



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

Third expert meeting of the working group on policy and legal frameworks of geospatial information management including addressing issues related to authoritative and reliable geospatial data and emergent technologies

General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information (GEOSA) Main Meeting Room
No. 64, Al Olaya, Riyadh 12213, Saudi Arabia
7 – 9 October 2025

Draft Concept Note and Provisional Agenda

Preamble

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) [resolution 2022/24](#), adopted on 22 July 2022, reiterated the importance of strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), particularly for the achievement of its operations focused on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF), to strengthen and ensure its continued effectiveness and benefits to all Member States. With a vision to position geospatial information to effectively address global challenges and specifically in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and future global sustainable development agendas, the objectives and functions of the Committee of Experts include providing a platform for the development of effective policies and strategies on how to strengthen national capacity concerning geospatial information, especially in developing countries.

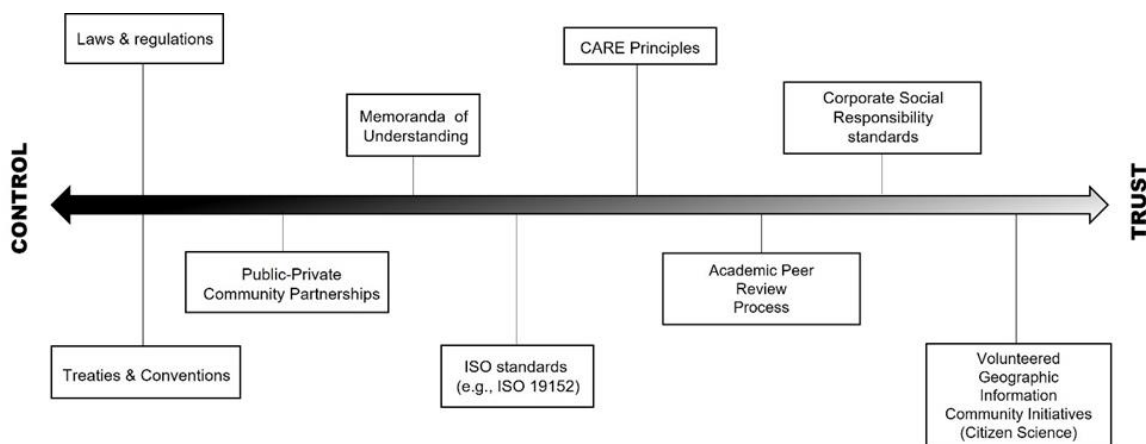
The Committee of Experts recognized that policy and legal issues that relate to the availability, accessibility and application of geospatial information are complex, and welcomed the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management continuing consideration of feasible solutions to real-world problems and the need for effective policy and legal frameworks that ensure lawful, transparent and real-world solutions in order to create preconditions for trust in the new digital era that characterizes our world today.

In August 2024, at its fourteenth session, the Committee of Experts in making decision [14/112](#) welcomed the convening of the upcoming third in-person meeting of the working group, to be hosted by Saudi Arabia in Riyadh in October 2025, and encouraged Member States, in particular those in the region, to seize the opportunity to work together to ensure robust and sound legal and regulatory frameworks for effective geospatial information management, including addressing issues related to authoritative and reliable geospatial data and emergent technologies. In addition, the Committee of Experts encouraged the working group to continue to analyse the complex policy and legal issues with particular attention to the impact of emerging technologies and trends on geospatial information management, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, and to explore appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks in consultation with Member States and partners.

In September 2024, the [Pact of the Future](#) adopted by Member States is a commitment to digital transformation and bridging the digital divide and ensure digital inclusion for all, including the most vulnerable. The Pact also recognizes the importance of data governance, provides a roadmap for artificial intelligence (AI) governance, and the relevance of digital public goods including for accelerating the Sustainable Development Goals. As digital public infrastructure is recognized the Pact notes each countries will develop and use shared digital systems according to its specific priorities and needs. This

imperative echo the motto of ‘country-led, country owned’ approach advocated by the Committee through the UN-IGIF for strengthening and enhancing geospatial information management arrangements, which is an integral part of digital public infrastructure and the mean towards a whole-of-government approach and to integrate data and services of various government agencies and departments. The Pact recognizes the need for a balanced, inclusive and risk-based approach to the governance of artificial intelligence (AI), with the full and equal representation of all countries, especially developing countries, and the meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including the geospatial community. In this context, the geospatial information management community must contribute to the future directions and implications of artificial intelligence systems and promote scientific understanding. From developing capacities, standards, trust in data, transparency and accountability, the geospatial community has a strong contribution to provide on directions to AI including for achieving the SDGs.

In 2021, the Committee endorsed the paper entitled “Authoritative data in an evolving geospatial landscape: an exploration of policy and legal challenges”, intended as a policy and legal guide to help national geospatial entities to better produce, sustain and govern the use of geospatial information that is deemed authoritative and trusted. The paper promotes the concept of a continuum of “Control versus Trust” (figure below) when considering authoritative data governance framework according to national circumstances. With the rapidly evolving geospatial landscape, the trust in data and its control will be paramount parameter for the use of AI.



Background

In 2016, UN-GGIM convened an International Forum on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management in Kuala Lumpur, in collaboration with the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and Pacific, in which it issued a [declaration](#) that called for the global geospatial information community to engage in discussions on policy and legal issues that could have an impact on the collection, licensing and use, privacy, provenance and accessibility of geospatial information.

At its seventh Session, held in New York from 2 to 4 August 2017, the Committee of Experts endorsed the establishment of a Working Group on Legal and Policy Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management and its [Terms of Reference](#) with the main objectives to play a leading role in raising awareness and highlighting the importance of sound policy and legal framework for geospatial information management at the highest levels to promote development, innovation, production consumption, distribution of geospatial information in the midst of rapidly changing societal norms

towards access to Big Data and other types of information; to explore appropriate policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management proactively, taking into consideration that good policy and legal frameworks will evolve over time, and respond to societal progress and technological developments; and to support the Committee of Experts in the development of norms, principles and guides, including any regional capacity development initiatives, to significantly increase the availability and accessibility of geospatial information so as to create high-quality, timely and reliable products and services from geospatial information to address the Sustainable Development Goals and other critical local, national, regional and international issues.

In 2018, at its eighth session, in making [decision 8/106](#), the Committee applauded the Working Group's work on developing a [Compendium on the Licensing of Geospatial Information](#) which could help and promote understanding of the legal and policy considerations that impact the collection, use, storage, and dissemination of geospatial information. The Working Group also contributed its expertise in the preparation and development of the strategic pathway on legal and policy matters for the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF). The Working Group also convened its [first expert meeting](#) where participants readily shared and exchanged knowledge and experiences related to legal and policy frameworks for national geospatial information management, including but not restricted to: the growing dependency on geospatial information in daily activities and transactions; the emergence of innovative approaches and technologies in the collection, production and delivery of geospatial information; the need for geospatial information to be "machine-readable"; and the need for better awareness of legal and policy challenges more broadly within Member States. The meeting discussed the continuum of mechanisms that support authority, such as approaches or mechanisms for compliance, for compulsion, and for cooperation. It was also noted that some jurisdictions shifted the recognition of authority from policy measures to legislative mandates.

In 2022, at its twelfth session, in making decision 12/112, the Committee of Experts noted the [Policy and Legal Resource Kit](#) developed by the Working Group as a policy and legal resource to facilitate data sharing and exchange, and improve the availability, accessibility, and usability of geospatial information, a resource that Member States can consider, adapt, and tailor to their national (or sub-national) circumstances.

In 2023, at its thirteenth session, in making decision [13/112](#), the Committee endorsed the paper entitled "[Authoritative data in an evolving geospatial landscape: an exploration of policy and legal challenges](#)", developed through a collaborative and inclusive global consultation process to address the issues related to authoritative data.

In 2025, for the fifteenth session, the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks on Geospatial Information Management developed concept papers and statements on [Data for public good in the digital world](#), [Authoritative Data for Crises](#), [Rallying Statement to the Geospatial Sector of the Developing Legal and Regulatory Framework on AI](#), [Report on International Regulations on AI in Geospatial Applications](#), and [the Implications of the Developing Legal and Regulatory Framework on AI for the Geospatial Sector](#). These paper are a direct contribution to wider considerations and policies brought to bear in the Pact of the Future and can further contribute to shape the considerations of the Committee and beyond to the international community at large.

In 2025, during its fifteenth session, the Committee of Experts noted the Working Group's Workplan for 2025–2027, which outlines new areas of focus; and welcomed the upcoming in-person meeting of the Working Group to be held in Riyadh, 7–9 October 2025, and encouraged active participation.

Third expert meeting

In accordance to its decision [14/112](#), the Committee welcomed the convening of the third in-person meeting of the working group, to be hosted by Saudi Arabia in Riyadh in October 2025. The Third expert meeting of the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks on Geospatial Information Management is hosted by the General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information (GEOSA) of Saudi Arabia. The third expert meeting will maximize the participation of and input from Member States, relevant stakeholders, and policymakers.

Objectives of the Meetings

This in-person expert meeting provides a forum for members of the Working Group together with invited participants to explore policy and legal issues for geospatial information management related to the current focus of the [Workplan Policy and Legal 2025-2027](#) including:

- Addressing policy and legal considerations for global geospatial information management that respond to evolving needs, societal progress and technological developments; notably, highlighting key policy and legal considerations related to AI and geospatial information.
- Continue to provide relevant expertise and support to the Committee of Experts in the development of norms, principles and guidelines, sustaining and building legal-policy capacity to respond to the needs of Member States and UN-GGIM functional groups.
- Continue to engage and communicate the value of sound, robust policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management, among and with relevant stakeholders and partners.

Provisional agenda

The provisional agenda for the second expert meeting of the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management –

- 1) Opening of the third expert meeting, welcome and introductions
- 2) Agenda, organization of the meeting and setting the scene
- 3) Policy and legal developments – national and regional
- 4) Workplan and deliverables for 2025 – 2027
- 5) Awareness, communication, engagement, and developing and sustaining legal-policy capacity
- 6) Evolving geospatial and technological landscape, artificial intelligence, and its regulation
- 7) UN-IGIF strategic pathway on Policy and Legal frameworks
- 8) Collaboration with partnering international organizations and other functional groups
- 9) Sixteenth session of the Committee of Experts
- 10) World Geospatial Information Congress 2026
- 11) Summary, next meeting and close

Dates

7-9 October 2025

Venue

The venue for the third expert meeting is at the General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information (GEOSA) Main Meeting Room in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Participants



This third expert meeting is an in-person closed meeting and participation is by invitation only. Participants are expected to be members of the Working Group, policy and legal invited expert representatives of Member States and regional committees, functional groups, and thematic networks of the Committee of Experts. Interested national representatives of Member States wishing to participate and contribute to this expert meeting and workshop may request to the co-Chair to be invited.

Outline Programme

The outline programme is as follows:

DAY 1 Tuesday 7 Oct 2025	Third Expert Meeting of the Working Group	
	08:30 –09:00	▪ Arrival of participants and registration
	09:00 – 10:30	▪ Agenda #1 Opening of the third expert meeting, welcome and introductions
		▪ Agenda #2 Agenda, organization of the meeting and setting the scene ▪ Agenda #3 Policy and legal developments – national and regional
	11:00–12:30	▪ Agenda #4 Workplan and deliverables for 2025 – 2027 ▪ Facilitated interactions and discussions
	Lunch break	
	13:30–15:00	▪ Visit of the GeoHub, GEOSA Main Building
DAY 2 Wednesday 8 Oct 2025	15:30 – 16:30	▪ Agenda #5 Awareness, communication, and engagement, and developing and sustaining legal-policy capacity Agenda #6 ▪ Facilitated interactions and discussions
	Third Expert Meeting of the Working Group	
	09:00–10:30	▪ Agenda #6 Evolving geospatial and technological landscape, artificial intelligence, and its regulation ▪ Stakeholder engagement and state of play ▪ Facilitated interactions and discussions
	11:00–12:30	▪ Agenda #6 Artificial intelligence and its regulation, implications for the geospatial sector and engagement strategies ▪ Facilitated interactions and discussions
	Lunch break	
	13:30–15:00	▪ Agenda #7 UN-IGIF strategic pathway on Policy and Legal frameworks ▪ Facilitated interactions and discussion
	15:30–16:30	▪ National Geospatial Governance, Policies and Standards for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ▪ Summarizing the session
	19:00	▪ Official dinner

DAY 3 Thursday 9 Oct 2025	Third Expert Meeting of the Working Group	
	09:00–10:30	▪ Agenda #8 Collaboration with partnering international organizations ▪ Facilitated interactions and discussions
	11:00–12:30	▪ Agenda #8 Collaboration with other functional groups: current developments and status ▪ Facilitated interactions and discussion
	Lunch break	
	13:30–15:00	▪ Agenda #9 Sixteenth session of the Committee of Experts ▪ Agenda#10 World Geospatial Information Congress 2026
	15:30–16:30	▪ Agenda #11 Summary, next meeting and close.

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8 September 2025