

# Work plan for the period 2023 - 2025

## 1) Background

Geospatial information is needed to support decisions and actions to achieve national priorities and development goals as well as global agendas and their goals.

Global Agendas	The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development					National priorities, development agendas and transformation programs
	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway	Addis Ababa Action Agenda	Paris Agreement on Climate Change	New Urban Agenda (Habitat III)	

However, there are commonly experienced challenges regarding the availability, accessibility, sharing, use and management of geospatial information, across various levels of society. In addition, there is increasing demand for guidance on governance and related instruments within Member States, and to address regional and international applications in shared areas such as the Arctic and the open seas that are beyond the jurisdiction of individual Member States.

Appropriate and effective policy and legal frameworks on geospatial information management can proactively support the development, management and efficient use of geospatial information in decision-making for the public good. The ultimate goal for any effective policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management is to maximize the utility and value of geospatial information with due consideration for privacy, confidentiality, security and risks. The United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) includes and advocates for sound and robust policy and legal frameworks, as the second of nine strategic pathways, to achieve the goals around enriched societal value and benefits, effective geospatial information management, and an economic return on investment.

At its twelfth session, from 3 to 5 August 2022, the Committee of Experts adopted Decision 12/112, in which it commended the progress made and the successful leadership transition from Australia and Sweden to Canada at the beginning of 2022, and in that regard, expressed its appreciation to Australia and Sweden for their leadership and contributions. The Committee of Experts noted the continuing efforts of the Working Group to align its workplan and activities with the UN-IGIF through the completion of the policy and legal resource kit, which includes model legal instruments (including an agreement, a policy and legislation) to which Member States could refer and, where appropriate, adapt and tailor to their national circumstances when implementing the Framework and improving data sharing and exchange at the country level.

The Committee of Experts recognized that the policy and legal issues that relate to the availability, accessibility and application of geospatial information are complex, and welcomed the Working Group's continuing consideration of feasible solutions to real-world problems and the need for effective policy and legal frameworks that ensure lawful, transparent and real-world solutions in order to create preconditions for trust in the new digital era that characterizes our world today.

The Committee of Experts noted the progress in addressing the issue of authoritative data, authority and custodianship by exploring the various ways that authoritative data had been described and applied, domain-specific understandings and applications of authoritative data, and policy and legal



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considerations for developing national authoritative data governance frameworks that respect unique national circumstances and legal systems.

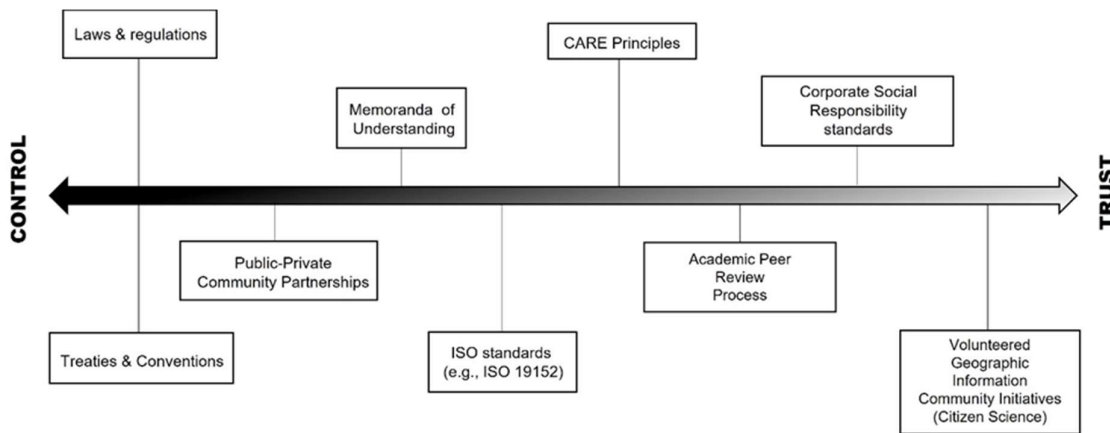
The Committee of Experts also appreciated the Working Group’s consideration of the ethical use of geospatial data in its activities, noted that the data ethics landscape was becoming complex, with a number of frameworks and activities under development, and encouraged further clarity regarding “ethical use of geospatial data” and/or “data for the public good”, which are separate concepts more commonly informed by guidance rather than legislation.

## 2) Introduction

The work plan deliverables in 2023-2025 reflect the Committee’s views and guidance and include a paper on Geospatial Data for Public Good and related issues on privacy, confidentiality, and new technologies. Recognizing the views of the Committee of Experts that “ethical use of geospatial data” and “data for the public good” are separate concepts more commonly informed by guidance rather than legislation whilst noting there are a number of frameworks and activities under development, the Working Group proposes a refocusing of its current efforts to geospatial data for public good and a paper aimed at providing guidance to member states based on a review of available case law.

The Working Group proposes to continue its efforts to address the issue of authoritative data by considering fit-for-purpose authoritative data for crises as a follow-on activity from the paper “Authoritative data in an evolving geospatial landscape: an exploration of policy and legal challenges”. The paper promotes the concept of a continuum of “Control versus Trust” (figure below) when considering authoritative data governance framework according to national circumstances.

Figure No. 1

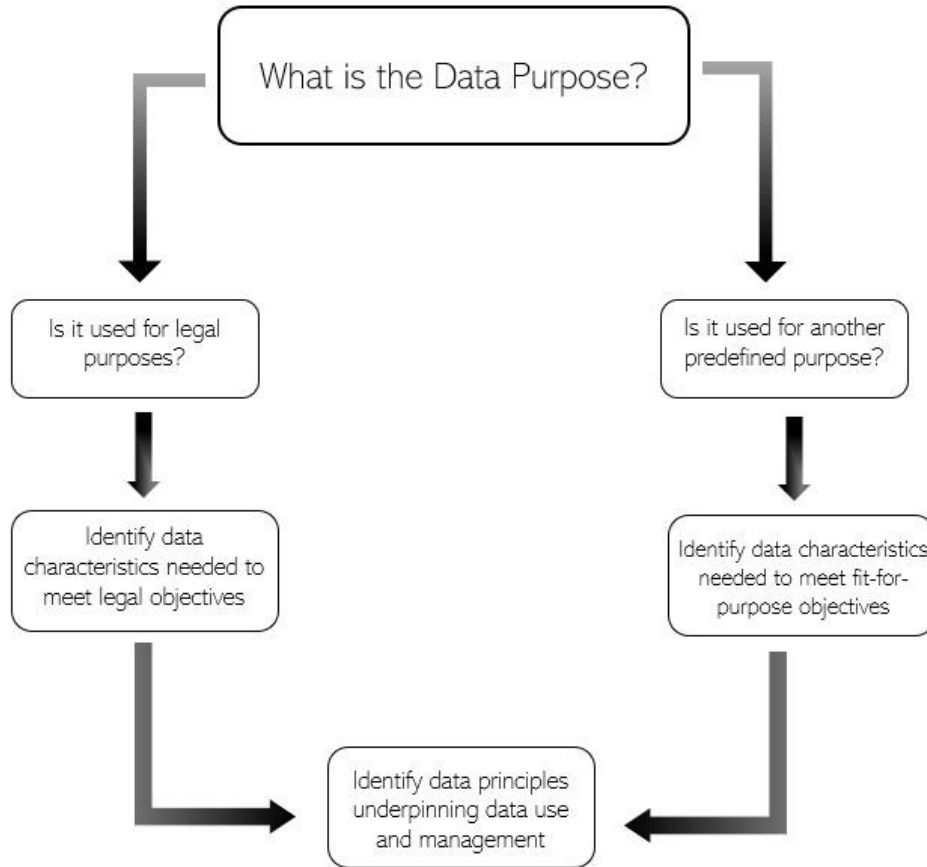


A pathway to establishing authoritativeness for data used for legal arbitration and for other predefined purposes is promoted in the paper. The pathway (figure below) is also relevant when considering geospatial data for public good and possibly providing a pathway for other policy and legal analyses.



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Figure No. 2



The present scope of consideration of the Working Group includes the range of policy and legal instruments that span the control-trust continuum, applied to Member States' various domains and priorities.

Overall, the scope of the work plan corresponds to the policy and legal elements in the UN-IGIF Strategic Pathway 2 – Policy and Legal.

### 3) Goals and Objectives

For the period covered by this work plan, the goals and objectives of the Working Group are to:

- Explore policy and legal considerations for addressing the issue of geospatial data for public good, taking into consideration that effective policy and legal frameworks will evolve over time, and respond to societal progress and technological developments;
- Address policy and legal considerations of authoritative data by exploring applications of the fit-for-purpose frame in crisis use-case scenarios, authoritative data for crises as a follow-on activity from the paper “Authoritative data in an evolving geospatial landscape: an exploration of policy and legal challenges”;
- Continue to provide relevant expertise and 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



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information to address critical local, national, regional and international issues, and support the implementation of UN-IGIF Strategic Pathway 2: Policy and Legal;

- Continue to engage and communicate the value of sound, robust policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management, among and with relevant stakeholders and partners.

Taking into consideration the objectives and goals, the work plan would focus on –

	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Connection to elements of IGIF Strategic Pathway 2: Policy and Legal</b>	<b>Focus</b>
G1	Effective policy and legal considerations to respond to evolving needs, societal progress and technological development	Improved governance and accountability in geospatial information management  Responsive to changes and progress	Consider geospatial data for public good
G2	Appropriate mechanisms to address the issue of authoritative data by considering fit-for-purpose authoritative data for crises	Sound and robust legislations, policies, norms and/or guides towards an enabling policy and legal environment	Address policy and legal considerations concerning geospatial data for crises through the fit-for-purpose frame, as a follow-on activity from the paper “Authoritative data in an evolving geospatial landscape: an exploration of policy and legal challenges”
G3	Sustaining and building legal-policy capacity to respond to needs of Member State and UN-GGIM functional groups	Improved collaboration and exchange of experience among geospatial and legal experts, UN-GGIM functional groups and relevant stakeholders	Identify and engage in activities/projects that raise awareness, share information, exchange experiences, develop trust, clarify concerns among relevant stakeholders and partners, including the legal profession
G4	Effective communication and engagement with relevant stakeholders and partners (advocate for sound, robust and responsive policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management)	Improved awareness, knowledge, governance and accountability  Responsive to changes and progress	Targeted activities to raise awareness, share information, exchange experiences, develop trust, clarify concerns among relevant stakeholders and partners, including the legal profession.

### 4) Deliverables and activities

This work plan responds to Member States’ needs for effective policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management. A policy and legal framework is sound when it favors the public good while recognizing the perspectives and interests of stakeholders and partners, and when conducted with fairness and due process.

Through its work plan, the Working Group produces policy and legal norms, approaches, resources and guidance that address real world challenges in an evolving environment. How this is implemented may vary from country to country, and case to case. Member states are thus advised to adapt guidance to their national and local circumstances and legal contexts, in consultation and collaboration with their geospatial experts, legal practitioners and relevant policy communities.



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	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Deliverables/Engagement and communication component</b>
G1 and G3	Paper on geospatial data for public good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft and table a paper for UN-GGIM endorsement</li> <li>• Develop abstract with key messages</li> <li>• Present paper, share results at meetings, via collaborations including the International Bar Association</li> </ul>
G2 and G3	Authoritative “fit for purpose” geospatial data for crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft and table a paper for UN-GGIM endorsement</li> <li>• Develop abstract with key messages</li> <li>• Present paper, share results at meetings, with functional groups, via collaborations including the International Bar Association</li> <li>• Consider linkage with relevant work items within the Committee of Experts programme or work; providing policy/legal perspective and decision support tools/instruments to operationalize and meet identified technical requirements</li> </ul>
G3 and G4	Sustaining and building legal-policy capacity to respond to needs of Member State; connecting legal and geospatial experts, along with the relevant policy community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to share/champion key outcomes, approaches, resources and deliverables</li> <li>• Considering how to support collaborative, flexible policy and legal instruments that are responsive to changing technologies and norms</li> <li>• Continuing to engage the legal profession when addressing policy and legal issues in geospatial information management</li> <li>• Advocating engagement with relevant policy communities to improve value and uptake in decision-making</li> </ul>
G4	Continuing to socialize key outcomes, approaches, resources and deliverables and share guidance from current and previous work plans (leveraging UN-IGIF Strategic Pathway 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing and sharing key messages corresponding to Working Group objectives, and each work plan item (e.g., policy and legal resource kit, paper on authoritative data)</li> <li>• Collaboration with key partners, attending key events, including the annual conferences of the International Bar Association</li> <li>• Strategically leveraging UN-GGIM meetings, events and activities</li> </ul>
G3 And G4	Collaboration with UN-GGIM functional groups including the Subcommittee on Geodesy, the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management and the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share key outcomes, approaches, resources and guidance at meetings functional groups as appropriate</li> <li>• Collaborate on work items as needed and where appropriate</li> <li>• tbd?</li> </ul>

In exploring, identifying and developing its understanding, guidance and proposed solutions, the Working Group may conduct information gathering, tabletop exercises, roundtables, workshops, and expert group meetings that may also involve the broader geospatial community and relevant stakeholders and partners.



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### 5) Reporting and proposed meetings

The indicative timings and deadlines based on known reporting opportunities and activities under the Committee of Experts are:

<b>2023</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Indicative timing and Deadline</b>
Reporting to the Committee of Experts	Summary of the report to 13th Session of UN-GGIM	May 5, 2023
	Report to the 13th Session of UN-GGIM	June 23, 2023
	Background documents for the 13th Session of UN-GGIM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Authoritative Data in an Evolving Geospatial Landscape: An Exploration of Policy and Legal Challenges”</li> <li>Refreshed work plan</li> </ul>	July 7, 2023
	Side meeting on “Authoritative Data in an Evolving Geospatial Landscape: An Exploration of Policy and Legal Challenges” (Part I)	August 1, 2023
Meetings of the Working Group	18th virtual meeting	Feb.7, 2023
	Global Webinar on “Authoritative Data in an Evolving Geospatial Landscape: An Exploration of Policy and Legal Challenges” (Part I)	April 11, 2023
	19th virtual meeting	June 20, 2023
	13th Session of UN-GGIM, UNHQ New York	2-4 August 2023
	Open meeting of the Working Group (at the 13th Session)	August 2, 2023
	20th virtual meeting	October 2023
Forums	IBA Annual Conference 2023 in Paris, France	29 October – 3 November 2023
	Other events (TBD)	

<b>2024</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Indicative timing and Deadline</b>
Reporting to the Committee of experts	Summary for the report to the 14th Session of UN-GGIM	First week of May 2024
	Report to the 14th Session	Last week of June 2024
	Background documents for the 14th Session of UN-GGIM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper on geospatial data for public good</li> </ul>	First week of July 2024
	Side event/open meeting on the margins of the 14 <sup>th</sup> Session of UN-GGIM	First week of August 2024
	Side event on the margins of the 14 <sup>th</sup> Session of UN-GGIM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper on geospatial data for public good</li> </ul>	August 2024



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<b>2024</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Indicative timing and Deadline</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary results of the paper on “Authoritative, fit for purpose data for crises” (Part II)</li> </ul>	
	Global consultation and refinement of paper on “Authoritative, fit for purpose data for crises” (Part II)	October 2024 – April 2025
Meetings of the Working Group	21st virtual meeting	February/March 2024
	22nd virtual meeting	May/June 2024
	23rd virtual meeting	October 2024
	2nd expert meeting of the Working Group (in-person)	TBD
Forums	TBD	TBD

<b>2025</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Indicative timing and Deadline</b>
Reporting to the Committee of experts	Summary of the report to the 15th Session of UN-GGIM	First week of May 2025
	Report to the 15th Session of UN-GGIM	Last week of June 2025
	Background documents for the 15th Session of UN-GGIM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Authoritative, fit for purpose data for crises” (Part II)</li> </ul>	First week of July 2025
	Side event/open meeting on the margins of the 15 <sup>th</sup> Session of UN-GGIM: presentation of the “Authoritative, fit for purpose data for crises” (Part II)	August 2025
Meetings of the Working Group	24th virtual meeting	February/March 2025
	25th virtual meeting	May/June 2025
Forums	TBD	TBD

*(Nineteenth virtual meeting of the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management 20 June 2023)*

