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

**Report on the ninth session  
(7–9 August 2019)**

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*Note*

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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 ninth session and provisional agenda and dates for the tenth 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 ninth session ([E/2020/46](#));
- (b) Decides that the tenth session of the Committee of Experts shall be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 5 to 7 August 2020;
- (c) Approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the tenth session of the Committee of Experts as set out below:

#### **Provisional agenda for the tenth 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. Geospatial information and services for disasters.
11. Marine geospatial information.
12. Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data.
13. National institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management.
14. Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community.

15. Collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.
16. Programme management report.
17. Provisional agenda and dates for the eleventh session of the Committee of Experts.
18. Report of the Committee of Experts on its tenth 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:

### **Decision 9/101**

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

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Secretariat (see [E/C.20/2020/4](#)) and the efforts of the Secretariat and the expanded Bureau of the Committee in continuing to take practical and strategic action to strengthen geospatial information management for Member States in line with the broadened mandate of the Committee pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution [2016/27](#) of 27 July 2016;

(b) Noted the considerable efforts undertaken to improve and strengthen national geospatial information capacity-building activities, as well as the extrabudgetary resources made available to support these efforts through several funding options and mechanisms;

(c) Welcomed the efforts of the United Nations and the Government of China in developing a proposal to jointly advance the establishment, led by the United Nations, of a global geospatial knowledge and innovation centre in Deqing, China, providing opportunities to build global geospatial capacity and capability and to improve and strengthen expertise on how to prepare for national geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries;

(d) Noted the importance of ensuring that the aims and activities of the centre were aligned with those of the Committee of Experts;

(e) Noted with appreciation the convening of the first United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, held in Deqing, China, in November 2018, and the Moganshan Declaration, issued at the conclusion of the Congress;

(f) Noted the progress and preparations for the sixth High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, with the overarching theme “Changing the world – geospatially”, to be hosted by the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain on behalf of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in April 2020;

(g) Welcomed the progress being made on a new edition of the report on future trends in geospatial information management by the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain, and encouraged Member States and relevant stakeholders to contribute to the global consultation currently under way;

(h) Acknowledged the need to consider various means and strategies to further mobilize extrabudgetary resources for the operations of the Committee,



to support and sustain long-term geospatial capacity and capability development, and to strengthen communication and integration between the regions;

(i) Noted the request of the Economic and Social Council in its resolution [2016/27](#) that the Committee report back to it within the next two years, and also noted the importance of the updated strategic framework 2018–2022 as a reporting instrument.

#### **Decision 9/102**

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

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Secretariat (see [E/C.20/2020/5](#)), commended the work and achievements of the five United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees and their respective working groups, and noted the convening of the annual plenary meetings of the committees during the intersessional period, as well as the many international thematic technical seminars and workshops held to further the objectives of the Committee, including the integration of statistical and geospatial information;

(b) Welcomed the decision of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific to transfer its secretariat services to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, thereby strengthening institutional arrangements in geospatial information management in the region;

(c) Expressed its appreciation for the continuing and valuable contributions of the thematic networks to the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, in particular, the efforts of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Academic Network to publish a research book on the Sustainable Development Goals connectivity dilemma;

(d) Welcomed the formal establishment of the steering group of the United Nations system network, and noted the renaming of the network to the United Nations Geospatial Network to ensure clear, succinct and compelling branding and facilitate communication within the United Nations system;

(e) Welcomed the continuing efforts made towards ensuring greater coordination among, and in alignment with, the activities of the Committee of Experts, the five regional committees, the thematic networks and the regional commissions, and other regional cooperation initiatives, such as the Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure, and in this regard emphasized the importance of sharing guides, framework standards and data, in particular in support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and of alignment with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;

(f) Recognized the capacity-building achievements of the recently concluded Caribbean Project for the strengthening of spatial data infrastructures in the Caribbean, thanked the Government of Mexico for its considerable support, and welcomed further capacity-building collaboration in the region, including with the Pan American Institute of Geography and History;

(g) Noted that the plenary meetings of the five regional committees would be convened over the coming intersessional period, and encouraged all Member States thematic networks and stakeholders to participate and contribute actively to such important regional processes and to consider the opportunity of having the plenary meetings of the regional committees and the plenary

meetings of the Group on Earth Observations be co-located to the extent possible.

**Decision 9/103**  
**Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Secretariat, prepared with assistance from the World Bank (E/C.20/2020/6) and the joint efforts of the Secretariat and the World Bank to develop the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, as a basis and guide for developing, integrating and strengthening geospatial information management, and to assist countries in bridging the geospatial digital divide, according to national priorities;

(b) Welcomed the series of extensive and productive expert consultative meetings that had been convened to develop and refine the Implementation Guide in preparation for subsequent and broader global consultations with Member States and other key stakeholders;

(c) Noted that the Implementation Guide of the Framework needed to incorporate and build on the work of the Committee's expert and working groups, including that of the working group on marine geospatial information, in order to avoid duplication, and to consider the marine context in the further development of the Guide;

(d) Noted that the Implementation Guide should have general applicability and contain simple and positive geospatial case studies and reliable examples and that the Guide should be a living document;

(e) Supported the proposed completion and launch of the Implementation Guide at the sixth High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, to be held in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in April 2020;

(f) Suggested that when it came to implementing the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, it was necessary for the Guide to build on existing regional experiences in the implementation of national spatial data infrastructure and to recognize that there was not only one way to implement the Framework;

(g) Commended the efforts of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the World Bank and Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations in implementing the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, in some pilot countries, by developing specific action plans, methods, toolkits and e-learning materials;

(h) Noted the expression of interest by many countries to cooperate closely with the Division and the World Bank in developing model action plans for countries in specific development circumstances, such as those prevailing in small island developing States;

(i) Welcomed the important ongoing efforts undertaken by some developed countries to use the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework as a national organizing framework;

(j) Noted, and welcomed the various offers by countries to contribute to the further development and implementation of the Framework, and in particular noted the offer by Belgium to contribute to its translation;

(k) Stressed the importance of capacity development and resources, including effective financial and institutional support, in the operationalization of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.

**Decision 9/104**  
**Global geodetic reference frame**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Subcommittee on Geodesy (see [E/C.20/2020/7](#)) and the progress made in advancing the elaboration of mechanisms and possible solutions to organize, strengthen and sustain the global geodetic reference frame and to facilitate global geodetic capacity-building, training, education and data-sharing;

(b) Supported the Subcommittee's agreement on the adoption of the International Terrestrial Reference System and the International Terrestrial Reference Frame as the standard for scientific, geospatial and operational geodetic applications;

(c) Commended the efforts of the Subcommittee and those of the governance working group to revise, through broad consultation over the intersessional period, the draft position paper on governance and to explore a number of modalities to balance the longer-term vision, stability and operational requirements of the global geodetic reference frame, including the establishment of a global geodetic centre of excellence in cooperation with the Committee of Experts, subject to the identification of appropriate financial donors;

(d) Noted the offers by Member States to actively contribute to the deliberations for establishing a centre of excellence and the requests by Member States for the Subcommittee to continue to ensure broad consultation on the progression and modalities of the position paper on governance, to establish global cooperation and to acquire a better understanding of how the practical and operational requirements of the frame could be implemented;

(e) Encouraged the Subcommittee to consult further on the practical implementation of the centre, including modalities, function, financial arrangements and programme of work, in direct coordination with the Committee of Experts and in coordination with other relevant geodetic stakeholders, including the International Association of Geodesy, the International Federation of Surveyors and the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees, in order to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of effort;

(f) Noted that the third meeting of the Subcommittee would be convened on the margins of the sixth High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, to be hosted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in April 2020, and encouraged broader participation in the activities of the Subcommittee, in particular from underrepresented regions, especially developing countries, to ensure even geographical representation.

**Decision 9/105**  
**Geospatial information for sustainable development**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

(a) Welcomed the report prepared jointly by the Secretariat and the working group on geospatial information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (see [E/C.20/2020/8](#)), and noted the recent activities of and progress made by the working group;

(b) Emphasized that implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a principal focus of the Committee of Experts, as evidenced by the themes, aims and objectives of its activities, and that the contribution of geospatial information, Earth observations and other relevant data must remain rigorous and relevant;

(c) Noted the concerns of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group to ensure that the working group was sufficiently connected to the statistical community, and requested the Secretariat's assistance to facilitate greater communication between the Inter-Agency and Expert Group and the working group and to strengthen alignment with, and closer cooperation between, the geospatial and statistical communities;

(d) Noted that the Inter-Agency and Expert Group had revised the working group's terms of reference and that the Co-Chairs of the working group had initiated mechanisms to revise its membership and recalibrate its activities;

(e) Welcomed a stronger regional and national collaboration among the geospatial, statistical and other communities towards reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicators, as demonstrated by the work of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe.

#### **Decision 9/106**

##### **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 (see [E/C.20/2020/9](#)), and noted the substantial achievement to support statistical and geospatial integration, to achieve national priorities and global development agendas and to further the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework under the leadership of Australia and Mexico;

(b) Noted the efforts and resources provided by the Expert Group to develop, refine and finalize the Framework, in particular the principle task teams that elaborated on the previously adopted five principles of the Framework;

(c) Welcomed the broad and inclusive global consultation on the draft Framework, which comprised the geospatial and statistical communities within and across developing and developed Member States;

(d) Adopted the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework as an important bridge that enabled a range of data to be integrated from both the geospatial and statistical communities and that, through the application of its five principles and supporting key elements, permitted the production of harmonized, standardized and integrated, geospatially enabled statistical data to facilitate data-driven decision-making;

(e) Encouraged the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees to support Member States in continuing their awareness-raising and promotion activities with regard to the Framework, and urged its implementation, including through the various regional geostatistical integration frameworks and initiatives;

(f) Noted the proposal of the Expert Group to continue its work to develop guidance on and support the promotion, awareness-raising and implementation of the Framework, and its work on statistical geospatial integration and coordination, in particular with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2020 round of population censuses, and encouraged

Member States and other stakeholders to participate in, and contribute to, these important elements;

(g) Noted the work being undertaken by the European Commission on a global harmonized methodology for the delineation of urban and rural areas intended for international comparisons, and also noted that the implementation of the principles of the Framework could support this methodology;

(h) Noted that the next meeting of the Expert Group would be held in October 2019, on the margins of the conference of the European Forum for Geography and Statistics in Manchester, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

#### **Decision 9/107**

##### **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 (see [E/C.20/2020/10](#)), and noted its continued efforts to advocate and raise awareness of the merits and benefits of effective and efficient land administration and management by formulating overarching policy guidance that could be referenced by Member States with regard to the relationship between people and land;

(b) Noted the considerable progress and efforts of the expert group towards formulating and developing a draft framework for effective land administration that would serve as overarching policy guidance for Member States, welcomed that the efforts were undertaken in alignment with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and also welcomed the elaboration of the nine strategic pathways of the Framework as they applied to the land sector;

(c) Welcomed the inclusion of appropriate globally agreed concepts and approaches in the draft framework, and requested the expert group to promote the use of applicable internationally agreed standards, including International Organization for Standardization standard 19152, in order to ensure the interoperable application of geospatial information for effective land administration;

(d) Recognized the need to promote and respect the inherent rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, territories and resources, the recognition of traditions, customs and customary tenures, and to note the importance of land use planning in the draft framework for effective land administration;

(e) Noted that the draft framework was to be periodically reviewed, updated and tailored to suit national circumstances, including the changing and evolving societal, economic, environmental, political and technological landscapes;

(f) Noted the request that the expert group initiate and undertake a broad global consultation process on the draft framework for effective land administration, involving Member States and relevant stakeholders, and that, thereafter, it be completed and provided to the Committee for consideration and adoption at its tenth session, in August 2020.

#### **Decision 9/108**

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

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

(a) Welcomed the report of the working group on marine geospatial information (see [E/C.20/2020/11](#)), and noted its progress, including the initiation of a use case exercise on data availability and interoperability, and the successful convening of its first formal meeting in Busan, Republic of Korea, in March 2019;

(b) Noted that the working group had utilized the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework as a mechanism for articulating and demonstrating national leadership in marine geospatial information and that the nine strategic pathways were means towards implementing integrated marine geospatial information systems in a way that would deliver a vision for sustainable social, economic and environmental development;

(c) In recognizing that marine geospatial information must be made available and accessible for a multiplicity of purposes, invited the working group to consider the variety of marine data sources that might be available, and in this regard to consider capacity development activities to strengthen marine geospatial information capabilities in developing countries and small island developing States;

(d) Noted the working group's updated workplan for the biennium 2019–2020, and requested that the group 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 participation of the International Hydrographic Organization and the Open Geospatial Consortium had strengthened the working group's commitment to promoting geospatial standards, including the S-100 suite of standards, and looked forward to the preparation of a practical guide for the use of geospatial standards in marine data;

(f) Requested the working group to consider extending the use case exercise to a broader audience beyond the working group so as to promote a better understanding of the challenges and issues the working group needed to address, including to provide real-world examples of the benefits of and need for readily available and accessible marine geospatial information;

(g) Encouraged broader geographic participation from Member States in the working group, including from Africa and small island developing States;

(h) Noted that the working group's terms of reference included the consideration of coastal zones, inland waterways and water bodies, and to facilitate integrated ecosystems geospatial data management practices.

#### **Decision 9/109**

##### **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 ([E/C.20/2020/12](#)), and the efforts of the working group, under the leadership of Jamaica and the Philippines, in advancing, critical issues related to geospatial information and services for disasters;

(b) Emphasized that the use of geospatial information and services for the effective management of all disasters was critically important and that reliable, relevant, accessible and interoperable geospatial information and services should be available across all phases of disaster risk reduction and management and at all levels of government;

(c) Noted the suggestions for the working group to consider in its future work:

- (i) Mechanisms to review its operational modalities;
- (ii) Linkages to other international initiatives and actors in disaster risk reduction and management;
- (iii) Implementation and awareness-raising of the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters;
- (iv) Support for the Statistical Commission to advance disaster-related statistics;
- (v) Design and implementation of scenario-based exercises on different hazards, including predictive modelling to test and improve the Strategic Framework;
- (vi) Ensuring the accessibility and capacity of geospatial information and services in times of disasters;
- (vii) Alignment of its work with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;

(d) Commended the working group on the preparation of the assessment survey on the Strategic Framework and the subsequent consultations held thereon through the regional committees, and in this regard endorsed the survey as a tool to help Member States to develop national implementation plans for geospatial information and services in support of disaster risk reduction and management;

(e) Encouraged the working group to continue its efforts towards aligning its messages with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework in the implementation of its Strategic Framework and towards ensuring greater coordination and collaboration with the activities of the regional committees and thematic networks of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, the regional commissions, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Open Geospatial Consortium and the Group on Earth Observations;

(f) Commended the Philippines, as outgoing Co-Chair of the working group, for its leadership and substantial contribution towards developing the Strategic Framework and towards the subsequent adoption of the Framework by the Economic and Social Council in resolution [2018/14](#) of 2 July 2018, and welcomed Japan as Co-Chair of the working group, together with Jamaica.

#### **Decision 9/110**

##### **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 (see [E/C.20/2020/13](#)) and commended the valuable activities and significant progress made to systematically address complex legal and policy issues in geospatial information management;

(b) Noted with appreciation the contribution of the working group to the development of the Implementation Guide of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and in this regard welcomed the document entitled “Guidance and recommended actions aligned with strategic pathway 2: policy and legal”, which underpins the strategic pathway;

(c) Encouraged the working group to consider learning and development activities related to the implementation of the strategic pathway on policy and legal frameworks;

(d) Noted the progress of the working group's use case exercise and the initial observations and findings, and also noted that the findings needed to consider national legal circumstances and the evolving technological landscape and be contrasted with the varying development contexts, including where there were insufficient legal and policy frameworks;

(e) Encouraged the working group to consider appropriate and applicable options and solutions together with proven practices, including that of the Arctic Spatial Data Infrastructure, to support the development of robust, sound and enabling legal and policy frameworks that optimized the application and value of geospatial information and the implementation of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;

(f) Requested the working group to consider the issue of the custodianship and authority of geospatial data, the need to strike a balance between security and privacy, the open use of geospatial data and to account for cultural and legal differences and diversity;

(g) Encouraged broader geographic representation and participation in the working group, in particular from the underrepresented United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees;

(h) Noted the working group's updated workplan for the biennium 2019–2020, which included the preparation of a white paper to address the issues and findings from the use case to provide guidance for its future work and to address, in an integrated manner, legal and policy considerations for the successful implementation of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.

#### **Decision 9/111**

##### **Global fundamental geospatial data themes**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe ([E/C.20/2020/14](#)), prepared on behalf of the working group on global fundamental geospatial data themes, and commended the regional committee and the working group, under the technical leadership of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for their efforts to support the advancement of the 14 global fundamental geospatial data themes;

(b) Noted the alignment of the 14 data themes with the broader work programme of the Committee of Experts, including the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, and the efforts of the working group to take into consideration the particular needs of developing countries with regard to measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals;

(c) Urged the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees, the Subcommittee on Geodesy, and the expert and working groups to support the implementation of the fundamental data themes;

(d) Expressed its appreciation and congratulated the Regional Committee and the working group for their leadership in developing the 14 data



themes and commended the working group for having successfully achieved its objectives and completed its tasks;

(e) Noted the suggestion to consider a working group on global geological big data to integrate accessible and reliable geological data in order to build upon the global fundamental geospatial data themes and to support the Sustainable Development Goals.

#### **Decision 9/112**

##### **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 (see [E/C.20/2020/15](#)), and noted the significant efforts of the group to document implementation steps, known practices and recommendations of national institutional arrangements;

(b) Commended the working group for its preparation of the *Foundational Guide to National Institutional Arrangement Instruments for Geospatial Information Management (Asia-Pacific)*, and noted that the group elaborated therein on the options, principles and instruments for delivering national institutional arrangements;

(c) Acknowledged the valuable efforts of the working group to align and integrate the *Foundational Guide* and the group's programme of work on institutional arrangements, which preceded but contributed to the rapid progress in developing the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and strategic pathway 1, on governance and institutions, of the Implementation Guide of the Framework;

(d) Recommended that the valuable body of work on institutional arrangements be transitioned into the further development of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework in order to make best use of expertise and the limited collective resources and to maximize efficiency;

(e) Also recommended that further work on national institutional arrangements be undertaken at the regional level, as appropriate, so that the results and expertise of the working group can be made available to as many Member States as possible, taking into account specific regional institutional requirements and contexts.

#### **Decision 9/113**

##### **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 (see [E/C.20/2020/16](#)), and expressed its appreciation to the three standards development organizations, namely, the Open Geospatial Consortium, the technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization and the International Hydrographic Organization for their continuing support and valuable work;

(b) Noted with appreciation the many diverse and collaborative standards development and implementation activities carried out by the three organizations in the global geospatial information management community;

(c) Welcomed the ongoing contribution of the three organizations in the development of guidance and recommended actions on the standards pathway for the Implementation Guide of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;

(d) Requested the three organizations to continue to liaise and work with Member States on developing and adopting technical standards and to keep the Committee informed of their ongoing work regarding the use of geospatial standards in supporting the implementation of national geospatial data and systems, the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the measurement and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(e) Encouraged the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees, thematic networks and working groups to continue to improve knowledge, raise awareness about and engage in the development and promotion of internationally agreed and open geospatial standards.

#### **Decision 9/114**

#### **Collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

(a) Welcomed the report prepared by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (see [E/C.20/2020/17](#)), and acknowledged the efforts of the Group of Experts to strengthen its relationship with the Committee and to identify items for collaborative work;

(b) Affirmed the importance of strengthened collaboration between the Committee and the Group of Experts, and noted the special role that the Group had to play in the specialized areas of geographic names, including on romanization, linguistics, culture and history;

(c) Acknowledged the importance of regular communications between the Bureau of the Committee and the Bureau of the Group of Experts to support the development of their respective strategic plans and the creation of geographical names authorities where they do not presently exist;

(d) Noted that strengthened collaboration and mutual representation between the Committee and the Group of Experts was most effective at the national level, and encouraged increased communication between geospatial information management authorities and geographical names authorities;

(e) Suggested for consideration possible areas of collaborative work at the global level, which would include supporting the development of relevant strategic pathways of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, capacity-building, and education and research initiatives, including with the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Academic Network.

#### **Decision 9/115**

#### **Programme management report**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management noted the oral report delivered by a representative of the Secretariat on the programme management of the Committee.

## Chapter II

### Items for endorsement, discussion and decision

#### A. Strengthening of geospatial information management

3. At its 1st meeting, on 7 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 3. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the strengthening of geospatial information management (E/C.20/2020/4),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management of the Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.

4. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Ireland (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Sweden, Mexico, Fiji, Singapore, Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

5. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

6. Also at the 1st meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

#### Action taken by the Committee of Experts

7. At the 6th meeting, on 9 August, statements were made by the representatives of Austria, the Bahamas, Cameroon, Canada and Guyana. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/101).

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

8. At its 1st and 2nd meetings, on 7 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 4. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda (E/C.20/2020/5).<sup>1</sup> Introductory statements were made by the Chairs of four regional committees and the Secretary-General of one regional committee.

9. At the 2nd meeting, on 7 August, introductory statements were made by the Chairs of the four United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management networks.

10. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Barbados, Australia, Mexico, Japan, Egypt, Iceland, Cameroon, the United States of America, Tonga, Oman, Belgium, Greece, Senegal and Morocco.

11. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of ECLAC.

12. Also at the 2nd meeting, statements were made by the observer for the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History, and the representative of the International Federation of Surveyors, a non-governmental organization having consultative status with the Council.

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<sup>1</sup> The full-length report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts at [http://ggim.un.org/ggim\\_committee.html](http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html).

13. At the same meeting, the Director of the Statistics Division made a statement, and the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

14. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August 2019, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/102).

**C. Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

15. At its 1st meeting, on 7 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 5. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (E/C.20/2020/6).<sup>1</sup> The Global Director for the Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience and Land Global Practice of the World Bank made a presentation.

16. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of India, Sweden, Chile, Australia, Ireland, Slovenia, Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Barbados, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (also on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Fiji, the Bahamas, the United States of America, Belgium, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Tonga, Morocco, the Philippines and Cameroon (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa).

17. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of ECLAC.

18. Also at the 1st meeting, statements were made by the observers for EuroGeographics, the International Association of Geodesy and the World Geospatial Industry Council.

19. At the same meeting, the Director of the Statistics Division summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

20. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, a statement was made by the representative of Austria. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/103).

**D. Global geodetic reference frame**

21. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, on 7 and 8 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 6. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the global geodetic reference frame (E/C.20/2020/7),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Co-Chair of the Subcommittee on Geodesy.

22. At the same meetings, statements were made by the representatives of Norway, Fiji, Argentina, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Denmark, France, the United States of America, Finland, Germany, Australia, Sweden (also on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Jamaica, Tonga, Belgium, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Saudi Arabia, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), Ireland, Tuvalu, Costa Rica, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Indonesia, Ethiopia and Morocco.

23. At the 3rd meeting, statements were made by the observers for EuroGeographics and the International Association of Geodesy.

24. At the same meeting, the Co-Chair of the Subcommittee on Geodesy responded to the comments made and questions posed, and the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

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

25. At the 6th meeting, on 9 August, statements were made by the representatives of France, Denmark, Austria, Lebanon and Belgium. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/104).

### **E. Geospatial information for sustainable development**

26. At its 3rd meeting, on 8 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 7. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on geospatial information for sustainable development (E/C.20/2020/8),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management and the Co-Chair of the working group on geospatial information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators.

27. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of India, Australia, Denmark, Spain (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Sweden, Mexico, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), Egypt, Canada, Saudi Arabia and Italy.

28. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of ECLAC.

29. Also at the 3rd meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

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

30. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August 2019, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/105).

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

31. At its 3rd meeting, on 8 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 8. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information (E/C.20/2020/9),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by both Co-Chairs of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information.

32. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Slovenia (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Ireland, the United States of America, India, Austria, Finland, Germany, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), Sweden, Argentina, Australia, Egypt, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Gabon, Ecuador, Colombia, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, and Costa Rica.

33. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the observer for the European Union.

34. Also at the 3rd meeting, a statement was made by the representative of ECLAC.

35. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the observer for Esri.

36. 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**

37. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/106).

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

38. At its 3rd meeting, on 8 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 9. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the application of geospatial information related to land administration and management (E/C.20/2020/10),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Co-Chair of the expert group on land administration and management.

39. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Azerbaijan, Guyana, Fiji, India, Germany, Finland, Timor-Leste, Italy (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Sweden, Tonga, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Sri Lanka, Gabon and Saudi Arabia.

40. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the observer for EuroGeographics and the representative of the International Federation of Surveyors, a non-governmental organization having consultative status with the Council.

41. Also at the 3rd meeting, the Senior Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

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

42. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/107).

### **H. Marine geospatial information**

43. At its 4th meeting, on 8 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 10. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on marine geospatial information (E/C.20/2020/11),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Co-Chair of the working group on marine geospatial information.

44. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Slovenia (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Norway, Tonga, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Jamaica, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), Australia, Singapore, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Canada and Spain.

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

46. Also at the 4th meeting, the Senior Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

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

47. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/108).

### **I. Geospatial information and services for disasters**

48. At its 5th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 11. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on geospatial information and services for disasters (E/C.20/2020/12),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Co-Chair of the working group on geospatial information and services for disasters.

49. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Sweden, Jamaica, Germany, China, Thailand, Poland, Fiji, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (also on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Italy, Barbados, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), Gabon, Peru, Japan and Indonesia.

50. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of ECLAC.

51. Also at the 5th meeting, statements were made by the observers for the Open Geospatial Consortium and EuroGeographics. A statement was also made by the representative of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Academic Network.

52. 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**

53. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, statements were made by the representatives of the Philippines, Japan and China. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/109).

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

54. At its 4th meeting, on 8 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 12. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data (E/C.20/2020/13),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Chair of the working group on legal and policy frameworks for geospatial information management.

55. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of India, Slovenia (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), the United States of America, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Australia, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

56. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the observer for EuroGeographics.

57. Also at the 4th meeting, the Senior Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

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

58. At the 6th meeting, on 9 August, a statement was made by the representative of Norway. Subsequently, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision, as orally revised (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/110).

### **K. Global fundamental geospatial data themes**

59. At its 4th meeting, on 8 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 13. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on global fundamental geospatial data themes (E/C.20/2020/14),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Chair of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe.

60. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Sweden, China, Ireland, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), Denmark, Belgium and Spain (also on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe).

61. 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**

62. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/111).

### **L. National institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management**

63. At its 5th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 14. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on national institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management (E/C.20/2020/15),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Chair of the working group on trends in national institutional arrangements in geospatial information management.

64. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Belgium, Jamaica, India, Japan, Sweden, Spain (also on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), the United States of America, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), Denmark, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ireland, Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

65. 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**

66. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/112).

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

67. At its 4th meeting, on 8 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 15. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on the implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community (E/C.20/2020/16),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced by the Secretary-General of the International Hydrographic Organization.

68. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Mozambique, Italy (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Austria, Sweden, Australia, Saudi Arabia, India, Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Fiji and Canada.

69. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the representative of the International Organization for Standardization, a non-governmental organization having consultative status with the Council, and the observers for EuroGeographics and the Open Geospatial Consortium.

70. Also at the 4th meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

71. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/113).

**N. Collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

72. At its 5th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 16. It had before it a note by the Secretariat on collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (E/C.20/2020/17),<sup>1</sup> which was introduced on behalf of the Chair of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

73. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Belgium, Sweden, Japan, Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe), Senegal (on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa), Sri Lanka, Oman and Indonesia.

74. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of ECLAC.

75. Also at the 5th meeting, the Interregional Adviser on Global Geospatial Information Management summarized the main points of the discussion.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

76. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/114).

**O. Programme management report**

77. At its 5th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 17. The Director of the Statistics Division gave an oral report on the programme management activities and issues related to the Committee of Experts and its work programme, including an assessment of the need for resources and to set priorities for its many activities that were supported by the Secretariat, and in that context expressed the commitment of the Committee to focusing on the implementation of its activities and to ensuring better coordination and coherence in their implementation in order to enable the Secretariat to effectively advance the global geospatial information management agenda. In the report, it was noted that several events and activities were planned for 2020, including the tenth session of the Committee, the sixth High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, the release of the next edition of the future trends report of the Committee, intensified efforts to operationalize the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and efforts to further advance capacity and capability development through a global geospatial knowledge and innovation centre.

78. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the representative of Belgium.

79. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the Statistics Division responded to the comments made and questions posed.

**Action taken by the Committee of Experts**

80. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft decision (see chap. I, sect. B, decision 9/115).

## Chapter III

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

81. At its 5th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts considered agenda item 18. It had before it a document containing the draft provisional agenda for the tenth session of the Committee of Experts ([E/C.20/2020/L.1](#)). The Director of the Statistics Division made an introductory statement.

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

82. At its 5th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts approved the draft provisional agenda for its tenth session and entrusted the Bureau with streamlining and finalizing it. The Committee decided to recommend it to the Economic and Social Council for approval (see chap. I, sect. A).

83. At the same meeting, the Committee of Experts decided to recommend to the Council that the tenth session of the Committee be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 5 to 7 August 2020 (see chap. I, sect. A).

## Chapter IV

### **Report of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on its ninth session**

84. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts considered item 19 of its agenda.

85. At the same meeting, the Rapporteur introduced the draft report of the Committee on its ninth session ([E/C.20/2020/L.2](#)), together with an informal paper containing draft decisions.

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

86. At its 6th meeting, on 9 August, the Committee of Experts adopted the draft report on its ninth 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

87. The Committee of Experts held its ninth session from 7 to 9 August 2019 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Committee held six meetings (1st to 6th).

#### B. Election of officers

88. At its 1st meeting, on 7 August, the Committee of Experts elected the following officers by acclamation:

*Co-Chairs:*

Fernand Guy Isseri (Cameroon)  
Dorine Burmanje (Netherlands)  
Rosamond Bing (Tonga)

*Rapporteur:*

Macarena Pérez Garcia (Chile)

#### C. Agenda and organization of work

89. At its 1st meeting, on 7 August, the Committee of Experts adopted its provisional agenda, as contained in document [E/C.20/2020/1](#). The agenda read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Strengthening of 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.
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. Programme management report.
  18. Provisional agenda and dates for the tenth session of the Committee of Experts.
  19. Report of the Committee of Experts on its ninth session.
90. At the same meeting, the Committee of Experts approved the organization of work for the session, as contained in document [E/C.20/2020/2](#).

#### **D. Attendance**

91. The session was attended by 446 participants, including 332 representatives from 94 Member States and 1 representative from 1 non-member State. Also present were 113 representatives of organizations of the United Nations system as well as representatives of 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).

92. The Committee of Experts also invited the following organizations to participate in the work of the session as observers: American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing; Booz Allen Hamilton; CARTO; Centre for Spatial Law and Policy; Clinton Health Access Initiative, Inc.; College of Charleston/Dublin Business School; Columbia University; ConsultingWhere; DataWorld; Digital Globe; Esri; EuroGeographics; Geospatial Frameworks; Geospatial Media and Communications Pvt. Ltd.; GeoTechVision; GeoThings; Global Innovations Holdings, Inc.; Global Resources Management Consultancy, Inc.; Group on Earth Observations secretariat; Health GeoLab Collaborative; International Association of Geodesy; International Cartographic Association; Jeju National University; Kokusai Kogyo Co., Ltd.; Leuven University; Location International, Ltd.; Lynker Technologies; National Society of Professional Surveyors, United States; National Technical University of Athens; OceanWise; Open Geospatial Consortium; Oracle; Pan-American Institute of Geography and History; PASCO Corporation; Riegl; Sen; Spatial Vision; Sustainable Development Solutions Network; Taylor & Francis Group; Ter Haar Geoinnovation Limited; Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi; Tim Trainor, Consultant; TomTom; Trimble; University of Maine; University of Melbourne; University of Mexico; University of Twente; Vital Wave; and World Geospatial Industry Council.

#### **E. Documentation**

93. The documents before the Committee of Experts at its ninth 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).

