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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management Eighth session

New York, 1-3 August 2018

Item 4 of the provisional agenda\*

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

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

### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The present paper contains the report of the contributions of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda for consideration by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

This report provides information on the contributions and achievements of the following eight regional committees and thematic groups: Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific; Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas; Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa; Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe; Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States; United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Geospatial Information Societies; United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Academic Network; and United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Private Sector Network. This report of the regional committees and thematic groups contain information on their activities and achievements since the seventh session of the Committee of Experts, held in New York from 2 to 4 August 2017, including the regional meetings and workshops held during the intersessional period. The reports also provide an overview of the work of the regional committees, including their working and thematic groups, in the following areas: (a) sustainable development; (b) land administration and management; (c) disaster risk reduction; (d) fundamental geospatial data themes; (e) integration of statistical and geospatial information; (f) legal and policy frameworks; (g) regional and international collaboration and capacity development, including the Americas Caribbean Project and Asia-Pacific Geodetic Capacity-building project of the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management; (h) global geodetic reference frame; (i) marine geospatial information; (j) priority issues and challenges; and (k) future plans and events.

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\*E/C.20/2018/1.

# **I. Report of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific (UN-GGIM-AP)**

## **A. Activities and achievements**

### **Contribution to the work programmes of the Committee of Experts**

1. UN-GGIM-AP substantially supported the International Workshop on Legal and Policy Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management: Licensing of Geospatial Information held on 7-9 November 2017 in Tianjin, China.
2. UN-GGIM-AP actively engaged in the Fifth High Level Forum on UN-GGIM held on 28-30 November 2017 in Mexico City, Mexico, and contributed to the inaugural meeting of the UN-GGIM sub-Committee on Geodesy.
3. UN-GGIM-AP supported the International Workshop on Legal and Policy Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management: Licensing of Geospatial Information held on 10-13 April 2018 in Nuku'alofa, Tonga.
4. UN-GGIM-AP is making efforts to assist with the preparation of the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress to be held from 19-21 November 2018 in Deqing, Zhejiang Province, China.

### **Working Group activities**

5. **Working Group 1 (WG1) on Geodetic Reference Frame** made lasting progress in the Asia-Pacific Reference Frame (APREF) project and the Asia-Pacific Regional Geodetic Project (APRGP), which has improved access to the global geodetic reference frame (GGRF), supported regional geodetic cooperation and enhanced regional global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) coordination. WG1 also made efforts for the Asia-Pacific Geodetic Capacity Building (APGCB) project. It supported the activities of the Pacific Geospatial and Surveying Council (PGSC) and provided assistance in the development of the PGSC strategic plan. It organized joint workshops and seminars, including the Forum on Regional Challenges, Benefits and Opportunities of Exchanging Geodetic Data on 16 October 2017 in Kumamoto Prefecture, Japan alongside the 6th Plenary of UN-GGIM-AP, and contributed to the International Workshop on Legal and Policy Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management: Licensing of Geospatial Information held on 10 - 13 April 2018 in Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

6. **Working Group 2 (WG2) on Disaster Risk Management** completed and published the List of Potential areas for contribution of the Geospatial Community including National Geospatial Information Agencies (NGIAs) for the effective implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (SFDRR). Based on the UN-GGIM Priorities for Action of "Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disaster (SFGISD)", the document serves as a guide for the geospatial community including NGIAs to find out the focus areas for contribution to SFDRR implementation. WG2 organized a "Special Session on Geospatial Information for Disaster Response - Case Study on the Disaster Response for Kumamoto Earthquake in April 2016" at the Sixth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM-AP on 16 - 19 October 2017 in Kumamoto, Japan. WG2 also finalized and published the Collection of Best Practices on the use of geospatial information for disaster risk reduction in Asia and the Pacific region<sup>1</sup>. WG2 is currently drafting the Guidelines for Disaster Risk Management Using Geospatial Information and Services.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un-ggim-ap.org/workinggroups/disaster/dblj/201712/P020171220333800491269.pdf>

7. **Working Group 3 (WG3) on Regional Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI)** continued the study on the common standards for regional SDI that are compatible with the fundamental geospatial data themes defined by the Committee's Working Group on Global Fundamental Geospatial Data, and the work on the pilot Regional SDI portal. WG3 organized the first UN-GGIM-AP International Seminar on Construction and Application of SDI on 15 to 22 September 2017 in Beijing, China and Wuhan, China in conjunction with the ISPRS Geospatial Week. The WG3 also organized the second UN-GGIM-AP International Seminar on Construction and Application of SDI on 2 to 10 May 2018 in Beijing, China in conjunction with the ISPRS TC III Symposium.

8. **Working Group 4 on Cadastre and Land Management (WG4)** completed the first and second surveys on the cultural, social, administrative, and technical environments for land management of the countries in Asia and the Pacific region, and proposed the draft report of land management framework based on the case study on Korea's land information system construction.

#### **B. Regional priority issues**

9. In addition to the four topics of the Working Groups, UN-GGIM-AP is conscious of the fundamental need for capacity building within the region. Meeting this need is particularly important in the Asia Pacific region due to the inhomogeneity within the geospatial infrastructure among member states, of which nearly 70% are developing countries and/or small island states. UN-GGIM-AP, is therefore seeking every opportunity to provide quality seminars and training programs to member states within the region. UN-GGIM-AP will continue to organize such aforementioned activities in cooperation with other regional and international organizations to enhance the capacity building on geospatial information for sustainable development in the region.

#### **C. Future meetings**

10. The Seventh Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM-AP will be held on 22 November 2018 on the margins of the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress on the 19 to 21 November 2018 in Deqing, Zhejiang Province, China. The 2018 - 2021 Executive Board of UN-GGIM-AP will be elected and the future composition of UN-GGIM-AP Working Groups will be established at the meeting.

11. The International Forum on "the Importance and Role of National Spatial Data Infrastructure towards Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs), hosted by the Agency of Land Administration and Management, Geodesy and Cartography, Mongolia and supported by UN-GGIM-AP, will be held on 6 - 7 September 2018 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

## **II. Report of the of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas (UN-GGIM: Americas)**

#### **A. Activities and achievements**

13. In November 2017, a new Board of Directors of the Regional Committee took office and aligned the work plan to the Global Strategic Framework 2017 - 2021.

14. As part of the restructuring of the work plan, the Working Groups of the Regional Committee were reorganized from five to three working groups: 1) Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (WG-ISGI); 2) Disasters (WG-Disasters); and, 3) Geospatial Data Infrastructure (WG-SDI). In addition, five lines of work were established: 1) Academic Network for the Americas; 2) Geodetic Reference Framework; 3) Joint Action Plan with

Regional Organizations; 4) Private Sector Network-Americas; and, 5) Regional Cooperation and Collaboration. Chairs of each working group were elected, and during the first months of 2018 they prepared the work plan and terms of reference for their respective working group.

### **Working Group activities**

15. **Working Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (WG-ISGI)** is documenting the standardization needed for the integration of statistical and geospatial information of all the countries of the region. This is with the aim of implementing the first version of the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) for the Americas, the regional implementation is called “Marco Estadístico y Geoespacial para las Américas” (MEGA).

16. **Working Group on Disasters (WG-Disasters)** in June 2018, a questionnaire was sent to conduct a diagnosis to develop a capacity building action plan for the region and Member States. This questionnaire incorporates components of the work of the three regional groups and the academic network.

17. **Working Group on Geospatial Infrastructure (WG-SDI)** will action the results of a questionnaire developed in collaboration with WG-Disasters and based on the results of the questionnaire, the WG-SDI will carry out, as a first step, a diagnosis of the geospatial data infrastructures in the region and will develop a dynamic visualization tool to analyse results.

18. To increase communication and participation the Regional Committee has:

(a) Established at least bi-annual meetings via WebEx with each of the Working Groups to better monitor, organize and coordinate activities between the UN-GGIM: Americas and the Member States. In May, the first WebEx per group took place. Virtual meetings were also held with the representatives of the lines of work, to further define and advance the tasks of the Working Groups; and,

(b) Redesigned the website of UN-GGIM: Americas<sup>2</sup>. It now includes a list of important events and an English version is available with direct access to social networks was enabled. The website is managed, maintained, and updated by INEGI, Mexico.

### **B. Regional and international collaboration**

19. Close collaboration continues within the framework of the Joint Action Plan with SIRGAS, PAIGH and GeoSUR, with the aim of accelerating the development of geospatial data infrastructure in the region.

20. The Project “Strengthening of the Spatial Data Infrastructure for the States and Territories Members of the Association of the State of the Caribbean”, continued during 2017 - 2018 with building capacity of Member States of the Caribbean. A Land Cover Map was created for the Caribbean and is currently being validated by Member States.

21. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and UN-GGIM: Americas, have enhanced collaboration to formulate strategies and conduct actions to support the process of integrating the statistical and geospatial communities within the region. This will contribute to improved decision-making and the definition of public policies, particularly those related to the challenges derived from the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the 2020 Round of Censuses.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.un-ggim-americas.org/>

22. During 2018, Chile and Mexico are cooperating on a project for the improvement and integration of software for managing geospatial information. The results of this project could be applied to achieve a greater integration of geospatial data in the Latin-American Region. This will be further followed by UN-GGIM: Americas as the project progresses.

### **C. Priority issues and challenges**

23. The greatest challenge for the region is to generate a common language for the integration of geospatial information and to have standardized data for the creation of common platforms for visualization, protection, use, dissemination and exchange of geospatial information. To achieve this goal, the active participation of Member States and their commitment to the UN-GGIM: Americas and the Committee of Experts are necessary.

### **D. Perspectives and future plans**

24. The short-term plans for the Regional Committee are to:

(a) Participate in the eighth session of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management in New York in August 2018;

(b) Convene two training courses for the Caribbean States. The first will be on Sustainable Development Goals and the second will be regarding the generation of a collaborative website for disaster management; and,

(c) Convene the Fifth Session of UN-GGIM: Americas in collaboration with the Latin America Geospatial Forum in November 2018, in Mexico City. A joint agenda with ECLAC will be prepared with the purpose of delivering a regional workshop on the integration of statistical and geospatial information for sustainable development.

### **E. Conclusion**

25. UN-GGIM: Americas is committed to the strengthening of geospatial information in the region and thanks Member States and regional organizations for their participation in the activities of such high responsibility.

## **III. Report of the of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa)**

### **A. Activities and areas of work**

26. The third meeting of UN-GGIM: Africa was held as a parallel event with the AfricaGIS 2017 Conference from 20 to 24 November 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting was attended by over 50 participants, including delegates from 14 African countries, and observers from international organizations including the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission (AUC), UN-GGIM Secretariat, academia, industry organizations, and the private sector.

27. The meeting afforded the opportunity to launch the African Action Plan on Global Geospatial Information Management, entitled “Geospatial Information for Sustainable Development in Africa” (GI4SD). GI4SD conceptualizes the overarching principle of holistic geospatial governance that strengthens the significance of geospatial information for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Africa. In outlining the essential actions with related responsibilities, timescales and costs the Action Plan will support and guide Member States with an agreed set of basic concepts, practices, standards, and guidelines for the

development and management of geospatial information in Africa. It is worth noting that Africa is the first region that has developed an action plan under the auspices of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

28. The global administrative data and second administrative level boundaries (SALB) have been updated with validated data provided by several countries including Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritius, Senegal, South Africa, and South Sudan. All data were processed and included in the SALB global platform for world administrative data.

29. Pursuant to the resolution made at the third meeting of UN-GGIM: Africa, held 28 November - 2 December 2016 in Grand Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire, UN-GGIM: Africa, with the support of ECA, is further developing its background paper on the dimensions of geospatial information and overarching policies in Africa. As UN-GGIM: Africa is designed as an intergovernmental statutory organ of African nations, a comprehensive policy and strategy is a prerequisite in achieving a better coordination mechanism for geospatial information management. The document outlines the common geospatial vision, strategy, and goals for Africa, and has been circulated and tabled for comments. The participants' recommendations to enhance the overall quality of the document in terms of structure and content with a review to ensure internal and policy consistency with other African strategies.

30. The second meeting of the AFREF Working Group was held on the margins of the UN-GGIM: Africa regional meeting, and continued to develop the unified African Geodetic Reference Frame (AFREF) programme as a regional geodetic reference frame aligned with the Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GCRF). AFREF allows for the direct and seamless application of all geospatial information on the continent. During the meeting the objectives and structure of the programme was revisited, the distribution of the Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) in Africa assessed, and the African Geodetic Commission was established; and,

31. The Regional Committee with support of ECA has developed a guiding document on key geospatial standards for Africa. This advocates the development and use of common geospatial data standards in Africa, in order to facilitate the harmonizing of geo-information in decision-making. The document provides some guiding principles on geospatial standards that can be used by national mapping agencies as a reference for strengthening the harmonization of fundamental geospatial datasets in Africa, including the common standards and metadata that would make statistical and geospatial information more useable and more relevant to a wider range of stakeholders.

## **B. Capacity development**

32. The global community has emphasized the need to support developing countries, mainly Member States of UN-GGIM: Africa, in building their capacity in the production and dissemination of reliable and timely geospatial information. Therefore, even more effort must be made to continue to lessen the gap between the developed and developing countries so that "No one is left behind". During the reporting cycle the following initiatives were accomplished at the regional level:

- (a) With the Support of the UN-GGIM Secretariat and ECA, UN-GGIM: Africa conducted an International Workshop on Fundamental Geospatial Datasets for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals on 25 - 27 April 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Workshop provided a unique opportunity for members of the statistical and geospatial data communities in Africa to exchange knowledge and experiences, and to strengthen cooperation towards the implementation of the internationally agreed Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes as a framework to foster efforts to improve the availability, accessibility and application of geospatial information in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development and Africa 2063 agendas; and,

(b) Technical assistance was provided to the West African Economic and Monetary Union (also known by its French acronym, UEMOA) to develop the Geospatial Data Infrastructure (RGDI), an umbrella of policies, procedures and technology to enhance more efficient production, management and use of geospatial data for member countries.

### **C. Partnerships, regional and international collaboration**

33. In addition to its involvement and participation in various activities related to the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, UN-GGIM: Africa continues to be fully involved in the following major regional initiatives:

(a) **African Union Commission Global Monitoring of Environment and Security (GMES) Programme** is supported by the provision of advisory services to establish a Policy Coordination and Advisory Committee (PCAC) to oversee and steer the GMES Action Plan to ensure that it responds to global needs and is linked with other global initiatives such as the Group on Earth Observation (GEO) and UN-GGIM: Africa; and,

(b) **Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS)** is conducted through the regional implementation “AfriGEOSS”, an initiative to strengthen the link between the current GEO activities with existing capabilities and initiatives in Africa.

### **D. Perspectives, outlook and future plans**

34. The region plans to organize the fourth meeting of UN-GGIM: Africa in conjunction with the Statistical Commission Africa Meeting, tentatively scheduled for 1 - 4 October 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

35. At its fourth session, UN-GGIM: Africa will continue to discuss issues related to sharing knowledge and best practices on the development of geospatial information in the continent; raise awareness on the benefits to be derived through the utilization of geospatial information for sustainable development; and, investigate policies, measures, and steps that African countries could take to ensure the successful implementation of the work programmes of the Committee of Experts.

### **E. Matters for consideration**

36. One of the most critical challenge facing the regional body is the insufficiency of financial resources to adequately implement and track progress of UN-GGIM: Africa activities.

37. Additionally, there is inadequate engagement from Member States, challenged by lack of shared political will to support UN-GGIM: Africa activities at both national and regional levels. For instance, the conveners of the Institutional Arrangements and Legal Frameworks Working Group; Capacity and Capability Development Working Group; and, Integration of Geospatial and Statistical Information for Sectorial Applications were not in attendance and were not able to provide progress reports of their activities.

38. With regard to standards and interoperability, the meeting has recognized that the participation of the African regional and specialized institutions, as well as Member States in ISO/TC211 was so far relatively poor. Therefore, UN-GGIM: Africa would like to create a mechanism to disseminate the relevant standards to the African geospatial community.

39. Communication is key to the successful implementation of UN-GGIM: Africa’s activities. The Regional Committee will conduct an awareness building campaign for geospatial professionals and everyday users of geospatial information, with a focus given to government leadership levels. In the interim, the Executive Board is hard at work to complete

the building of the UN-GGIM: Africa Website, which is tentatively scheduled to be released in October 2018.

## **IV Report of the of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe (UN-GGIM: Europe)**

### **A. Activities and areas of work**

#### **Contribution to the work programme of the Committee of Experts**

40. The Committee of Experts mandated UN-GGIM: Europe to establish and lead a Global Working Group, the Working Group on Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes, to draw together current projects from different Regional Committees to determine global fundamental geospatial data themes. In the past twelve months the Working Group on Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes has continued with its work, and has successfully fulfilled its mandate and terms of reference. A report on work of the Committee's Working Group on Fundamental Data was submitted to the Committee of Experts at its eighth session.

41. UN-GGIM: Europe continues to actively participate and contribute to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicator Working Group on Geospatial Information (IAEG-SDGs-WGGI). In participating in these meetings, the alignment of the work of the regional Working Group on Data Integration provides European input to the IAEG-SDGs.

42. The Regional Committee actively participated in the Fifth High Level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management held on 28-30 November 2017 in Mexico City, Mexico. Regional members also participated in the inaugural meeting of the Committee's Subcommittee on Geodesy, held on the margins of the forum on 26 – 27 November 2017.

43. Members of the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe contributed to the UN-GGIM Expanded Bureau Meeting, which followed immediately after the Fifth High Level Forum in Mexico City on 29 November 2017.

44. UN-GGIM: Europe contributed to the Fifth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman on 19 – 21 February 2018. UN-GGIM Europe has and will continue to share experiences and knowledge regarding the institutional arrangements for geospatial data management with the Regional Committee of Arab States.

45. The Regional Committee, through EuroGeographics, facilitated the presentation and consultative opportunity of the work on the 'Integrated Geospatial Framework' by the World Bank to European Member States. This was part of a wider work organized in May 2018.

46. Recognising the mutual benefits of working together UN-GGIM: Europe and the UN Economic Commission for Europe have drafted a proposal for greater collaboration<sup>3</sup>. Agreed and drafted by both parties, this was well received by the Executive Committee of UNECE at their Ninety-fifth meeting in Geneva in December 2017. Benefits are expected in terms of improving outreach and raising awareness of the respective work programmes, as well as strengthening capacity building activities and learning from each other.

#### **Working Group activities**

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/commission/EXCOM/Agenda/2017/95Excom-11-Dec-17/Item\\_7-2017\\_65\\_Proposal\\_Geospatial.pdf](https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/commission/EXCOM/Agenda/2017/95Excom-11-Dec-17/Item_7-2017_65_Proposal_Geospatial.pdf)



47. **Working Group on Core Data**<sup>4</sup> is focusing on increasing data interoperability and harmonisation by proposing core geospatial data which meets essential user needs.

48. **Working Group Data Integration**<sup>5</sup> works to ensure that the regional entity focuses on how geospatial data can enhance sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda in Europe. The working group was also set up with the intention that it will interact with the IAEG-SDG Working Group on Geospatial Information.

49. **Working Group on Geodetic Reference Frame - Europe**<sup>6</sup> has a close connection to the various geodesy related organisations in Europe and actively contributes to the work of the Committee's Subcommittee on Geodesy.

## **B. Regional activities**

50. UN-GGIM: Europe held its Fifth Plenary Meeting<sup>7</sup> on 6 to 7 June 2018 in Brussels. This meeting brought together senior executives and experts from the national geospatial information and statistical authorities of 24 Member States, and 12 international and observer organisations. At the meeting a new Chair and new member to the Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe were nominated and approved. The Work Plan for UN-GGIM: Europe for 2018 - 2021 was approved by the Regional Committee. The wider UNECE Member States were invited to participate in the meeting.

51. UN-GGIM: Europe helped organise and/or actively participated in a number of regional activities in the twelve-month intersessional period. These included:

(a) INSPIRE Conference<sup>8</sup>, 6 - 8 September 2017, Strasbourg, France and Kehl, Germany;

(b) European Forum for Geography and Statistics Conference<sup>9</sup>, 2 - 3 November 2017, Dublin, Ireland;

(c) A joint workshop with UNECE on Integrating Geospatial and Statistical Standards<sup>10</sup>, November 2017, Stockholm, Sweden;

(d) The Fourth joint UN-GGIM: Europe – ESS - UNECE Meeting, 18 March 2018, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg; and,

(e) Participation of the UN-GGIM: Europe Executive Commission in the UNECE High-Level Seminar on Strategic Partnerships in Official Statistics<sup>11</sup>.

## **C. Priority issues and challenges**

52. The Executive Committee of UN-GGIM: Europe consider that some of the priority issues for the coming period include:

(a) The Sustainable Development Goals;

<sup>4</sup> <http://un-ggim-europe.org/content/wg-a-core-data>

<sup>5</sup> <http://un-ggim-europe.org/content/wg-b-data-integration>

<sup>6</sup> <http://un-ggim-europe.org/content/wg-grf-europe>

<sup>7</sup> <http://un-ggim-europe.org/content/fifth-plenary-meeting-un-ggim-europe>

<sup>8</sup> <https://inspire.ec.europa.eu/conference2017/psessions>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.efgs.info/event/efgs-2017-conference-dublin-ireland-2/>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.58/2017/mtg3/Workshop\\_on\\_integrating\\_geospatial\\_and\\_statistical\\_standards\\_-\\_meeting\\_report.pdf](https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.58/2017/mtg3/Workshop_on_integrating_geospatial_and_statistical_standards_-_meeting_report.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/SPIOS/High-level+Seminar+on+Strategic+Partnerships+in+Official+Statistics>

- (b) Improved collaboration between the statistical and geospatial communities;
- (c) Capacity Development;
- (d) The continuation of the work on the promotion and adoption of the Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes; and,
- (e) The Integrated Global Geospatial Framework.

#### **D. Future plans and activities**

53. The Regional Committee will continue with the work and delivery of the working groups as outlined in the Work Plan 2018 - 2021 which was approved by the Regional Committee at its Fifth Plenary.

54. UN-GGIM: Europe is planning to organise/actively participate in the following future events in the next twelve months:

- (a) European Forum for Geography and Statistics Conference, October 2018, Helsinki, Finland;
- (b) United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, 19 -21 November, Deqing, Zhejiang Province, China;
- (c) Fifth Joint UN-GGIM: Europe-ESS-UNECE Meeting, Spring 2019, Luxembourg;
- (d) Sixth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe, June 2019, Brussels, Belgium; and,
- (e) UN-GGIM - UNECE Joint Workshop on Data Integration, 2019, date and venue to be confirmed.

## **V Report of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Arab States (UN-GGIM: Arab States)**

### **A. Activities and areas of work**

55. The UN-GGIM: Arab States plays its role as the formal Arab chapter of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, with the core objective of coordinating, facilitating and enhancing the regional cooperation, as well as cooperating with other regional and international entities for promoting best practices in geospatial information management in the region.

56. The members of UN-GGIM: Arab States have been actively working together to develop this young body. They have obtained active support and patronage from their respective governments and the main government bodies or associations responsible for geospatial information in their respective countries. There has been one plenary meeting of the Member States during the intersessional period.

### **B. Activities**

57. The fifth meeting of Regional Committee was held in Oman on 19 - 21 February 2018. It was attended by fifty-five representatives from thirteen Arab countries: People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Kingdom of Bahrain, Arab Republic of Egypt, State of Kuwait, Kingdom of Jordan, Lebanese Republic, Kingdom of Morocco, Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Republic of the Sudan, Republic of Tunisia, and

United Arab Emirates. Additionally, the Gulf Cooperation Council Statistical Forum, Co-Chairs UN-GGIM, UN-GGIM Secretariat, World Bank and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) were represented. In addition, international experts were invited to support the UN-GGIM: Arab States Working Groups.

58. The meeting was hosted by the Sultanate of Oman's National Survey Authority this plenary in collaboration with the UN-GGIM: Arab States Secretariat.

59. Each of the four UN-GGIM: Arab States Working Groups organized workshops during this plenary that was attended by the invited subject matter experts. The experts advised the WGs on matters pertaining to their respective areas of focus in the form of presentations, discussions and analysis. Additionally, there were sessions where the participants shared their experiences in the field of geospatial information management.

60. The main objective of the fifth meeting was to further the development of a general framework for the member states to support the future program for all UN-GGIM: Arab States' Working Groups to facilitate the obtainment of the expected deliverables from this body.

61. Below are the recommendations of the fifth meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States that were circulated to all members:

(a) An Approval to start the Arabic Geodetic reference frame Project with participation of People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Kingdom of Jordan, Kingdom of Morocco, Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Republic of Tunisia. To be joined by other member states as soon as they are ready;

(b) An Approval to start the first version of the Arab Geo-Portal, with participation of People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Arab Republic of Egypt, Kingdom of Jordan, Kingdom of Morocco, Sultanate of Oman, State of Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Republic of the Sudan, and Republic of Tunisia. To be joined by other member states as soon as they are ready;

(c) Request for Approval upon Arabic Data Dictionary at the eighth session of the Committee of Experts, and Republic of Tunisia will prepare the first draft to be reviewed by Members;

(d) Adopting a road network layer for data sharing in the first draft of the Arab Geo-Portal, through the Web Services. Saudi Arabia will provide hosting services;

(e) Urging all Arab member states to participate in the Arab Geodetic Reference and the Arab Geo-Portal as soon as they are ready;

(f) Review and update the implementation plan for Working Group 1 (Institutional Arrangements, Legal, Policy, Awareness, and Capacity Building) to be approved during the eighth session of the Committee of Experts;

(g) Nominate People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Kingdom of Morocco, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Republic of Lebanon, and Arab Republic of Egypt, to represent UN-GGIM Arab States on the Subcommittee on Geodesy (formerly Working Group on Global Geodetic Reference Frame);

(h) Nominate Arab Republic of Egypt, State of Kuwait, and Sultanate of Oman, to represent UN-GGIM Arab States in Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information;

(i) Provide support in second phase for Working Group 4 (Integration of Geospatial and Statistical Information) work plan, through urged Member States to meet their requirements and support the integration of their work with Working Group 2 (Fundamental Data and Geo-Standards);

(j) Each WG's Head provide a progress report to UN-GGIM: Arab States secretary before 31 May 2018, to be included into report to the Committee of Experts at its eighth session;

(k) Urging all Arab member states to communicate with their delegation in UN to attend eighth session of the Committee of Experts;

(l) Urging all Arab member states to attend The Second UN World Data Forum in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on 22 - 24 October 2018, and the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress to be held from 19 - 21 November 2018 in Deqing, Zhejiang Province, China; and,

(m) Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the candidate for hosting the plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States from 18 - 20 February 2019.

### C. Next plenary meeting

62. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host the sixth meeting of the UN-GGIM: Arab States in February 2019.

## VI Report of the Network of Geospatial Societies (UN-GGIM: Geospatial Societies)

63. This section provides a summary of the full report from the UN-GGIM: Geospatial Societies (formerly the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies - JBGIS<sup>12</sup>) thematic group.

### A. Activities

64. **The Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association (GSDI).** The GSDI has announced the winding down of the Association as a legal entity and has committed to use remaining financial resources to support the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

65. **IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS).** The IGARSS17 Symposium focused on 'International Cooperation and Global Awareness' held special Technology, Industry and Education (TIE) sessions on 'GEO and Global Awareness' and 'Sustainable Goals and the United Nations 2030 Program'. Barbara Ryan, GEO Director, participated as a Conference Plenary Speaker.

66. **The International Cartographic Association (ICA).** ICA is moving forward on a book project 'Mapping a Sustainable World', which was announced during the Fifth High Level Forum in Mexico. The book is not intended as a cartographic textbook, nor an atlas of SDGs but will focus on the challenges and pitfalls faced by those who are interesting in mapping the SDG indicators, it is due for publication in 2019.

67. **The International Confederation of Surveyors (FIG).** The major effort in 2017 focused on raising awareness and providing fit-for-purpose land administration tools for secure property rights in order to address the divide between the 2.5 billion people who can

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.fig.net/jbgis/>

register property rights and the 5 billion, largely from impoverished environments, who cannot.

68. **The International Map Industry Association (IMIA).** The IMIA Regional Boards of Directors have approved plans to consolidate operations of the Association into a single, expanded International Board of Directors and eliminate the separate regional structures. This new structure will better position the Association to provide value to its members and position it for growth in the burgeoning geospatial economy.

69. **The International Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS).** Each of the five ISPRS Technical Commissions organise Symposia presenting developments in science, research, education and applications in their area of interest: Sensors and Systems; Photogrammetry; Remote Sensing; Spatial Sciences, and Education and Outreach. With respect to SDG Goals, the activities of the ISPRS Technical Commission are focused on SDG Goals: 2, 3, 11, 13, and 15.

70. **The International Geographical Union (IGU).** IGU Commissions published a book on 'Geospatial Technologies and Geography Education in a Changing World' under the IGU Springer Series 'Advances in Geographical and Environmental Sciences'. The IGU have also initiated a new book with the same publisher on 'Spatial Information Technology for Sustainable Development Goals' which is currently in press.

## VII Report of the Academic Network (UN-GGIM: Academic Network)

### A. Summary

71. Since the official establishment of the UN-GGIM: Academic Network at the sixth session of the Committee of Experts in August 2016 in New York, and in line with its working plan, and the approval of its Terms of Reference at the UN-GGIM Extended Bureau meeting in New York on 7 – 9 December 2016, the UN-GGIM Academic Network has been very active with a series of contributions and participation at several conferences and events, and actively promoted the Network at different international events for engaging new members.

72. Since the seventh session of the Committee of Experts, significant progress has been achieved in the consolidation of the UN-GGIM: Academic Network as an active body supportive of the Committee's work programmes. The main achievements of the Academic Network in the past years are:

- (a) The UN-GGIM: Academic Network actively participates in all key meetings of the Committee of Experts, including in high level and expert meetings, regional congresses and working group sessions;
- (b) The UN-GGIM: Academic Network has expanded its membership to 30 universities and research centres. It has representation globally, across all continents, with a significant presence in those countries known for their research in relation to geospatial and land matters;
- (c) Technical review of reports and technical documents produced by the UN-GGIM Secretariat, working and expert groups; and,
- (d) Conduction of a successful International Forum as part of the seventh session of the Committee of Experts, with a strategic theme and focus in line with the Committee's work programmes.

## **B. Initiatives**

73. Six initiatives have been identified to be the focus of the UN-GGIM Academic Network. For each initiative key performance indicators and a target for them have been identified:

- (a) Organize Parallel Academic Events at Key Forums and Meetings of the Committee of Experts;
- (b) Expanding member base in all regions;
- (c) Participate actively in subcommittees, expert and working groups, and Regional Committees;
- (d) Build and Populate an Online Registry of Technical Capacities Across the Members of the Network; and
- (e) Provide Technical Support to UN-GGIM Secretariat and the Committee's expert and working groups with Review of Technical Documents:

## **C. Meetings and administrative processes**

74. During the 2017 - 2018 year, the UN-GGIM: Academic Network Executive Committee and Advisory Board has held several meetings and communicates actively via email for different activities related to the Network.

75. The following meetings were convened and resulted in significant progress in the Network:

- (a) 31 July 2017 (Forum as a side event as part of 7th Session the Committee); and
- (b) 24 January 2018; and
- (c) 13 May 2018: Executive Board Meeting

76. Additionally, the Chair (Professor Abbas Rajabifard) and the Secretary (A/Professor Daniel Paez) met on three occasions in Melbourne, Australia, New York, United States of America, and Istanbul, Turkey to plan activities and complete administrative tasks.

## **D. Membership**

77. Currently, the UN-GGIM: Academic Network has over 30 members from all continents (this includes members of the Executive and the Advisory Board). This coverage allows the Academic Network to serve the needs of the Committee of Experts' global issues properly, as well as provide advice and support to regional and technical matters. Fifteen new applications were received and accepted in the past year, they were assessed and all were found eligible to join. The list of members is detailed in the full report/background document.

## **E. Website and Media**

78. During this second year of the UN-GGIM: Academic Network, the website<sup>13</sup> was updated, LinkedIn account<sup>14</sup> and Twitter account<sup>15</sup> maintained. The website has proven to be an invaluable tool to connect members and disseminate information about the Network

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<sup>13</sup> <http://unggim.academinetwork.org>

<sup>14</sup> <http://linkedin.com/company/unggiman>

<sup>15</sup> @UNGGIMAN / <https://twitter.com/unggiman>

activities and at the same time an essential tool to conduct key administrative tasks such as accepting new submissions.

#### **F. Work Plan and Objectives**

79. With the cooperation with all members of its Advisory Board, the UN-GGIM: Academic Network has created an ambitious Work Plan for the next two years. The goal of the plan is to:

- (a) Define and develop a set of research projects in line with the Committee's major activities that academic network members and members from the wider geospatial communities can participate and contribute. Two research projects identified are: Cadastral Template 2.0 and Sustainable Development and The Role of Geospatial Research and Innovation in Implementing the SDGs;
- (b) Organize parallel academic events at critical forums and meetings of the Committee of Experts. At the Eight Session of the Committee, the Network will be holding its second international forum, under the theme, 'The SDGs Connectivity Dilemma: Urban Settlements, Resilience, and Sustainability';
- (c) Expanding its member base in all regions;
- (d) Participate actively in the expert and working groups, regional groups and subcommittees of the Committee of Experts;
- (e) Build and populate an online registry of technical capacities across the members of the Network;
- (f) Connect activities with other networks of the Committee of Experts, and social organizations; and,
- (g) Provide technical support to UN-GGIM Secretariat with a review of technical documents as required.

### **VIII Report of the Private Sector Network (UN-GGIM: PSN)**

80. The objective of UN-GGIM: PSN is to facilitate direct connection and communication for the global private sector to work with Member States towards achieving success in global geospatial initiatives. Recognizing the expertise of the private sector, UN-GGIM: PSN shall create opportunities to assist with the creation of developing policies, processes, practices, capacities and recommendations for geospatial information infrastructure at national, regional, and global levels.

#### **A. Activities, areas of work and achievements**

81. At its the seventh session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management in New York on 31 July to 4 August 2017, UN-GGIM: PSN organized and participated in two events:

- (a) The Chair of UN-GGIM: PSN participated in a panel discussion conducted by the UN-GGIM Academic Network, highlighting the need to collaborate with the academic sector and have a joint bureau; and,
- (b) The UN-GGIM: PSN organized a side event on "Where is the Data?" comprised of two main segments on measuring and monitoring the SDGs as the anchor. One segment looked at the geospatial data needs to measure and monitor progress of the SDGs with

the second segment demonstrating the status of geospatial data solutions and platforms for the SDGs.

82. Under the umbrella of the Geospatial World Forum on 18 - 19 January 2018 Hyderabad, India, there were two activities organized in partnership with UN-GGIM: PSN. One was entitled “Transformation of National Mapping Agencies in Contemporary Economy” and the other program examined “Construction and Engineering” with the theme “Resilient Infrastructure – Key to Economic Growth”. The main points highlighted from both events are provided in the background report of the UN-GGIM: PSN.

83. UN-GGIM: Americas, the Government of Mexico, and UN-GGIM: PSN collaborated to deliver the Fifth High Level Forum on UN-GGIM in Mexico City, Mexico on 28 – 30 November 2017. It was highly successful with private sector representation in every session, from across the world. Private sector representation constituted large to medium scale companies. Presentations and interventions from private sector representatives were primarily on the potential of the geospatial private sector, which also highlighted the message that the geospatial industry is going beyond the context of selling a product.

84. The convergence and partnership between UN-GGIM: PSN and GEO is being examined. GEO’s expectation from UN-GGIM: PSN is that by maximizing any engagement that UN-GGIM: PSN has with UN-GGIM can also be leveraged advantageously by the GEO community. Furthermore, this partnership is more about sharing experience with GEO.

85. UN-GGIM: PSN has also put forth its comprehensive view and thoughts on the Compendium on Licensing of Geospatial Information document prepared by the Working Group on Legal and Policy frameworks for Geospatial Information Management.

#### **B. Future course of action**

86. The following are the future goals of the PSN:

- (a) Expansion of the UN-GGIM: PSN by a democratic process and representing industry view in the UN-GGIM regional committees and thematic groups;
- (b) The creation of a working group for each region and thematic group so that there is body of participation in the process; and,
- (c) The five to six Vice Chairs of UN-GGIM: PSN are to be assigned to represent different geographies. These members can participate on that particular subject in the related geography in UN-GGIM meetings.

87. Additional issues to be discussed during the upcoming PSN board meeting are:

- (a) Strategies for making specific contributions through organizing webinars and seminars;
- (b) Taking forward the collaboration and engagement of Secretariat of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO); and,
- (c) The organization of two panels at United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress. The proposal is under review.

## **IX Points for discussion**

**88. The Committee of Experts is invited to:**



- (a) Take note of the present report and express its views on the operation and achievements of the regional committees and thematic groups;**
- (b) Take note that the Fourth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Africa will be convened in conjunction with the Statistical Commission Africa Meeting from 1-4 October 2018 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;**
- (c) Take note that the Seventh Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM-AP will be convened on 22 November 2018 on the margins of the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress in Deqing, China, and that at that time a new Executive Board will be elected for the 2018-2021 period;**
- (d) Take note that the Fifth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Americas will be convened in collaboration with the Latin America Geospatial Forum from 7-8 November 2018 in Mexico City, Mexico;**
- (e) Take note that the Sixth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States will be convened in February 2019 in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia;**
- (f) Take note that the Sixth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe will be convened in June 2019 in Brussels, Belgium;**
- (g) Express its views on the progress and efforts towards ensuring greater coordination among the activities of the Committee of Experts, the regional committees, the thematic networks, and the UN Regional Commissions; and**
- (h) Provide guidance on strategies and mechanisms the Committee may need to consider to ensure that adequate resources may become available for the sustained engagement for regional meetings and activities by national representatives in developing countries.**