



Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information

We, the participants of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) International Forum on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 18-19 October 2016, having met in the context of United Nations initiatives to exchange knowledge, experience and good practices and to enhance cooperation towards better policy and legal frameworks in geospatial information management for sustainable development;

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/24, which established the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) to provide a forum for coordination and dialogue among Member States, and to hold regular high-level, multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information, including through the convening of global forums, with a view to promoting a comprehensive dialogue with all relevant actors;

Recalling General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/1, in which the Assembly adopted “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which called to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data and to exploit the contribution to be made by a wide range of data, including Earth observations and geospatial information, while ensuring national ownership in supporting and tracking progress towards sustainable development;

Recalling General Assembly resolution 69/266, entitled ‘A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development’ in which the Assembly called for greater multilateral cooperation on geodesy, including the open sharing of geospatial data, further capacity-building in developing countries, the creation of international standards and conventions, and contributions to the global reference frame and regional densifications through relevant national mechanisms and intergovernmental cooperation;

Recalling further the Report of the Secretary-General on the Inventory of Issues to be addressed by the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (E/C.20/2012/5/Add.1) where one of the issues relates to addressing policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information;

Recognizing that Decision 5/107 at the Fifth Session of UN-GGIM supported the convening of an international forum on legal and policy issues and frameworks at an appropriate time in 2016, as a means to provide a suitable opportunity to open the dialogue on the issues and challenges of this topic to all stakeholders with a view to intensifying and taking a more proactive role in facilitating a more informed dialogue on the identified issues, including national policies;

Recognizing further that Decision 6/105 at the Sixth Session of UN-GGIM noted that it is essential for any legal and policy frameworks that could have an impact on geospatial information be developed in partnership with the geospatial community, the legal community and other related areas of work of the Committee;

Noting that UN-GGIM is cognizant of ongoing developments and the increased focus that could have an impact on policy and legal frameworks supporting geospatial information including that which relate to the collection, use, provenance and accessibility of data, such as privacy, licensing, accessibility and national security;

Noting further that the global geospatial community needs to be more proactively engaged with these ongoing developments as well as issues related to the development and use of innovative and creative applications arising from new and emerging technologies and potentially intrusive devices;

Acknowledging the growing need for geospatial professionals to understand the legislative and regulatory processes and their implications for the entire geospatial community, and for the legal profession, regulators and legislators to understand the wider usefulness and benefits of geospatial information;

Agreeing that there is an urgent need for proactive and sustainable data eco-systems to progress towards the sustainable development goals with high-quality, timely and reliable data and to exploit the contribution to be made by a wide range of data including from new and innovative data sources;

We recognize that,

- Policy and legal issues impact geospatial information management at the local, national and international levels; and that these must be considered and balanced within national strategies, policies, laws and contexts;
- Developments and innovations in geospatial information and its related technologies and techniques are rapidly changing societal access to information, requiring the urgent need for geospatial professionals to actively engage with policy, legislative and regulatory challenges to allow for an enabling environment where geospatial information can further inform and support economic and sustainable development;
- Effective and sustained policy and legal frameworks will evolve over time, respond to societal progress and technological developments, including as machine-learning environments become more prominent; and such effective policy frameworks will allow for progressive and forward-looking strategies and include guidelines, principles and internationally agreed standards;
- There are significant policy and legal challenges to address, including issues related to the quality, timeliness, comparability, authority, availability, accessibility, licensing, pricing, sharing, liability, privacy and security of data, and open data.

We resolve to,

- Contribute, as a responsible geospatial community of stakeholders and partners working together, to provide collaborative leadership for the change needed to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, noting that when realized across its full extent, the lives of all will be profoundly improved and our world will be transformed for the better;
- Confirm that the global geospatial community will be more proactively engaged with issues relating to the collection, use, privacy, provenance and, accessibility of data, as well as issues related to the use of unmanned aircraft systems and other potentially intrusive devices;
- Agree that an enabling strategy and plan of action must be developed in order to begin the advocacy and engagement process on policy and legal issues among relevant parties;
- Continue to strive towards providing the necessary mechanisms to enable effective and efficient governance, sharing and usage of geospatial information and technologies towards achieving national development aspirations as well as common goals for sustainable development regionally and globally;
- Consider the potential policy and legal implications associated with delivering reliable geospatial data that is required to be nationally disaggregated by a number of metrics including, income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We therefore request UN-GGIM at its Seventh Session to,

- Thank the Government of Malaysia for the hosting of this International Forum on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information;
- Consider establishing a working group to explore policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information, with participants from both the geospatial and legal communities;
- Develop a strategy and plan of action on policy and legal issues in order to begin the advocacy and engagement process, inclusive of a guide to the licensing and dissemination of geospatial information that can provide guidance to Member States;
- Contribute to developing capacity within the Member States on the policy and legal issues that impact the collection, use, storage and dissemination of geospatial information;
- Adopt this Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information.