



**UN-GGIM**  
UNITED NATIONS  
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON  
GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL  
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

## Second Virtual Expert Meeting on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management

**Tuesday 27 April and Thursday 29 April, 2021**

10:30 hrs. – 12:30 hrs. (UTC)/06:30 a.m. – 08:30 a.m. (EDT-New York/UTC-4)

### Concept Note

#### Background

At its tenth session the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), in making Decision 10/103, “welcomed the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) as a means to strengthen national geospatial information management arrangements within and across Member States and noted the global significance of the IGIF, which can be applied to any country to guide transformational change”. The IGIF provides a basis, a reference and a mechanism for countries when establishing or strengthening their national geospatial information management arrangements and related infrastructures, or to coordinate activities to achieve alignment between and across existing national capabilities and infrastructures. The Framework translates high-level concepts to practical implementation guidance and does this by leveraging seven (7) underpinning principles, eight (8) goals and nine (9) strategic pathways as a means for governments to establish, improve and sustain more effective geospatial information management arrangements. The IGIF Implementation Guide, adopted in September 2020 by UN-GGIM<sup>1</sup>, provides the specific guidance and recommended actions to be taken by Member States to establish, improve or strengthen their national arrangements in geospatial information management, systems and infrastructures.

The IGIF Strategic Pathway 2: Policy and Legal seeks to establish a robust policy and legal framework that is essential for instituting effective, efficient and secure management and exchange of geospatial information - nationally and sub-nationally. The objective is to address current policy and legal issues by improving the policies and laws associated with, and having an impact on, geospatial information management. This is achieved by proactively monitoring the policy and legal environment, including mandating responsibility for the production of data, and keeping abreast of issues and challenges arising from the evolving, innovative and creative use of geospatial information and emerging technologies.

UN-GGIM is cognizant that the need to address policy and legal issues that impact geospatial information management has become more critical with innovative and creative applications, and from new and emerging technologies and devices. These developments can be disruptive to existing policy, regulatory and legal frameworks. Examples include, the acquisition and application of geospatial information from remotely operated aerial systems, autonomous vehicles, pervasive mobile applications, smart cities initiatives and the internet of things. These applications and technologies consume and produce location-based services and information at an increasing pace and volume.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/10th-session/>



Hence, at the tenth session, UN-GGIM in its Decision 10/110 encouraged the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks on Geospatial Information Management to work with candidate Member States in the implementation of strategic pathway 2: policy and legal of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, to consider appropriate mechanisms to promote data sharing and exchange and to improve the availability, accessibility and usability of geospatial information, including across Member States.

The Secretariat and the Centre for Spatial Law and Policy together with the Working Group are developing legal instruments (agreement, policy, legislation) that Member States can adapt and tailor to their national circumstances. The proposed instruments will support Member States to implement the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) to:

- i) promote data sharing and exchange; and
- ii) improve the availability, accessibility and usability of geospatial information.

## Objectives

The objectives of this expert meeting are -

- To raise awareness on Strategic Pathway 2 – Policy and Legal of the IGIF within the global policy and legal community;
- To discuss the relationship of legislation, policies and agreements in national geospatial information management; and
- To consult and obtain feedback from invited Member States and relevant stakeholders on the (a) Annotated Geospatial Information Sharing Agreement; (b) Form Geospatial Information Management Policy; and (c) Model Geospatial Information Management Legislation.

## About this Second Virtual Expert Meeting

This expert and consultative meeting seeks to bring together a group of expert representatives of Member States and other relevant stakeholders to discuss, consider, comment and feedback on the proposed drafts of the following -

- Annotated Geospatial Information Sharing Agreement
- Form Geospatial Information Management Policy
- Model Geospatial Information Management Legislation.

Importantly, these proposed instruments should be readily adapted by and tailored to national circumstances including its national or sub-national<sup>2</sup> policy and legal frameworks.

The expert meeting will be participatory and interactive, where invited participants are expected to actively engage in the discussions and considerations, and encouraged to comment and feedback.

The first virtual expert meeting was held on 15 April 2021. It brought together a small group of expert representatives of Member States and relevant stakeholder. The participants considered, commented, discussed and provided further inputs and feedbacks for the preparation and development of the three proposed instruments.

---

<sup>2</sup> This is in recognition that some Member States are federations.

## The proposed instruments

*Annotated Geospatial Information Sharing Agreement* – The annotated Geospatial Information Sharing Agreement is intended to provide national geospatial information management authorities/agencies an annotated form of legal document by which geospatial data can be shared within government if existing agreements are not adequate or responsive to the country's needs. The goal is to provide a resource that can be adapted and tailored by national authorities/agencies together with their legal personnel to apply the principles of the IGIF to their unique legal systems and national circumstances. This document will include examples of contractual language that aligns with the Compendium on Licensing of Geospatial Information as well as alternative language that could be used depending upon the type of geospatial data being shared and the intended use.

*Form Geospatial Information Management Policy* - A geospatial information sharing policy template that aligns with the elements of Strategic Pathway 2: Policy and Legal of the IGIF as well as other relevant IGIF Strategic Pathways. It includes basic principles to enhance geospatial information sharing within government as well as guidance to reference and follow. The document also includes drafting notes to explain important sections and how the authorities/agencies can adapt and tailor the template to their respective policy and legal frameworks and national circumstances.

*Model Geospatial Information Management Legislation* – A model geospatial information management legislation addresses the IGIF Strategic Pathways. The purpose is to provide national authorities/agencies a model or template that could serve as an initial or practical starting point to codify IGIF in law. The goal is for relevant government agencies tailor and adapt it to the current and desired future state of integrated geospatial information management in their respective countries, cognizant of their national policy and legal framework and national circumstances.

## Outline programme

The second virtual expert meeting will be held over two days, from 10:30 hrs. – 12:30 hrs. each day, and the proposed organization of work is as follows –

*Tuesday 27 April 2021*

This session of the second virtual expert meeting will set-the-scene for participants and outline the objective and desired outcomes of the expert meeting. The session will consider and deliberate the proposed annotated geospatial information sharing agreement.

*Thursday 29 April 2021*

This session will consider and deliberate on: a) the form geospatial information management policy and b) the model geospatial information management legislation.

The drafts of: a) annotated geospatial information sharing agreement; b) form geospatial information management policy; and c) model geospatial information management legislation will be shared with confirmed participants ahead of the second virtual expert meeting.

## Language

The expert meeting will be conducted in English.

## Participants

This second virtual expert meeting is a closed event and participation is solely by invitation only. Invited experts are primarily expert representatives of Member States and relevant stakeholders actively seeking to develop a set of legal instruments tailored to the IGIF to improve the availability, accessibility and usability of geospatial information nationally and sub-nationally. These instruments should support and address: a) policy and legal considerations in data sharing and dissemination; and b) the preparation of policy and legislation to strengthen nationally integrated geospatial information management.

## Organizers

The United Nations Statistics Division of DESA as the Secretariat of UN-GGIM will organize this second virtual expert meeting together with the Centre for Spatial Law and Policy and the UN-GGIM Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management.

## Points of contact

CheeHai TEO  
UN Global Geospatial Information Management Section  
Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Email : teo@un.org

Kevin Pomfret  
Centre for Spatial Law and Policy  
Email : kevin@spatiallaw.com