop national implementation plans, and to monitor and report progress on the implementation of the strategic framework;
- (e) Emphasized that the use of geospatial information for managing all disasters is critically important, that geospatial information must be available before disasters, and that the real-time integration of statistical and geospatial data, to connect people with location, is required;
- (f) Encouraged the Working Group to align its messages with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, as disaster risk reduction and management is a critical beneficiary of national geospatial capability, noting that the Committee has an important role to play in enabling the development of those services for the benefit of society.

#### **Decision 8/112**

##### **Marine geospatial information**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information and commended the work and effort of the Working Group in developing its work plan for the biennium 2018 – 2019, which seeks to address issues related to the availability, accessibility and application of marine geospatial information;
- (b) Noted the Working Group's activities and progress, including preparation of a communication plan that describes the benefits and value of marine geospatial information, and that addresses livelihoods and the wellbeing of communities, and linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (c) Encouraged the Working Group to consider a use case study on data availability and interoperability, linkages to national geospatial information infrastructure that relates to inland water bodies and waterways, coastal zones, seas and oceans, and to consider good practices and exemplars including the Arctic SDI Project;
- (d) Requested the Working Group to take note and consider in its activities the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and related international initiatives, including the Seabed 2030 Project;
- (e) Noted that the Working Group encourages and promotes the use of internationally agreed standards, the S-100 suite of standards, including the S-121 standard, across all marine activities and, in the development of specifications and standards, to engage with standards development organizations;
- (f) Encouraged the Working Group to remain focussed, to actively seek collaboration with other expert and working groups of the Committee of Experts so as to avoid duplication, and to ensure that activities remain technical in nature;
- (g) Noted that the Working Group will convene its first expert meeting, back-to-back with the meeting of the International Hydrographic Organization Marine

Spatial Data Infrastructures Working Group (MSDIWG) scheduled for the first week of March 2019 in Busan, Republic of Korea.

**Decision 8/113**

**National geospatial data and information systems**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Secretariat and World Bank, and their joint efforts to develop an Integrated Geospatial Information Framework as an overarching strategic policy guide for countries to reference when developing and strengthening their national and sub-national geospatial information management systems and capabilities;
- (b) Commended the Secretariat, World Bank and the many actors within the Committee of Experts for contributing to the formulation of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework as an important and practical global guide; supported the approach for the Framework to be a living document, further refined as technologies, processes and knowledge evolves; and comprising three parts as separate, but connected, documents;
- (c) Adopted Part 1, the Overarching Strategic Framework, as a forward-looking Framework that provides the overarching strategic messages and expansive, integrated national framework, focusing on the policy, perspectives and key elements of geospatial information; and in this regard, supported an illustrative executive summary to be developed as a high-level reference document for growing geospatial awareness for policy and decision makers;
- (d) Agreed in-principle to the structure and main elements of Part 2, the Implementation Guide, as the detailed document that provides the specific guidance and actions to be taken in implementing the Framework;
- (e) Noted the valuable comments and suggestions from Member States and working groups of the Committee of Experts for further developing and improving the Guide, which will be captured during a broad consultation period;
- (f) Commended the World Bank's efforts to initiate pilots to develop Part 3: Country-level Action Plans, and to base the Action Plans on real examples and case studies from countries, at both a national and sub-national level, and noted the requests to additionally strengthen and pilot the Action Plans in Africa and the small island developing States, using these unique experiences to test differing methodologies;
- (g) Noting that the intent of the Framework is an overarching guide that sits above all other activities, the Committee agreed that the detailed Implementation Guide will need to directly reference and build upon the many current activities, guides and frameworks of the working groups of the Committee of Experts, as well as national and regional SDI and related initiatives and frameworks; specifically, through each of the nine strategic pathways of the Framework;
- (h) Recognizing the sense of urgency to complete the Implementation Guide and Action Plans in a timely manner, supported consideration for the completed documents to be provided to the Committee for adoption at its ninth session in August 2019.

**Decision 8/114**

**Strengthening collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, and commended the efforts to develop a mutually beneficial relationship, and to define collaborative work items between the Group of Experts and the Committee;
- (b) Encouraged even further collaboration and in this context, welcomed the proposal to create a liaison group with responsibility to define operational working relations and coordinate future collaborative work;
- (c) Commended concrete cooperative activities such as the ECA's Geonyms project, the work on 14 fundamental geospatial data themes, and joint communication and training initiatives;
- (d) Commended the Group of Experts on modernizing its operations with the adoption of ECOSOC Resolution 2018/2, "Future organization and methods of work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names", and further suggested to explore colocation of the Expert meetings as a possible cost-saving and further integration measures.

**Decision 8/115**

**Review of United Nations activities in geospatial information management**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Secretariat on United Nations activities related to geospatial information management and the update on efforts to establish the United Nations System Network;
- (b) Reaffirmed the need for the United Nations system to work together effectively in the field of geospatial information management to: streamline activities; avoid duplication; communicate coherently; avoid unnecessary reporting burdens; support the subcommittee, expert and working groups of the Committee of Experts; and to share knowledge, technology and resources ultimately provided by Member States;
- (c) Consolidate the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group and the United Nations System Network to have one efficient mechanism building upon experiences of past coordination efforts; and following the example of the statistical community;
- (d) Endorsed the terms of reference for United Nations System Network as contained in Annex I of document E/C.20/2018/18/Add.1.

**Decision 8/116**

**Programme Management Report**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the oral report from the Secretariat on the programme management for the Committee through the newly created Global Geospatial Information Management Section in the Statistics Division.

## **Chapter II**

### **Items for endorsement, discussion and decision**

#### **A. Strengthening geospatial information management**

- 3. The Committee of Experts considered item 3 of its agenda at its 1st meeting, held on 1 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on strengthening geospatial

information management,<sup>2</sup> which was introduced by the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management of the Statistics Division.

4. At the 1st meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Ireland (on behalf of UNGGIM Europe), Mexico, India, Japan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, Antigua and Barbuda and Indonesia.

5. At the same meeting, statement was made by the representative of the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean.

6. Statements were also made by the representatives of EuroGeographics and GEO Secretariat, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or invited to participate as observers in the session of the Committee.

7. Also at the same meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

#### **Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

8. At its 5th meeting, held on 3 August, statements were made by the representatives of Germany, Austria and Belgium. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/101).

### **B. Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda**

9. The Committee of Experts considered item 4 of its agenda at its 2nd meeting, held on 1 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda.<sup>17</sup> The chairs and a Vice-Chair of the five regional committees and three United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management networks made introductory statements.

10. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Barbados, Guatemala, Argentina, Egypt, Cameroon, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Ethiopia, Austria, Germany, Australia and Singapore.

11. At the same meeting, Statements were also made by the representatives of the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean and the Economic Commission for Africa.

12. At the same meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

#### **Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

13. At its 5th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/102).

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<sup>2</sup> Available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts ([http://ggim.un.org/ggim\\_committee.html](http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html)).



### C. Global geodetic reference frame

14. The Committee of Experts considered item 5 of its agenda at its 3rd meeting, held on 2 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the global geodetic reference frame.<sup>17</sup> The co-chair of the Subcommittee on Geodesy made an introductory statement.

15. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Saudi Arabia, Germany, Australia, Tonga, India, Finland, the Russian Federation, France, Ethiopia, Mexico, Japan, Norway, New Zealand, Belgium, Sweden, Bahamas, the Republic of Korea, Tuvalu, the United Kingdom, the United States, Jamaica, Argentina, Indonesia, El Salvador, Uruguay, Burkina Faso and Jordan.

16. At the same meeting, statement was also made by the representative of the Economic Commission for Africa.

17. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of EuroGeographics, GEO, ISO and International Association of Geodesy, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or invited to participate as observers in the session of the Committee.

18. At the same meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

#### Action taken by the Committee of Experts

19. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/103).

### D. Determination of global fundamental geospatial data themes

20. The Committee of Experts considered item 6 of its agenda at its 4th meeting, held on 2 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the determination of global fundamental geospatial data themes,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced on behalf of the chair of the Working Group on Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes.

21. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the Spain, India, Mexico, Ethiopia, Singapore, Japan, Denmark, France, Ireland, Suriname, the United Kingdom, Fiji, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Canada.

22. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of the European Union.

23. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of the EuroGeographics, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or invited to participate as an observer in the session of the Committee.

24. At the same meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

#### Action taken by the Committee of Experts

25. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August, statements were made by the representatives of Singapore and Mexico, as well as by the observer for the European Union. Subsequently the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/104).

## **E. Trends in national institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management**

26. The Committee of Experts considered item 7 of its agenda at its 4th meeting, held on 2 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on trends in national institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced by the chair of the working group on trends in national institutional arrangements.

27. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of India, Ecuador, Slovenia, Japan, Denmark, Belgium, Austria and Haiti.

28. Also at the same meeting, the Senior Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

### **Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

29. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, statements were made by the representatives of Denmark and Italy. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/105).

## **F. Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data**

30. The Committee of Experts considered item 8 of its agenda at its 4th meeting, held on 2 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced by the Chair of the Working Group on Legal and Policy Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management.

31. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of India, the United Kingdom (on behalf of UN-GGIM Europe and national capacity), Sweden, Tonga, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, France, Canada, Japan and Fiji.

32. At its 4th meeting, the Senior Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management Secretariat summarized the main points of the discussion.

### **Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

33. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/106).

## **G. Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community**

34. The Committee of Experts considered item 9 of its agenda at its 5th meeting, held on 3 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced by the Chair, Technical Committee 211, International Organization for Standardization.

35. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of India, Australia, Austria, Germany, Ireland, Sweden, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Indonesia and Canada, as well as by the observers for the State of Palestine, and the International Hydrographic Organization.

36. At its 5th meeting, statements were made also by the representatives EuroGeographics, and Open Geospatial Consortium, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or invited to participate as observers in the session of the Committee.

37. At the same meeting, the Senior Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

#### **Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

38. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/107).

### **H. Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information**

39. The Committee of Experts considered item 10 of its agenda at its 3rd meeting, held on 2 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information,<sup>17</sup> which was jointly introduced by the co-chair of the expert group on the integration of statistical and geospatial information and the Chair of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas.

40. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Italy, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Poland (on behalf of UN-GGIM Europe), Ireland, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Cuba, Egypt, Brazil, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, the Republic of Korea, China, Sweden, Colombia, Barbados, Spain, Dominica, Argentina, Canada, Jordan and El Salvador.

41. Also at the same meeting, statement was also made by representative of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

42. At its 3rd meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the ISO and Open Geospatial Consortium, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or invited to participate as observers in the session of the Committee.

43. At the same meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

#### **Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

44. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August, a statement was made by the representative of the United Kingdom. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/108).

### **I. Application of geospatial information related to land administration and management**

45. The Committee of Experts considered item 11 of its agenda at its 4th meeting, held on 2 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the application of geospatial information related to land administration and management,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced by the co-chair of the expert group on land administration and management.

46. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of India, the Netherlands (on behalf of UN-GGIM Europe), Barbados, Chile, Sweden, Canada, Suriname and the Republic of Korea.

47. Also at the same meeting, statements was made by the representative of the International Organization for Standardization, , non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or invited to participate as observers in the session of the Committee.

48. At its 4th meeting, the Senior Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

49. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, statements were made by the representatives of Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and India. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/109).

**J. Geospatial information for sustainable development**

50. The Committee of Experts considered item 12 of its agenda at its 2nd and 3rd meetings, held on 1 and 2 August.. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on geospatial information for sustainable development,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced by the co-chair of the working group on geospatial information.

51. At the 2nd and 3rd meetings, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, Italy, Mexico, Ireland, Japan, Sweden, India, the United Kingdom, Colombia, Denmark and China as well as by the representative of the European Union.

52. At its 3rd meeting, the Interregional Adviser, Global Geospatial Information Management Secretariat, summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

53. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, statements were made by the representatives of Mexico and the United Kingdom. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/110).

**K. Geospatial information and services for disasters**

54. The Committee of Experts considered item 13 of its agenda at its 4th meeting, held on 2 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on geospatial information and services for disasters,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced on behalf of the co-chairs of the working group on geospatial information and services for disasters.

55. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Côte d'Ivoire, Jamaica, Sweden, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Mexico, the Netherlands (on behalf of UN-GGIM Europe), Japan, Dominica, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Canada and Jordan.

56. At its 4th meeting, statements were made by representatives of the MapAction and Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA), non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or invited to participate as observers in the session of the Committee.

57. At the same meeting, the Interregional Adviser, Global Geospatial Information Management Secretariat, summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

58. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/111).

**L. Marine geospatial information**

59. The Committee of Experts considered item 14 of its agenda at its 4th meeting, held on 2 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on marine geospatial information,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced by the Co-Chair of the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information.

60. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Italy, Canada, Norway, Jamaica, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, the United States, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Burkina Faso, Fiji and Australia.

61. Also at the same meeting, a statement was also made by the observer for the International Hydrographic Organization.

62. At the same meeting, the Senior Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

63. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/112).

**M. National geospatial data and information systems**

64. The Committee of Experts considered item 15 of its agenda at its 1st meeting, held on 1 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on national geospatial data and information systems,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced by the Director of the Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Global Practice at the World Bank.

65. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Ireland (on behalf of the UNGGIM Europe), Ethiopia, Barbados, Sweden, Japan, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Belgium, Argentina, Egypt, Norway, Burkina Faso, Canada, Cameroon, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Indonesia, Colombia, Jordan, China, El Salvador, Suriname, Singapore, Spain, the Republic of Korea, the Dominican Republic, Tuvalu, Fiji, Italy and Ukraine, as well as by the observer for the State of Palestine.

66. Also at the same meeting, statement was also made by the representative of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

67. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association, Pan American Institute of Geography and History; EuroGeographics; and Open Geospatial Consortium, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or invited to participate as observers in the session of the Committee. A statement was also made by a representative of the UN-GGIM Academic Network.

68. At its 2nd meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

69. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/113).

## **N. Strengthening collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

70. The Committee of Experts considered item 16 of its agenda at its 5th meeting, held on 3 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on strengthening collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced on behalf of the chair of that Group.

71. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Canada, Belgium, Germany (on behalf of UN-GGIM Europe and national capacity), Japan, Sweden, Australia, Italy, Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

72. Also at the same meeting, statement was made by the representatives of the Economic Commission for Africa.

73. At its 5th meeting, Director of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs summarized the main points of the discussion.

### **Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

74. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/114).

## **O. Review of United Nations activities in geospatial information management**

75. The Committee of Experts considered item 17 of its agenda at its 5th meeting, held on 3 August. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of United Nations activities in geospatial information management,<sup>17</sup> which was introduced by the Director of the Statistics Division.

76. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the Slovenia (on behalf of UN-GGIM Europe), Sweden, Mexico, Italy, Ethiopia (on behalf of UN-GGIM Africa), Malaysia, Australia and Canada.

77. Also at the same meeting, statement was also made by the representative of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, followed by a statement by the representative of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs.

78. At its 5th meeting, the Director of the Statistics Division summarized the main points of the discussion.

### **Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

79. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/115).

## **P. Programme management report**

80. The Committee of Experts considered item 18 of its agenda at its 5th meeting, held on 3 August 2018. The Director of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat provided an oral report on programme management activities and issues related to the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, which contained an assessment of

the need to set priorities for its many activities that were supported by the secretariat and, in that context, committed to focusing on implementation, as well as the need to ensure better coordination and coherence across the various activities of the Committee to enable the secretariat to further advance the global geospatial information management agenda.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

81. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 8/116).

## Chapter III

### **Provisional agenda and dates for the ninth session of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management**

82. The Committee of Experts considered item 19 of its agenda at its 5th meeting, held on 3 August 2018. It had before it a note by the Secretariat containing the draft provisional agenda for the ninth session of the Committee of Experts (E/C.20/2018/CRP.3). The Director of the Statistics Division made an introductory statement.

83. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom, Belgium, Sweden, Australia, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Cameroon, Italy and Burkina Faso.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

84. At its 5th meeting, held on 3 August, the Committee of Experts approved the draft provisional agenda for its ninth session, and entrusted the Bureau with streamlining and finalizing it. The Committee also decided to recommend it to the Economic and Social Council for approval (see chap. I, sect. A).

85. At the same meeting, the Committee of Experts decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that its ninth session be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 7 to 9 August 2019 (see chap. I, sect. A).

## Chapter IV

### **Report of the Committee of Experts on its eighth session**

86. The Committee of Experts considered item 20 of its agenda at its 5th meeting, held on 3 August.

87. The Rapporteur introduced the draft report of the Committee on its eighth session (E/C.20/2018/L.1), together with an informal paper containing draft decisions.

88. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of Singapore.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

89. At its 6th meeting, held on 3 August 2018, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft report on its eighth session, including the draft decisions contained therein, as orally revised, and entrusted the Rapporteur with streamlining and finalizing it, with the support of the Secretariat.

## **Chapter V**

### **Organization of the session**

#### **A. Opening and duration of the session**

90. The Committee of Experts held its eighth session from 1 to 3 August 2018 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Committee held six meetings (1st to 6th).

#### **B. Election of officers**

91. At its 1st meeting, held on 1 August, the Committee of Experts elected the following officers by acclamation:

*Co-Chairs:*

Dorine Burmanje (Netherlands)

Li Pengde (China)

Fernand Guy Isseri (Cameroon)

*Rapporteur:*

Macarena Pérez Garcia (Chile)

#### **C. Agenda and organization of work**

92. At its 1st meeting, held on 1 August, the Committee of Experts adopted its provisional agenda, as contained in document [E/C.20/2018/1](#). The agenda read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Strengthening geospatial information management.
4. Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda.
5. Global geodetic reference frame.
6. Determination of global fundamental geospatial data themes.
7. Trends in national institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management.
8. Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data.
9. Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community.
10. Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information.
11. Application of geospatial information related to land administration and management.
12. Geospatial information for sustainable development.
13. Geospatial information and services for disasters.
14. Marine geospatial information.
15. National geospatial data and information systems.
16. Strengthening collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.



17. Review of United Nations activities in geospatial information management.
  18. Programme management report.
  19. Provisional agenda and dates for the ninth session of the Committee of Experts.
  20. Report of the Committee of Experts on its eighth session.
93. At the same meeting, the Committee of Experts approved the organization of work for the session, as contained in document E/C.20/2018/2.

#### **D. Attendance**

94. The session was attended by 428 participants, including 311 representatives from 88 Member States and 5 representatives from 2 non-Member States. Also present were 112 representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations. The list of participants is available from the website of the Committee of Experts at [http://ggim.un.org/ggim\\_committee.html](http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html).

95. The Committee of Experts also invited the following organizations to participate in the work of the session as observers: AAM Group; Airbus Defence and Space; Association of Geospatial Industries, India; Austrian Academy of Sciences; Bentley; Urban and Regional Information Systems Association; Catapult; Centre for Spatial Law and Policy; Columbia University; ConsultingWhere; DataWorld; DigitalGlobe; Earth-i; e-Geos; Environmental Systems Research Institute; EuroGeographics; Geomares Publishing; Geospatial Media and Communications; GeoThings; Global Resources Management Consultancy; GroundTruth; Group on Earth Observations Secretariat; Hexagon Geospatial Geosystems; IIC Technologies; International Association of Geodesy; Kokusai Kogyo, Japan; KU Leuven; Location International; MapAction; Mapbox; National Autonomous University of Mexico; Open Geospatial Consortium; Oracle; Pan-American Institute of Geography and History; PASCO; Politecnico di Milano; PrecisionHawk; Riegl; Taylor and Francis Group; Ter Haar Geoinnovation; Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi; Tim Trainor Consultant; TomTom; Trimble; University of Maine; University of Melbourne; University of New Brunswick; University of the Republic, Uruguay; University of Twente; and World Geospatial Industry Council.

#### **E. Documentation**

96. The documents before the Committee of Experts at its eighth session are available from the website of the Committee of Experts at [http://ggim.un.org/ggim\\_committee.html](http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html).