



**Third Preparatory Meeting of the Proposed United Nations Committee of
Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management**

New York, 4-6 April 2011

Report

Introduction

1. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) of the Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) in cooperation with the United Nations Cartographic Section (UNCS) of the Department of Field Support (DFS) convened the Third Preparatory Meeting on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) in New York, 4-6 April 2011. 60 Experts from 20 countries (Australia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Finland, Germany, Guatemala, India, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Norway, Sweden, Tanzania, UK, USA), 6 UN entities (UNOOSA, UNECA, UNGEGN, UNGIWG, UNCS, and UNSD) and 11 Regional and International Organizations (GSDI, FIG, IHO, ISCGM, ICA, ISPRS, EUROGI, ISO/TC 211, OGC, JB GIS/ESRI, GIS Development¹) attended the Meeting (see Annex 1). The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Hiroshi Murakami (Japan) and Mr. Luiz Paulo Fortes (Brazil).
2. Paul Cheung, Director of UNSD, welcomed the experts and thanked them for providing their strong guidance and continuous support to the GGIM initiative since the first meeting in Bangkok in October 2009. He addressed the need and relevance of such a global mechanism, set up under the auspices of the United Nations to respond effectively to the global critical issues during humanitarian crises, and to support place-based strategies for socio-economic development. Mr. Cheung stressed that the establishment of this global mechanism will improve coordination among geospatial information authorities across countries, bring the regional perspectives together and help evolve a global community of practice through the adoption of partnerships, including with the private sector and other emerging mapping networks. In this context, Mr. Cheung also noted that the traction from countries is increasing, and emphasized the need for the global mechanism to be country-driven, with the identification of focal points from countries.
3. Kyoung-Soo Eom, Chief of UNCS, addressed in his brief remark that, throughout the past UNCS experience, while many of the Member States, professional experts and international/regional organizations have the capacity, resource and willingness to help for global challenges, there is no or lack of global mechanism in terms of how to support each other effectively and in timely fashion with coordinated means and cooperated ways. Thus, it is clear that the establishment of a UN Committee of Experts on GGIM would greatly help to resolve such challenges.
4. Eight technical papers on the activities of UN agencies and international organizations and the lessons learned from their work had been prepared and were briefly introduced by the respective authors (see list in Annex 2).

Discussion

Draft ECOSOC report on Global Geospatial information management

5. UNSD made a brief presentation on the process that was initiated and led to the preparation of the report on GGIM commissioned by ECOSOC as well as the future steps that would lead to its submission to ECOSOC. With regard to the content itself, it was noted that the report was not meant for experts in the field of geospatial

information, but rather for ECOSOC delegates. In this context, the discussion focussed on the general message to be conveyed, in terms of the need and relevance of a global mechanism, its response to the global critical issues, and the overall benefits geospatial information management is contributing to socio-economic development, and particularly to countries in need. The meeting reviewed the key geospatial information issues outlined in the report and made some suggestions. Comments from the participants were raised with regard to the importance of clarification and relationship of different activities mentioned in ECOSOC report since it is dedicated to politicians and decision-makers, the absence of hydrological terminologies, and the lack of action orientated verbs for the Terms of Reference of the Proposed Committee on GGIM. There was general agreement that the global mechanism should be built on the regional initiatives and be output-oriented. The meeting also reiterated its recognition that the most important challenge lies in the area of effective coordination and infrastructure management, both at the national, regional and international level, in order to develop the full potential of geospatial information and the underlying technologies and to make them accessible to and effectively used by a broad range of users.

Update on Mission Statement and Critical Issues

6. The meeting reviewed the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Proposed UN Committee of Experts on GGIM and made some suggestions, particularly with regard to membership. It was explained that the term “Experts” is a generic one used by the UN for Member States representatives within a Committee. The issue of a focal point on geospatial information management within a country was discussed. It was recognized that a single focal point for GGIM within a country may be a difficult issue due to the fact that coordination is one of the major challenges facing many countries today and that each country has its specific administrative arrangements. Comments were raised concerning the importance of establishing a mechanism to ensure the continuity of GGIM work and the clarification of the role to be played by the international professional organisations. It was agreed that the critical issues on GGIM contained in the Mission Statement and outlined in the TOR will be discussed in the first official meeting of the Proposed Committee.

Update on Some GGIM Activities

7. The meeting reviewed some GGIM-related activities carried out since the Second Preparatory Meeting, held in May 2010. UNSD developed a website on GGIM, a resource for GGIM experts and others, particularly on national practices in geospatial information management, and a knowledge-base on geospatial information policy issues to the widest possible audience. The website header features a GGIM logo that was presented to the audience. The meeting appreciated the website and the logo as point of focus for the wider geospatial information community. Updates on Global Map project, UNmap and UN Second Administrative Level Boundaries (SALB) project were presented and discussed. The meeting agreed that these projects are complementary and gain to cooperate with each another.
8. Representatives of other initiatives such as INSPIRE and UN-SPIDER shared some lessons learned from their work respectively in Europe and other parts of the world. The UN-SPIDER coordinator gave an example of a good lesson learned in Chile

where the success in responding effectively to the earthquake was attributed to the availability of its National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). It was reported that the GGIM initiative had been presented to various international meetings, such as the INSPIRE Conference 2010 in Poland, GSDI-12 Conference and the ISCGM-17 in Singapore in October 2010, PAIGH meetings in Lima, Peru, in November 2010, and more recently the Geospatial World Forum 2011 in Hyderabad, India. The representative of Japan shared with the group the extent to which geospatial information was used in the context of the recent catastrophic events in his country. In this context he reemphasized the need for effective coordination. Other issues were raised during this session concerning the need for dialogue between geospatial industry and National Mapping Authorities as well as the importance of establishing cooperation mechanisms under UN framework.

First forum on GGIM

9. Republic of Korea, the host country of the upcoming forum on GGIM, made a presentation on the logistics and other organizational arrangements the country is putting in place for the organization of the forum in October 2011. The expert group meeting agreed on the format of the forum as follows: the first morning session will be dedicated to an opening ceremony, followed by a Ministerial segment, involving 4-5 ministers representing all regions of the world. The following four half-day sessions will each cover respectively a key geospatial information issue: (i) Challenges in geospatial policy formulation and institutional arrangements; (ii) Common frameworks and tools in GGIM; (iii) Developing joint products in meeting global needs; and (iv) Capacity building & knowledge transfer. The afternoon of the third day will be reserved for a Committee of Experts session. In addition to the forum activities there will be a special event on the issues and challenges related to the integration of statistical and geospatial information on 27 October 2011. The meeting also agreed on a pre-conference activity, an exchange forum to facilitate the involvement of the geospatial industry at the most senior levels in the discussions surrounding GGIM. It is worth noting that the host country has expressed its commitment to support up to 30 developing countries, from all regions of the world, to attend the forum. Participants discussed whether the ministerial session should emphasize the technical or generic issues to attract the attention of the decision makers and agreed that emphasis should be in presenting the topics from a strategic than technical operational point of view.

Informal Bilateral Consultations

10. The third day was dedicated to informal bilateral consultations and to meetings of some of the international and regional organizations (e.g. JB-GIS meeting; PC-IDEA Working Group meeting; ISCGM and UNCS technical meeting, Business forum planning meeting as pre-conference activity of the high level forum on GGIM).

Conclusion

11. The meeting reached the conclusion that the report on GGIM, commissioned by ECOSOC in July 2010, as amended, can be submitted to the next session of ECOSOC in July 2011. Experts were given an opportunity to submit specific comments and

corrections by 13 April to UNSD. On the basis of these inputs the Secretariat would then finalize the Secretary General's report in close consultation with the co-chairs¹.

12. With respect to the upcoming high level forum on GGIM to be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, set from 24 to 26 of October 2011, the meeting welcomed the efforts being made by the Host country as well as the UN, and encouraged them to continue the preparatory activities, both at substantive and organizational levels. The meeting reiterated its recognition that geospatial databases are increasingly important to societies all over the world and geospatial data and associated policies at regional and global levels are important tools for addressing current cross-border problems such as climate change; natural disasters; environmental quality; disease pandemics; wars; famines; population displacement; migration; and economic crises. The meeting agreed that the forum on GGIM would provide a unique opportunity to kick-start the discussion of some of these critical geospatial information issues at the global level. This would be a useful contribution to the reflection on a possible programme of work for the next coming years.

¹ The ECOSOC paper was subsequently submitted and the final version can be found on the ECOSOC website: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>

Annex 1: List of participants

Participant	Country	Email address
Greg Scott	Australia	greg.scott@ga.gov.au
Luiz Paulo Souto Fortes	Brazil	luiz.fortes@ibge.gov.br
Valeria Oliveira Henrique de Araujo	Brazil	valeria.araujo@ibge.gov.br
Moema José de Carvalho Augusto	Brazil	moema.augusto@ibge.gov.br
Claude OBin Tapsoba	Burkina Faso	claudioebin@gmail.com
Prashant Shukle	Canada	prashant.shukle@nrccan-rnccan.gc.ca
Paula McLeod	Canada	paula.mcleod@nrccan-rnccan.gc.ca
Esteban Tohá González	Chile	etohag@mbienes.cl
Álvaro Monett Hernández	Chile	amoneth@mbienes.cl
LI Weisen	China	jiangxh@sbsm.gov.cn; jxh1508@hotmail.com
Wang Qian	China	jiangxh@sbsm.gov.cn; jxh1508@hotmail.com
Wang Baoli	China	jiangxh@sbsm.gov.cn; jxh1508@hotmail.com
Li Chengming	China	jiangxh@sbsm.gov.cn; jxh1508@hotmail.com
Iván Darío Gomez	Colombia	Direccion@igac.gov.co
Jarmo Ratia	Finland	jarmo.ratia@nls.fi
Arvo Kokkonen	Finland	arvo.kokkonen@nls.fi
Dietmar Grünreich	Germany	VorzimmerPraesident@bkg.bund.de
Oscar Leonel Figueroa Cabrera	Guatemala	oslefig@gmail.com
Swarna Subba Rao	India	srswarna@gmail.com
P.S. Acharya	India	psa@nic.in
Hiroshi Murakami	Japan	murakamih@gsi.go.jp
Takayuki Nakamura	Japan	nakamura@gsi.go.jp
Seong-An Leem	Republic of Korea	ngii21@korea.kr
Chang-Hoon Lee	Republic of Korea	smart_hoon@korea.kr
Jane Hong	Republic of Korea	jane96@korea.kr
Sang-Ho Lee	Republic of Korea	addlsh78@korea.kr
Woosug Cho	Republic of Korea	wcho@inha.ac.kr
Dató Abdul Kadir Bin Taib	Malaysia	drkadir@jupem.gov.my
Luis Gerardo Esparza	Mexico	Gerardo.Esparza@inegi.org.mx
Olaf Østensen	Norway	olaf.ostensen@statkart.no
Ulf Sandgren	Sweden	Ulf.sandgren@LM.se
Selassie D. Mayunga	Tanzania	magese22@yahoo.ca
Carl Wilson	UK	carlstjohn.wilson@ordnancesurvey.co.uk
Peter ter Haar	UK	Lynne.Sims@ordnancesurvey.co.uk
Tim Trainor	USA	timothy.f.trainor@census.gov
Ivan DeLoatch	USA	ideloatch@usgs.gov

Organization/Agency

Participant	Organization	Email address
Abbas Rajabifard	GSDI	abbas.r@unimelb.edu.au
CheeHai Teo	FIG	chteo.surveyor@gmail.com
Robert Ward	IHO	robert.ward@ihb.mc , info@ihb.mc
Fraser Taylor	ISCGM	fraser_taylor@carleton.ca
Yoshikazu Fukushima	ISCGM	fukushima@gsi.go.jp
William Cartwright	ICA	william.cartwright@rmit.edu.au
Mauro Salvemini	EUROGI	mauro.salvemini@uniroma1.it
Ammatzia Peled	ISPRS	peled@geo.haifa.ac.il
Olaf Østensen	ISO/TC 211	olaf.ostensen@statkart.no
Mark E. Reichardt	OGC	mreichardt@myogc.org
Mark Cygan	ESRI/ Joint-Board GIS	mcygan@esri.com
Carmelle J. Terborgh	ESRI/ Joint-Board GIS	cterborgh@esri.com
Sanjay Kumar	GIS Development	Sanjay.kumar@gisdevelopment.net

UN Entities

Aida Opoku-Mensah	UNECA	Aida.uneca@un.org
Andre Nonguierma	UNECA	Anonguierma@uneca.org
Helen Kerfoot	UNGEFN	hkerfoot@nrcan.gc.ca
Suha Ulgen	UNGIWG	Ulgen@un.org

United Nations Secretariat

Paul Cheung	UNSD	paul.cheung@un.org
Stefan Schweinfest	UNSD	schweinfest@un.org
Amor Laaribi	UNSD	laaribi@un.org
David Stevens	UNOOSA	david.stevens@unoosa.org
Kyoung-Soo Eom	UN Cartographic Section	Eom@un.org
Ayako Kagawa	UN Cartographic Section	kagawa@un.org
Daniel Berhanu Eshetie	UN Cartographic Section	koenigo@un.org
Olav Koenig	UN Cartographic Section	eshetie@un.org

Annex 2: List of technical papers

1	Mauro Salvemini	President of EUROGI	Results of The INSPIRE State of Play 2010: First lessons learnt from the application of INPIRE directive in EUROPE
2	Yoshikazu Fukushima	Secretary General of ISCGM	Present Status of Global Mapping Project and its contribution to GGIM
3	Abbas Rajabifard	President of GSDI	GSDI Short Report to 3rd Preparatory Meeting of the Proposed United Nations Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management
4	UNCS		UNmap
5	UNSD and UNCS		Update on SALB Project
6	UNSD		The Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)
7	UNSD		Feedback on the GGIM initiative from various international Meetings
8	UNSD		GGIM Website

ⁱ Abbreviations:

GSDI:	Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association
FIG:	International Federation of Surveyors
IHO:	International Hydrographic Organization
ISCGM:	International Steering Committee for Global Mapping
ICA :	International Cartographic Association
EUROGI:	European Umbrella Organization for Geographic Information
ISPRS:	International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing
ISO/TC 211:	International Organization for Standardization/Technical Committee 211
OGC:	The Open Geospatial Consortium
JB GIS:	The Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies
ESRI:	Environmental Systems Research Institute
GIS Development:	Geographic Information Systems Development
UNOOSA:	United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs
UNECA:	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNGEGN:	United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names
UNGIWG:	United Nations Geographic Information Working Group