

Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information Work Plan for 2023 - 2024

1. Background

Water is at the core of sustainable development and is critical for socio-economic development, energy and food production, healthy ecosystems and for human survival itself. Water is also at the heart of adaptation to climate change, serving as the crucial link between society, the global economy and the environment. Approximately 70% of the Earth's surface is water, inland water bodies, rivers and tributaries, seas and oceans, it is estimated that more than three billion people depend on the seas and oceans for their primary source of protein. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has estimated that 90% of the world's trade is carried upon seas and oceans.

Marine geospatial information including information on inland water bodies, rivers and tributaries is needed to support the administration, management and governance of these environments to meet the demand for critical analysis when questions arise pertaining to the governance, management and coordination of these environments and the resources. Such needs include information on spaces for recreation, telecommunication and transportation and for natural resources yielding food, medicine, energy and minerals. The information gathered will play a vital role in addressing issues, challenges and opportunities in oceans and seas, coastal zones, deltas and tributaries, inland waters and water bodies, and in supporting national development and strategic priorities and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

At its sixth session in August 2016, the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) recognized the need to consider the marine environment, namely, shorelines, coastal waters, seas and oceans, as a key component of the spatial data infrastructure that underpins the administration, management and governance of land and marine spaces, and the national geospatial resources of many littoral Member States. In addition to the UN-GGIM Decision 7/111 that endorsed the terms of reference and established the Working Group, this work plan recognizes two recent calls to action as foundational to its goals:

The United Nations General Assembly's resolution 72/73 (December 2017) recognized that hydrographic surveys and nautical charting are critical to the safety of navigation and life at sea, environmental protection, including the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems, and the economics of the global shipping industry, and encouraging further efforts towards electronic charting, which not only provides significantly increased benefits for safe navigation and management of ship movement, but also provides data and information that can be used for sustainable fisheries activities and other sectoral uses of the marine environment, the delimitation of maritime boundaries and environmental protection; and

The United Nations General Assembly in July 2010 recognized the human right to water and sanitation. The Assembly recognized the right of every human being to have access to sufficient water for personal and domestic uses.









2. Introduction

UN-GGIM, at its Twelfth session noted that the work plan for 2023 – 2024 would continue raising awareness, providing guidance and encouraging the availability and accessibility of marine geospatial information for the wellbeing of society, environment and economy, address climate-related challenges and leave no one behind. UN-GGIM also noted that Operational Framework



for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management (UN-IGIF-Hydro) being developed to provide practical guidance for countries to extend the nine strategic pathways of UN-IGIF into the marine environment, and to enhance the ability to make informed decisions to support the preservation and management of the marine resources. UN-GGIM further noted that the updated work plan would seek to address issues related to the land-sea interface and coastal zones; integration of the maritime, terrestrial and cadastral domains; promoting the use of established standards; and strengthening collaboration, partnerships, engagement and capacity development including with the International Hydrographic Organization, the Open Geospatial Consortium, the IHO-Singapore Innovation and Technology Laboratory, the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans Seabed 2030 project and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

The work plan supports ECOSOC resolution 2022/24 (July 2022) aiming to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of UN-GGIM, particularly for the achievement the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, to strengthen and ensure its continued effectiveness and benefits to all Member States.

SDGs with interest in marine geospatial information								
								

Working Group’s objectives as stated in the Terms of Reference:

- play a leading role at the policy level by raising political awareness and highlighting the importance of reliable; timely and fit-for-purpose marine geospatial information to support the administration, management, and governance of the marine and ocean environments.
- encourage the use of internationally agreed-upon geospatial information frameworks, schemas, systems and established standards to improve the growing inter-dependent relationships between people and the marine environments; and
- support the UN-GGIM in the development of norms, principles, guides and standards to significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable geospatial information including any regional capacity development initiatives

3. Goals for the Work Plan 2023-2024

Building the foundation to ensure that standardized, accessible, and easy to apply marine geospatial information is available for policy development and decision making will have to be a coordinated effort that unfolds in many steps. The work plan continues to take a graduated approach to presenting a path toward managing and promoting the utility of marine geospatial information. It continues with roll-over tasks from the previous work plan that can be completed in the short term and are critical toward delivering the business of the working group. It then offers steps that are more long term in nature and those that are ongoing. The work plan strives to support the UN-GGIM’s mandated objectives as they relate to the marine environment (including inland waters and water bodies) within the global geospatial information management ecosystem:



Leadership	Coordination	Capacity Development	Standards	Inclusion
Provide Leadership in setting the agenda for the development of global geospatial information and to promote its use to address key global challenges	Provide a forum for coordination and dialogue with and among Member States and relevant international organizations on enhanced cooperation	Provide a platform for the development of effective strategies to build and strengthen national capacity and capability concerning geospatial information, especially in developing countries	Propose work-plans, frameworks and guidelines to promote common principles, policies, methods, standards and mechanisms for the interoperability and use of geospatial data and services	Make joint decisions and set the direction for the production and use of geospatial information within and across national, regional and global policy frameworks



4. Activities and deliverables

Goal	Timeline/ Status	Action	Expected Outcome	Person/Area Responsible	Comments Level of effort and impact
1 Coordination	<i>Ongoing</i>	Liaise with relevant organizations and coordination bodies	<i>Maintain network of organizations with complementary objectives</i>	<i>Co-Chairs</i>	Easy Supports Requests from UN-GGIM
2 Capacity Development and Inclusion	<i>Ongoing</i>	Work with IHO Joint Capacity Building Working Group to coordinate capacity development initiatives that could benefit from WG's expertise	<i>Help the WG focus on work that will support capacity development</i>	<i>IHO Joint Capacity Building Working Group, All Member States</i>	Moderate
3 Leadership, Coordination, Capacity Development and Inclusion	<i>Ongoing</i>	Liaise with and participate in plenary meetings of regional committees of UN-GGIM to raise awareness and promote the objectives, functions and activities of the Working Group	<i>Increased cooperation at the regional level and increased opportunity to raise awareness including UN-IGIF-Hydro and engage in capacity development</i>	<i>Co-Chairs</i>	Moderate Helps with future direction
4 Leadership, Coordination, Standards	<i>Ongoing</i>	Recognize and endorse established standards for marine geospatial information – formalize in 'UN-IGIF-Hydro' ¹	<i>Users of geospatial information will have a single reference for internationally recognized standards in marine and inland waters</i>	<i>Ad hoc Task Group</i>	Easy Important for Standards and a foundation for WG
5 Leadership, Coordination, Standards	2023	Submit a joint proposal to the IHO-Singapore Innovation and Technology Laboratory together with Expert Group on Land Administration and Management, the IHO-MSDIWG and OGC-MDWG exploring the land-sea interface and the integration of terrestrial, maritime and cadastral domains	<i>Engages Member States to coordinate and address key global geospatial challenge on the integration of relevant domains at the land-sea interface.</i>	<i>Ad hoc Task Group</i>	Moderate High Impact

¹ The Working Group has embarked on a body of work to leverage the UN-IGIF and its Implementation Guide and explain/expound the need for integrated marine geospatial information to be readily available and accessible for national development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals.



6 Leadership, Coordination, Standards	2023 - 2024	Produce paper or publication that promotes understanding of the land-sea interface and issues of integration to provide solutions leveraging UN-IGIF and UN-IGIF-Hydro to address societal, environmental and economic challenges, and the many facets of land-sea interface including the integration of physical and human geography	<i>Users of geospatial information will have a single reference for working with land and sea datasets including inland tributary hydrographic data</i>	<i>Collaborate with the Expert Group on Land Administration and the IHO-Singapore Innovation and Technology Laboratory</i>	Difficult High Impact
7 Leadership, Coordination, Standards	2024	As part of the 'UN-IGIF-Hydro', develop understanding (and subsequently provide guidance) to connect any marine spatial data infrastructure to the national spatial data infrastructure, and to ensure the principle of "build once, use many times"	<i>The integration of any marine spatial data infrastructure into the jurisdiction's national spatial data infrastructure and national geospatial information system provides immense benefits to Member States</i>	<i>All Member States, Co-Chairs</i>	Difficult High Impact
8 Leadership, Capacity Development and Inclusion	Ongoing	Organize side events and open meetings at annual sessions of UN-GGIM	<i>Providing a forum for exchange and dialogue with and among Member States, sharing knowledge and promoting understanding of good practices and experiences</i>	<i>Co-Chairs</i>	Moderate Helps with future direction
9 Leadership, Coordination	2023	Leverage the 'UN-IGIF-Hydro' to explain and expound to implementors of the UN-IGIF, as well as to provide guidance to address issues and ensure that the watered/marine aspect is addressed when operationalizing the UN-IGIF at the country-level	<i>The 'UN-IGIF-Hydro' as a reference and guidance when operationalizing the UN-IGIF at the country-level, and to include IHO/ISO/OGC standards, maritime limits and boundaries and integrated ecosystems-based data management</i>	<i>Co-Chairs, IHO-Singapore Technology and Innovation Laboratory</i>	Difficult High Impact
10 Leadership, Capacity, Coordination, Development and Inclusion	2023	Complete one UN-IGIF-Hydro pilot implementation project in the South Pacific region	<i>Engages Member State with the goal of collecting feedback or gaining consensus on the UN-IGIF-Hydro prior to seeking full endorsement by the Committee of Experts</i>	<i>Co-Chairs</i>	Moderate High Impact
11 Leadership, Capacity, Coordination, Development and Inclusion	2Q2023	Finalize UN-IGIF-Hydro Part Two and subject the draft to a global consultation process involving Member States and relevant stakeholder	<i>Engages Member States with the goal of collecting feedback or gaining consensus on the UN-IGIF-Hydro prior to seeking full endorsement by the Committee of Experts</i>	<i>Co-Chairs</i>	Moderate High Impact



12 Leadership, Capacity, Coordination, Development and Inclusion	3Q2023	Finalize the UN-IGIF-Hydro Part Two and provide to the Thirteenth Session for consideration and endorsement	<i>Engages Member States with the goal of collecting feedback or gaining consensus on the UN-IGIF-Hydro prior to seeking full endorsement by the Committee of Experts</i>	Co-Chairs	Moderate High Impact
13 Leadership, Coordination, Inclusion	2023 - 2024	Produce UN-IGIF-Hydro Outreach Package including a generic presentation	<i>Engages Member States with the goal of enhancing cooperation with other relevant stakeholders</i>	Co-Chairs	Moderate High Impact



5. Activity and Meeting Schedule

For 2023

Activities		Time and deadlines
Reporting to UN-GGIM	Summary	Mid-May
	Report	End-June
13 th Session of UN-GGIM 2 – 4 August, 2023	Side event	August 2023
	Open meeting with delegates	August 2023
Meetings of the Working Group	Fourth Expert Meeting (face-to-face)	Jan/Feb 2023
	online meeting	June 2023
	in-person meeting (on the margins of the Thirteenth Session)	August 2023
	online meeting	October 2023

For 2024

Activities		Time and deadlines
Reporting to UN-GGIM	Summary	Mid-May
	Report	End-June
14 th Session of UN-GGIM	Side event	August 2024
	Open meeting with delegates	August 2024
Meetings of the Working Group	Online meeting	January 2024
	Fifth expert meeting (face- to-face and to be confirmed)	Feb/Mar 2024
	Online meeting	June 2024
	Online meeting	October 2024

(February 2023)

