

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

07-09 October 2025

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



UN-GGIM

United Nations Committee of Experts on
Global Geospatial Information Management

WORKING GROUP ON POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS
FOR GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Positioning geospatial information to address global challenges

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UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

THE COMMITTEE



UN-GGIM Objectives



Reports directly to the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**



Discusses and coordinates **geospatial information management** activities by involving **Member States** at the highest level



Makes **joint decisions** and sets **directions** on the use of geospatial information within national, regional and global **policy frameworks**

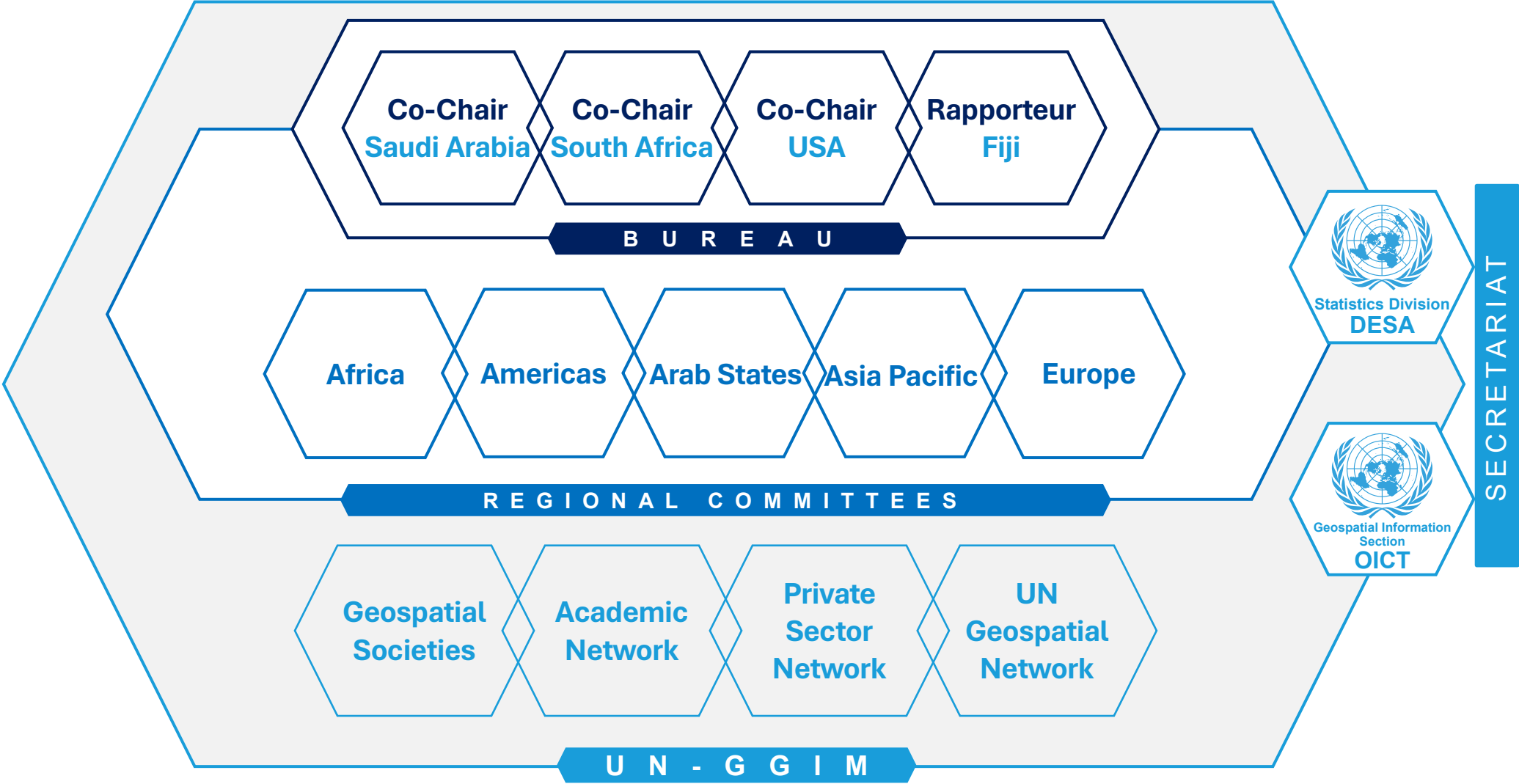


Contribute **collective knowledge** as a community with shared interests and concerns, address **global issues** and **challenges**



Develops **effective strategies** to strengthen and enhance nationally integrated **geospatial capacity** and **leadership** particularly in developing countries

UN-GGIM Architecture



UN-GGIM Bureau



Mohammed AlSayel
Co-Chair
Saudi Arabia



Clinton Heimann
Co-Chair
South Africa



Deirdre Dalpiaz Bishop
Co-Chair
USA



Meizyanne Hicks
Rapporteur
Fiji

B U R E A U

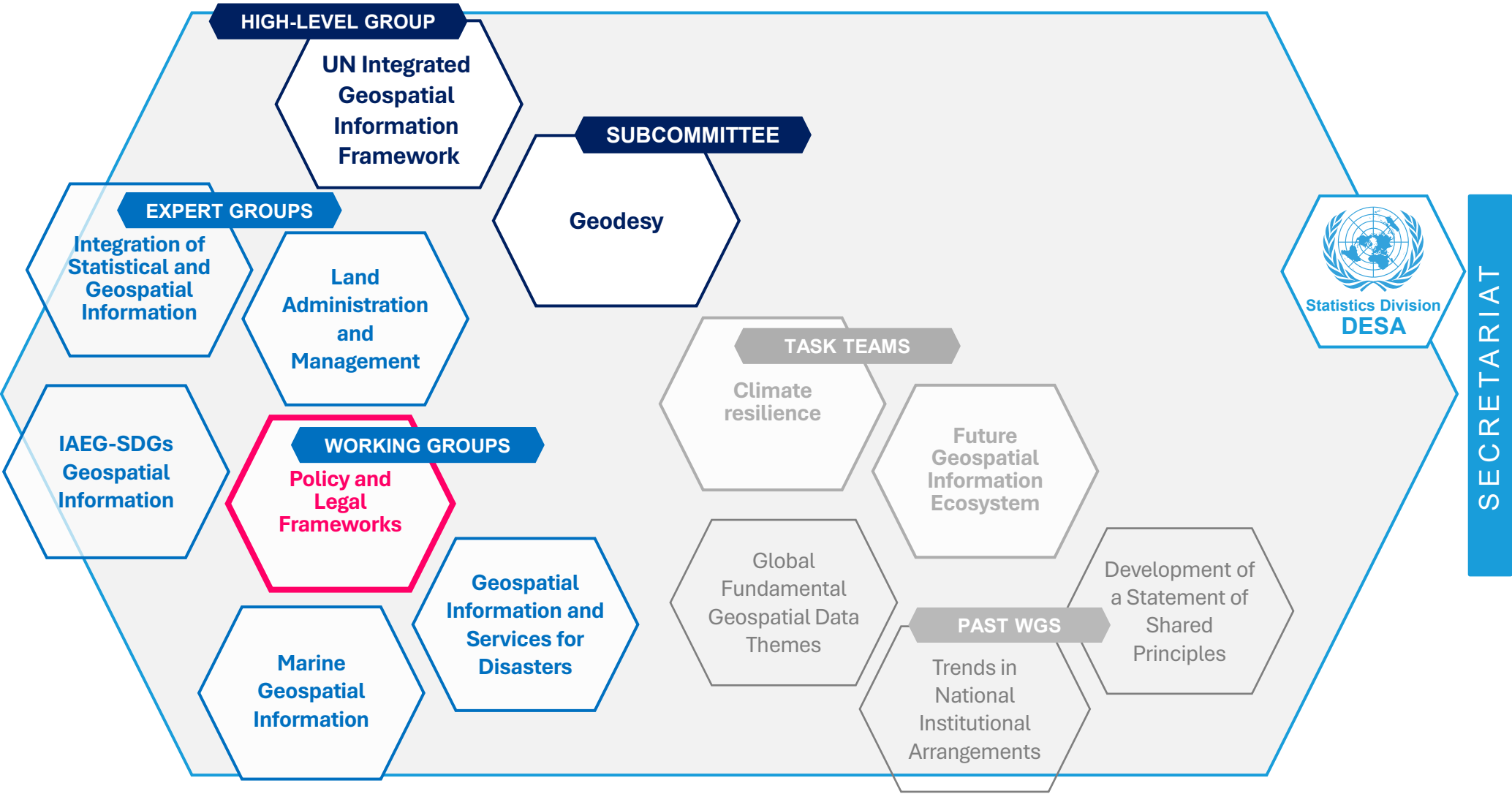
Rule 7, The Committee shall elect **three Co-Chairs** and a **Rapporteur** during each session from among its members, with due regard for the equitable geographical rotation of the officers from among the regional groups. The Co-Chairs and the Rapporteur shall constitute the Bureau of the Committee. The Bureau shall take on tasks designated by the Committee.

At its fifteenth session, the Committee of Experts agreed:

- that, having successfully achieved its objectives, the writing team on the future geospatial information ecosystem of the Bureau had concluded its activities.
- that, having successfully achieved its objectives, the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience had concluded its activities.
- to the preparation of a comprehensive holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and disaster resilience are considered holistically with a view to presenting the holistic report to the sixteenth session.



UN-GGIM Functional groups



Sixteenth Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management – Reporting

Summary reports:	29 Apr 2026
Full reports:	26 Jun 2026
Background docs:	10 July 2026

E/C.20/2026/1	Provisional agenda for the sixteenth session [...]
E/C.20/2026/2	Documentation for the session
E/C.20/2026/3	Organization of work
E/C.20/2026/4	Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements
E/C.20/2026/5	Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda
E/C.20/2026/6	Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda
E/C.20/2026/7	The future geospatial information ecosystem
E/C.20/2026/8	United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework
E/C.20/2026/9	Global geodetic reference frame
E/C.20/2026/10	Geospatial information for sustainable development
E/C.20/2026/11	Geospatial information for climate, environment and disaster resilience
E/C.20/2026/12	Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information
E/C.20/2026/13	Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management
E/C.20/2026/14	Integrated marine geospatial information
E/C.20/2026/15	Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data and emerging technologies
E/C.20/2026/16	Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community
E/C.20/2026/17	Standardization of geographical names and collaboration with UNGEGN
E/C.20/2026/18	Contribution of UN global geospatial centres (away from Headquarters) to enhancing GGIM arrangements



UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Sixteenth Session
5-7 August 2026
UN Headquarters
New York USA



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

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, 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**



Sharing of experiences on policy and legal advancements

Acknowledge the contributions and sharing of experiences from Member States

Thank participants for the exchanges, sharing of practices and experiences in implementation of national policies and legal frameworks on geospatial information management

Acknowledge and appreciate the sharing of the experience of Saudi Arabia in:

- National Geospatial Governance, policy and legal approach, aligning with the UN-IGIF
- National Geospatial Ecosystem

As one of the good practices in Geospatial Information Management



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Updates to the UN-IGIF SP2

Proposed next steps:

SP2 should be updated in order to give the geospatial community the tools it needs to understand and address concerns in AI and other emerging technologies.

Assemble a team with experience in implementing UN-IGIF (Policy and Legal):

Suggested substantive team:

Canada: Kristine Hirshkorn, Madeleine Martin, Ignace Kabayiza, Cindy Mitchell

Saudi Arabia: Asim AlGhamdi, Ali AlAwaji

South Africa: Clinton Heimann

UK: James Norris

Possible review by:

Lesley Arnolds, Tim Trainor

Considerations, see next slides:

Considerations for Modifications and Edits to SP2

- Members should review the content of SP2 to reflect any changes in policy and legal references.
- Suggest beginning with the structure diagram on page 3 to review the principal content for SP2.
- Some content should be updated. Examples to consider include:
 - 2.4.2 Policies, Norms, and Guides
 - References to nonbinding may be changing in some circumstances
 - 2.5 Guiding Principles – should “Inclusive Expertise” be added with a reference to encourage and include legal experts in planning, discussions, and decisions?



Suggestions for Consideration

- Working Group members should review SP2 and provide any comments for consideration to a central contact within the Working Group for consolidation and review by the Working Group.
 - Consider language that is simple to understand and that clearly conveys helpful guidance.
- Reference the resources available for developing a Country-level Action Plan (CAP). Part 3 of the IGIF was prepared after SP2 was developed. Part 3 offers insight into how a country considers policy and legal topics in developing their CAP.
 - Task 4 Current and desired (or future) situation assessment (references to policy and law)
 - Task 5 Baseline assessment (many questions on policy and legal topics)
 - Task 6 Environmental scanning and analysis (SWOT and PEST – external references to policy and law topics)
 - Task 8 Strategic alignment (and benefits) (aligning geospatial planning and efforts to national priorities)
 - Task 10 Gap analysis matrix (based on the nine Strategic Pathways; encourages actions to take in CAP development)
 - Task 11 Needs assessment and gap analysis (a CAP tool that includes each Strategic Pathway for identifying gaps in geospatial information management capabilities, for making decisions about how to address the gaps as well as prioritizing them, and for how to proceed with resolving the gaps through actions)
 - Task 12 Template for Country-level Action Plan (a template for developing a CAP that includes suggestions and wording for each Strategic Pathway; similar to Task 11 with additional detail and examples)



Suggestions for Consideration (continued)

- Develop strategies for greater involvement by the legal community in policy and legal topics for geospatial information management as a way of establishing and strengthening partnerships with the legal community
- The close connection between geospatial and technology demands that legal arrangements and legal requirements reflect new and evolving technology developments. This need exists within SP2 and should be encouraged by the WG.
- Add references to emerging technologies and the potential role of policy and legal frameworks where appropriate in SP2 such as:
 - AI and machine learning
 - Other new developments in remote sensing technologies such as unmanned aerial systems and drones
 - Cloud computing and big data platforms
 - 5G and Internet of Things
 - Earth observation satellites
 - Augmented reality/virtual reality and digital twins
 - Blockchain and geospatial security
 - Edge computing
 - Quantum computing



Suggestions for Consideration (continued)

- Review the Country-level Action Plans on the UN-GGIM website for policy and legal points to consider
 - <https://ggim.un.org/UN-IGIF/part3.cshtml#NationalCAPS>
- Add to Resources Section 2.9 recent documents created or used by the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks
 - Paper on Data for Public Good in the Digital World
 - Rallying Statement to the Geospatial Sector on the Development of a Legal and Regulatory Framework for AI
 - Report on International Regulations on AI in Geospatial Applications
 - Concept Paper To Address the Potential Implications to the Geospatial Sector of the Developing Legal and Regulatory Framework on AI
 - Authoritative Data for Crises
 - Others?
- Add content from discussion papers into SP2



AI and its regulation: impact for geospatial sector

Proposed next steps:

Continue to consider and address AI and geospatial

Emerging technologies such as AI present significant opportunities in geospatial information management but also raise a number of legal issues and concerns

Maintain an open agenda on policy/legal issues in emerging technologies and how to address them (AI, automation, digital twins, data spaces, regulatory sandboxes)



High-definition mapping for autonomous navigation (land/sea)

Proposed next steps:

Considerations on policy and legal implications and regulatory requirements of seamless navigation from sea to land

Develop papers on considerations on liability, rights and risks for navigation

Approaches and requirement to the mandatory use of specific data for navigation

Bridging with the legal community - webinar

Proposed next steps:

Strategize the approach to bring along the legal community:

How do we bring legal experts ?

How do we communicate the topics ?

How do we ensure participation and expertise ?



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Bridging with the legal (marine) community

Proposed next steps:

Strategize the approach to bring along the legal community:

Considerations to bridge further with the legal marine community through:

- Advisory Board on the Law of the Sea / Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
- Marine geospatial information management, policy and legal considerations
- Presentation on authoritative data by WG Policy and Legal (June 2026 or 27) at the
Informal Consultative Process (ICP) on Law of the Sea

Bridging with the land and marine – Compilation report

Proposed next steps:

Consider how to bridge the land and marine domains:

Data integration across land and sea domains is facilitated by effective laws and policies.

According to UN-IGIF *Strategic Pathway 2: Policy and Legal*, robust legal frameworks lead to “effective and secure management, sharing, integration and application of geospatial information”.

Governance and Institutions (SP-1) and Policy and Legal (SP-2) are highlighted as critical strategic pathways for advancing terrestrial-maritime integration.

A strong and enabling policy and legal environment is essential for effective geospatial information integration.



Communications

Proposed next steps:

Improved communication and impact of Working Group resources, including development of plain language resources

Develop documentation and shared outreach materials to facilitate the dissemination and understanding of key papers developed by the Working group, including in plain language, presentations, one pagers, document design, FAQs, exemplars, etc...



Coordinated periodic foresight, policy, and research documents as a comprehensive knowledge resource on future geospatial ecosystem and trends

Proposed next steps:

Concise policy and research papers on Policy and Legal (as part of wider initiative) on:

- AI and implication of its regulation for geospatial sector– ethics, accountability, and trust.
- High-definition mapping for autonomous navigation – licensing, accuracy, regulations
- Data Sovereignty and Interoperability – rights-based data sharing.
- Legal Innovation – enabling frameworks for digital public infrastructure.

Expected Outcomes:

- A living repository including on policy insight and legal foresight
- Strengthened Member State capacity for ethical and interoperable data governance.
- Institutional visibility for UN-GGIM as the global convener including on AI ethics in geospatial systems.

A world **where** geospatial information solves local to global challenges

