

**Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management  
Eleventh Session**

**Agenda item 12 – Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data**

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

Tuesday, 24 August 2021

Dear Distinguished Representatives, Delegates, Observers, and Colleagues,

The policy and legal settings for geospatial information within and across Member States is a complex tapestry that is not easily unpicked.

- Firstly, each Member State will have individual policy and legal settings that guide the access to, and use of, geospatial information. These settings may limit access due to privacy, national security or commercial-in-confidence concerns.
- Secondly, the volume of geospatial information continues to grow exponentially and is available in many forms from many sources. Geospatial information has not been the exclusive domain of national mapping authorities for some time.
- And finally, decision-makers seek a level of trust, timeliness and fitness-for-purpose in geospatial information, in order to minimise liability, and maximise defensibility and ethical use.

To address the first challenge, the Working Group has prepared a resource kit to assist Member States in creating a broad policy and legal framework for geospatial information access that can fit within their national data policy settings.

The Working Group continues to grapple with the other challenges, in particular the definition and sources of ‘authoritative data’, and the policy issues of ethical and ‘public good’ use of geospatial information. The Working Group has welcomed a diverse range of initial views from the geospatial practitioners and legal experts around the world who make up the Working Group.

The Working Group welcomes statements from Members on the report. In particular, the Working Group welcomes Members’ perspectives on the issues highlighted at Part III, in order to guide the Working Group’s report to the Twelfth Session of the Committee in 2022.

Introductory Statement prepared by Mr Simon Costello  
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