

Report
Second High Level Forum on GGIM
Seminar on Regional Cooperation in Geospatial Information Management
The Courtyard Marriot Hotel, Doha Qatar
February 7, 2013

The Seminar on Regional Cooperation held on February 7 2013, was significant, in that it was the first time that 11 Member States (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates) in the Middle East met and discussed Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM). The seminar was attended by 27 representatives from the 11 Member States, five UN officials, four members from the regional groups of Europe and Asia and six observers (who did not attend the third closed session). The list of attendees is attached at Appendix 1.

The aim of the regional seminar was to promote the increased use of geospatial information and to influence the development of the geospatial information field in the ESCWA region. Specific objectives were to discuss the state of geospatial information management at a national level, provide an overview on international/regional cooperation and the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) initiative, and deliberate on the need to establish a regional UN-GGIM committee to coordinate geospatial information in the ESCWA region.

The meeting began with opening remarks followed by three sessions. The meeting agenda is attached in Appendix 2. Session one provided an overview of existing regional coordination efforts with presentations from UN-GGIM Asia-Pacific, UN-GGIM Europe, and an overview on GGIM as a global intergovernmental mechanism including its mandate, objectives and future plans. The Second Administrative Level Boundary (SALB) Project was introduced, as an example of a product (work in progress) of international cooperation on GGIM. The Member States attending were invited to participate in the SALB project.

Session two gave Member States the opportunity to share and discuss the status of national GGIM/SDI initiatives in the region. Here, Egypt, Qatar and Tunisia shared their work and achievements in the management of geospatial information. Bahrain's presentation was delivered the day before, during the High Level Forum and therefore already received by the attendees. Based on the discussions, presentations and a pre-seminar survey on GGIM in the region, it was found that the Member States are undertaking geospatial information activities; however the level of adoption, implementation and maturity are variable. Member States have applied geospatial information in a variety of areas ranging from census taking, health, water, emergency management to land use management, and all were supporting decision making activities and generating societal benefits.

The third session was chaired by ESCWA. It was emphasised during the opening remarks that the UN-GGIM Secretariat with the support of ESCWA would facilitate the start of a regional partnership on GGIM for the region and provide Secretariat support to develop effective strategies to build geospatial capacities, improve policy, institutional arrangements and frameworks to address global issues and contribute to collective knowledge. Attendees openly expressed the issues and challenges they

were experiencing in geospatial information management. The following is a list of challenges compiled from the discussion and from responses to the pre-seminar questionnaire.

- i. Lack of coordination and cooperation between geospatial data producers and users
- ii. The need to create a national geospatial information infrastructure with a common reference frame for all users, to facilitate the exchange of information between the partners and contribute to economic development
- iii. No high level body (government authority) to ensure that all parties are committed and follow the agreed policies.
- iv. Lack of geospatial standards e.g. (structure, geographical names etc).
- v. Data inconsistency and coordinate system mismatch of the data from various stakeholders.
- vi. Spatial data is often missing or incomplete or the same data was collected by different organizations
- vii. Cultural, institutional, financial and legal barriers prevent or delay the sharing of spatial data.
- viii. Data privacy and security need to be ensured for an individual's legal and physical wellbeing.
- ix. An increasing array of and changes in technologies creates the need to quickly determine requirements and keep pace of the changes
- x. The need to develop human resources to support GIS environments, in addition to being able to retain qualified persons.

At the end of the discussions, Member States present agreed and endorsed the need to establish a regional committee and implement an organized structure, with support from the ESCWA Secretariat, to discuss and progress the regional interests of GGIM.

UNSD, UN-GGIM and ESCWA were tasked to prepare the seminar report and the required documentation to begin the process of having the regional group on UN-GGIM created.



Attendees of Seminar on Regional Cooperation

APPENDIX 1
List of Attendees

Country	Name of Person	Function Title	Institution, Department or Unit
Algeria	Mr. Arezki Kesraoui	General Director	National Institute of Cartography and Remote Sensing
Bahrain	Dr. Khalid Al-Haidan	Director	GIS Directorate
	Ms Seema Ahmed Al-langawi	Consultant	ProLand Consultants
Egypt	Nahla Seddik Mohamed Saleh	Director of GIS Unit	CAPMAS,IT Sector,GIS Department
Iraq	Mr. Fuad Mahmood	Director General	Survey Works, Ministry of Water Resources
Iraq Iraq	Mr. Yassin Ali	Expert Engineer	
	Mr. Mudher Al_Adhami	Senior Chief Engineer	State Commission on Survey
Lebanon	Mr. Amin El Khoury	Vice Director	Directorate of Geographic Affairs (DAG)
Lebanon	Mr. Ahmad El Jabi	Head of Photogrammetry Department	Lebanese Army-Directorate of Geographic Affairs
Morocco	Ms. Zahra Dafer	Director of Cartography	Agence Nationale de la Conservation Foncière, du Cadastre
Oman	Mr. Yaqoob Al-Toobi	Head of National Survey Authority	Ministry of Defence
	Mr. Saleem Al-Hashmi	SOI Production	National Survey Authority
Qatar	Dr. Mohamed Hamouda	GIS Consultant	Center for GIS, Qatar
	Dr. RCS Taragi	GIS Expert	Statistics Authority
	Amer Al Humaidi	Head of Planning and Projects	Centre for GIS, Qatar
	Mansoor Al Malki	Director of IT	Statistics Authority
Saudi Arabia	Mr. Nasr Al- Sahhaf	Director	Saudi Space Geodesy Center
	Mr. Morayyea Hassan Al Shahrani	GCS President	General Commission for Survey GCS
	Mr. Saad Al-Hamlal	Geospatial Information Center Director	General Commission for Survey GCS
	Mr. Bandar Almuslmani	Geodesy and Land Survey Director	General Commission for Survey GCS
	Mr. Talal Al-Shafaey	GIS Department Manager	General Commission for

			Survey GCS
	Mr. Sattam Al-Otaibi	Photogrammetry Department Manager	General Commission for Survey GCS
	Mr. Mohammed Al-Qarni	Cartography Department Manager	General Commission for Survey GCS
	Mr. Abdulatif Al-Shahrani	Presidents Office Manager	General Commission for Survey GCS
	Mr. Abdullah Aldoshan	Head of Mapping & GIS	Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs
Tunisia	AFI Sahbi	General Director	National Center of Mapping and Remote sensing (NCOMR)
United Arab Emirates	Joseph Abdo	SDI Project	
OTHER ATTENDEES			
UN ESCWA	Mr. Juraj Riecan	Director	Statistics Division of ESCWA
UN ESCWA	Ms Neda Jafar		Statistics Division of ESCWA
UN-GGIM AP	Mr. Yoon Jin-hwan		UN-GGIM AP
Co-Chair UN- GGM	Ms. Vanessa Lawrence	Director General and Chief Executive	Ordnance Survey
UN-GGIM-Europe	Mr. Jevon Snell		Ordnance Survey
UNSD, UN-GGIM Secretariat	Ms. Cecille Blake	Statistician	UN Statistics Division, DESA
UNSD, UN-GGIM Secretariat	Mr. Greg Scott	Inter-Regional Advisor	UN Statistics Division, DESA
UNSD, UN-GGIM Secretariat	Ms Cilla Ng	Associate Statistician	UN Statistics Division, DESA
UNCS, UN-GGIM Secretariat	Ms. Ayako Kagawa	Geographic Information Officer (GIO)	Cartographic Section, DFS
OBSERVERS			
	Sanghoon Lee	Deputy Director	NGII Korea
	Seung-weon shin	Officer	NGII Korea
	Mark Cygan	Industry Solutions Manager	Esri
	Timothy Trainor	Chief Geography Division	US Census Bureau
	Shigeru Matsuzaka	Executive Officer of International Observation	GSI, Japan
	Mei Maruyama	Cordinator UN_GGIM AP Secretariat	Japan Map Centre

**APPENDIX 2
MEETING AGENDA**

AGENDA

THURSDAY, 7 February

- 8.30-9:00** **Registration of participants** – Venue: Courtyard Marriot Hotel
- 9.00-9.30** **Opening Remarks**
1. Ms. Cecille Blake, Representative United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)
2. Mr. Juraj Riecan, ESCWA Representative
- Introduction of Participants
- 9.30-10.30** **Session 1**
- International/Regional Coordination in Geospatial Information**
- Chair: Mr. Greg Scott, UNSD**
- Presentations**
1. Overview of GGIM, Ms. Vanessa Lawrence, Co-Chair of UN-GGIM
 2. The Asia-Pacific region mode of operation, Mr. Yoon Jin-hwan, UN-GGIM-AP
 3. European cooperation, Mr. Jevon Snell, UN-GGIM Europe
 4. Example of international cooperation: SALB project
 - a. General overview – Ms. Cecille Blake, UNSD, DESA
 - b. Technical matters – Ms. Ayako Kagawa, UN Cartographic Section, DFS
- 10.30-10.45** **Coffee Break**
- 10.45-11.45** **Session 2**
- National GGIM/SDI Situation**
- Chair: Ms. Vanessa Lawrence, Co-Chair of UN-GGIM**
- Country Presentations**
1. **Egypt**, Ms. Nahla Seddik, Director of GIS Unit, CAPMAS, GIS Department
 2. **Qatar**, Mr. Mohamed Hamouda, Head, Planning and Projects Division, Centre for GIS
 3. **Tunisia**, Mr. Sahbi El Afi, General Director, National Center of Mapping and Remote sensing
 4. **Bahrain**, Mr. Khalid Al Haidan, Director, GIS Directorate
- 11.45-13.00** **Session 3 (Closed)**
- Regional Cooperation in the ESCWA Region**
- Chair: Mr. Juraj Riecan, ESCWA**
- Open Panel Discussion**
- Summary and Decisions**
- Closing and Concluding Remarks: UNSD Representative**