Fourth High Level Forum on
United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management

'Good Land Governance for the 2030 Agenda'

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
20-22 April 2016

Concept Note

Background

The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), in collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), will host the **Fourth High Level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management at UNECA's Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 20-22 April 2016.**

The Fourth High Level Forum is being staged in pursuance of the mandate from the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to convene global forums to promote comprehensive dialogue on global geospatial information management with all relevant governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

At the fifth session of UN-GGIM, convened in New York in August 2015, the Committee acknowledged the importance and need for geospatial information as an essential base for an effective and efficient land information system to support the administration of land policy frameworks, customary rights, security of tenure, property rights, sustainable development and overall environmental, economic and social well-being. The Committee further acknowledged that it needed to take a leading role at the policy level by raising political awareness and highlighting the importance to decision makers of the need for timely and fit for purpose land administration and management, supported by capacity development, particularly in developing countries and vulnerable regions.

The Committee endorsed the establishment of an Expert Group to undertake the work needed to advance the activities related to the administration and management of land, and strengthening the use of geospatial information for good land governance. The Committee also approved and supported the convening of the Fourth UN-GGIM High Level Forum to be held in April 2016 in Addis Ababa, Africa, focused on land administration and management, with particular emphasis on sharing experiences, including benefits and challenges, considering fit for purpose aspects, digital land registers, cadastres, and other land data needs, demonstrating practical examples of land administration success stories.

Land information and its management are fundamental to successful land administration and the derived benefits to the economies, and overall sustainable development of nations. Therefore, the overarching theme of the Fourth High Level Forum is **'Good Land Governance for the 2030 Agenda'**.

Context

Land is the single greatest resource in almost all countries. The management of natural resources and administration of ownership and land-use are treated as national development tools, with their policy outcomes often being pivotal for a country's national circumstances. Land administration provides an important infrastructure for an efficient economy; it touches all aspects of people's lives, including their

income generation activities, and is fundamental for economic growth and poverty reduction. Clear and secure land tenure can improve livelihoods and sustainable management of natural resources, and promote sustainable development and responsible investment that eradicates poverty and food insecurity. Land tenure security guarantees the existence of land rights, ensures protection of rights through legal remedies, and creates land markets that unlocks its potential as an asset and encourages efficient allocation and transactions.

However, despite these benefits, the majority of the land area in most developing countries – up to 90 percent in some – is not covered by a formal land record and secure property rights. Approximately 75 percent of the world's population does not have access to formal systems to register and safeguard their land rights. The majority of these are the poor and the most vulnerable in society. Governments must be able to efficiently evaluate and assess situations, formulate strategies, implement and monitor land tenure and registration projects and facilitate the development of transparent and formal land markets that are affordable and sustainable. These functions can only be successfully executed with the use of geospatial information and the application of related information and communication technologies.

Forum Outcomes

Recognizing the perspectives and guidance from the Committee of Experts, the Fourth High Level Forum offers the opportunity for the global geospatial information community to pay particular attention to the geospatial information requirements for land administration and management with a special focus on the needs for Africa.

Bringing all stakeholders together, the Forum will: provide Member States and geospatial stakeholders with the unique opportunity to share and learn from each other, new ideas, methods and strategies to support local, regional and global land administration and management initiatives. It will also raise political awareness and highlight the importance to decision makers of the need for timely and fit for purpose land administration and management; facilitate coordination and dialogue among global experts from the land administration and geospatial communities to strengthen the use of geospatial information for good land governance; and collaborate with professional bodies and experts working in land governance, including United Nations bodies and other international organizations, to identify and address common issues of land management and governance in support of sustainable development.

Forum Outline

As in previous Forums, a Ministerial Segment will be convened in order for high level decision makers to share and exchange views with delegates on the very important role of geospatial information in national and sustainable land development. The event will feature technical presentations, group discussions and a series of side meetings that address issues from the formal inter-governmental meetings of the Committee of Experts.

The Forum will be substantively supported by the Regional Committees of UN-GGIM, including, for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa), Asia and the Pacific (UN-GGIM-AP), the Americas (UN-GGIM: Americas), Europe (UN-GGIM: Europe), and the Arab States (UN-GGIM: Arab States).

The continued involvement of the geospatial industry at the most senior levels will be a key component of the Forum's technical program. It will actively engage with the industry, in discussions regarding key

issues of both policy and technology through the sessions, while demonstrating some of the trends and directions in land administration and management.

Wednesday, 20 April

Opening Ceremony and Ministerial Segment
Welcome, opening address, and keynote speeches.
The opening session will consists of interventions by invited Ministers, followed by a high level moderated panel discussion on addressing land administration and management issues.

Session 1: Land information for sustainable development
While not a singular goal in itself, many aspects of land are captured within and underpin the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Specific areas include poverty alleviation, food security, water and sanitation, gender equality, health lives, sustainable agriculture and production, sustainable cities and human settlements, forests and ecosystems, and land degradation and biodiversity loss. The sustainable development goals (SDGs), targets and indicators related to land at the global level will be important in order to deliver on better land governance, tenure and land rights at the national and local level.

This session will explore the land information data needs for the SDGs, targets and global indicator framework. Efficient land administration and management together with effective data sharing can unlock a wealth of existing knowledge about social, economic and environmental matters, playing a vital role in understanding and contributing towards addressing the many challenges confronting countries.

Thursday, 21 April

Session 2: Good land governance and regulatory frameworks
This session will discuss the role of geospatial information in good land policy and governance, regulatory frameworks, institutional models and land information systems. Such arrangements are understandably country-specific, given the different realities in each country and the varying degrees to which land reform is actually being implemented. Land policies need to recognize and reflect the specific realities of certain land issues such as: blocking of unjust land practices and abuses; legal recognition of some marginalized groups, including women and indigenous communities; issuance of titles or certificates to other groups; or the creation of needed bodies or establishing lacking systems. Further, an expanded view of land reform policy is emerging. The 'fit-for-purpose' approach to building land administration systems, particularly in less developed countries, is fundamentally a human rights approach – enabling security of tenure for all – that offers governments the opportunity to make significant improvement in global land issues.

Session 3: Geospatial land information management
Geospatial information for land and its management will be fundamental to successful land administration and its associated benefits to the economies and overall sustainable development of countries. However, there is a desperate need to address the considerable data and information deficit, consider appropriate data requirements and access to geospatial data (particularly maps and imagery), and appropriate

acquisition processes and technologies to better identify and record the people-to-land relationship. This session will use exemplar cases to demonstrate and discuss geospatial key land data elements including spatial frameworks, fundamental data requirements, data quality, maintenance and standards.

Friday, 22 April

Session 4: Technology and capacity development

Information and communication technology (ICT) has an increasingly fundamental role in providing data to improve land administration operations and making land services more supportive of economic development. With increasing innovations and improvement in technologies – GIS, GNSS, cloud computing, web services, mobile mapping, open data movement and crowd sourcing, all are converging and creating unprecedented opportunities to efficiently and effectively manage land. Notwithstanding these developments, many countries are yet to take advantage of ICT and geospatial information and to also channel these into land policy development and implementation.   This session will therefore feature presentations on the use and adoption of ICT and geospatial data for land management, in addition to an examination of the legal framework supporting ICT, e-government, e-conveyancing and tools used to foster citizen and community participation in land administration. This will be coupled with discussions on capacity development across the public and private sectors and civil society; as capacity development is integral to realising the full benefits of ICT investments. The identification of key capacity building issues particularly for Africa will be covered in addition suggestions needed to fill the knowledge and capacity gaps. A salient question to also be addressed during this session is, in what ways the geospatial community can assist in strengthening capacities for good land administration.

Session 5: Shared objectives and partnerships

Important and valuable work on sound land administration and good land governance has been done by many organisations inclusive of United Nations bodies as well as by NGOs, the World Bank and academia. However, the issues remain a global concern particularly in developing countries and it has often proven to be difficult to turn these works into policies and agendas.

This session will feature a panel discussion that examines the work and impact of global land administration and management support organisations, with a critical look at the successes, strengthens and weaknesses of their interventions. Panellists will also identify specific areas of focus, synergies and possible partnerships in managing and monitoring land administration and management projects and programmes, at the global and regional levels (north/south and south/south). Geospatial technology is an integrative tool that not only brings data together but also people, processes and results. Therefore an additional feature of the session will be a discussion segment that explores opportunities for collaboration among land administration and management organizations within the African continent, to build on existing strengths by sharing methodologies, practices and experiences in ameliorating the man to land challenge.

Summary and Issuing of the Addis Ababa Declaration