



Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management¹

1. Mandate

- 1.1 The establishment of the UN-GGIM Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management² was decided at the seventh Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) from 2 - 4 August 2017.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Working Group are to:

- 2.1 Play a leading role in raising awareness and highlighting the importance of sound policy and legal framework for geospatial information management at the highest levels in order to promote development, innovation, production consumption, distribution of geospatial information in the midst of rapidly changing societal norms towards access to Big Data and other types of information;
- 2.2 Explore appropriate policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management proactively, taking into consideration that good policy and legal frameworks will evolve over time, and respond to societal progress and technological developments; and
- 2.3 Support the Committee of Experts in the development of norms, principles and guides, including any regional capacity development initiatives, to significantly increase the availability and accessibility of geospatial information so as to create high-quality, timely and reliable products and services from geospatial information to address the Sustainable Development goals and other critical local, national, regional and international issues.

3. Functions

The functions of the Working Group will be to:

- 3.1 Provide a forum for dialogue and coordination between member states, United Nations System, and relevant stakeholders with a view to –
- i) Encourage enhanced global cooperation in addressing policy and legal issues in geospatial information management;

¹ The Committee of Experts, through its decision 10/110 at its tenth session in 2020, endorsed the name change to the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management

² Paragraph 34 of the Report of the Working Group to the tenth session of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/10th-Session/documents/E-C.20-2020-32-Add_1-Legal-and-Policy-Frameworks-17Jul2020.pdf)



- ii) Engage issues relating to the collection, use, privacy, provenance and accessibility of data, including issues related to the use of unmanned systems, smart cities and potentially intrusive sensors and devices;
 - iii) Consider and provide guidance on potential policy and legal implications associated with delivering timely and reliable geospatial data that is required to be nationally disaggregated by a number of metrics including, income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics in support of national development priorities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
 - iv) Consider and develop mechanisms to enable effective and efficient governance, sharing and application of geospatial information and the integration of geospatial information with other information and from volunteered sources towards a national integrative information system for the accomplishment of national development aspirations as well as common goals for sustainable development regionally and globally;
 - v) Develop and provide guidance on sound policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management including initially, working on issues for the licensing of geospatial information to promote data availability and data sharing; and
 - vi) Develop guidance and support any regional capacity development initiatives related to policy and legal framework for geospatial information management.
- 3.2 A key undertaking is to develop and implement a strategy for advocacy and engagement processes on policy and legal issues among relevant parties; and
- 3.3 Propose work programs, informed by broad global consultation, to address the main area of focus identified by Member States while ensuring that there are no overlaps or duplication of initiatives.

4. Membership, Composition and Term of Office

- 4.1 The Working Group will comprise representatives nominated by Member States from their geospatial, statistical and legal communities who are knowledgeable and experienced in the work of the Group. To ensure broad expertise and effectiveness, subject matter experts from the United Nations System, international organisation and the wider legal and information technology communities should be drawn into the Group.
- 4.2 The Working Group will select two members as co-Chairs and any other position as deemed necessary to support the work of the Group. The co-Chairs will serve for two (2) years and should the work continue beyond two (2) years, the Working Group may retain existing co-Chairs or elect new co-Chairs for another two (2) years. In normal circumstances, co-Chairs should not serve more than two consecutive two (2) year terms.



- 4.3 Should the need arise, the Working Group may establish sub-groups or task teams to work on particular aspects of its work programme. All sub-groups or task teams must have defined deliverables, delivery milestones and are established with a fixed duration. All sub-groups or task teams must bring its task to a satisfactory conclusion no later than the annual session of the Committee of Experts.
- 4.4 The Working Group will liaise, as required, with international organisations that have an interest in policy and legal matters in geospatial information management and invite their nominated experts as observers.

5. Reporting Procedure

- 5.1 The Working Group will report to the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management at its annual session and this will include the preparation of written reports and background documents from time to time.

6. Frequency of Meetings

- 6.1 The Working Group will operate virtually and meet when the opportunity arises in concurrence with related UN-GGIM events.

7. Governance

- 7.1 The UN-GGIM Bureau will review and evaluate the work of the Working Group from time to time, may proposed to UN-GGIM revision of the terms of reference based on the accomplishments of the Working Group and any new items that UN-GGIM would like the Working Group to address.

8. Secretariat

- 8.1 The United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs will serve as the permanent Secretariat of the Working Group. It will provide the day-to-day management and coordination when necessary, and undertake internal and external communication on behalf of the Working Group.
- 8.2 The co-Chairs will coordinate, monitor and report on the activities of any sub-group or task teams to the UN-GGIM Bureau and the Secretariat.
- 8.3 In co-operation with the co-Chairs, the Secretariat will coordinate and assist with the organisation and preparation of the agenda for the meetings of the Working Group, issue notices and any other support activities deemed necessary.

(October 2017)

