



# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

### Eleventh session

New York, 23, 24 and 27 August 2021

Item 12 of the provisional agenda\*

### Legal and policy frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data

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### Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared by the working group on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/11th-Session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the progress made by the working group in its efforts to address legal and policy issues in geospatial information management, including issues related to authoritative data.

### Summary of the report

At its tenth session, held virtually on 26 and 27 August and 4 September 2020, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 10/110, in which it noted that in the conclusions of the white paper it was affirmed that there were no general or one-size-fits-all solutions that would solve the many types of legal and policy issues. In that regard, it supported the working group's transition from hypothetical to real-world situations, addressing real-world problems and developing practical solutions by leveraging the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and its Implementation Guide, while recognizing the national circumstances that prevailed in Member States. The Committee encouraged consideration of additional legal issues, including authority and custodianship, authoritative data, geospatial data for public good, the ethical use of geospatial data, standard licence agreements applicable under diverse liability definitions and legal frameworks in Member States. It also encouraged the working group 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

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\* E/C.20/2021/1.



exchange and to improve the availability, accessibility and usability of geospatial information, including across Member States. The Committee endorsed the change of name of the working group to the working group on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management, thereby affirming its emphasis on supporting the implementation of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework at the country level as a means of addressing real-world and complex policy and legal issues.

In the report, the working group provides information on its progress and activities, including a review of its workplan for the period 2020–2022 and its efforts to address complex policy and legal issues in geospatial information management and to support the implementation of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. The working group also discusses its initial consideration of the real-world and complex policy and legal issues identified in its updated workplan, including issues relating to authority and custodianship, authoritative data and geospatial data for public good. In addition, it indicates in the report that it has developed a communication plan highlighting activities designed to encourage dialogue and engagement between the Committee and legal professionals.

The working group also provides information on its progress in considering and developing appropriate policy and legal resources to promote data sharing and exchange and to improve the availability, accessibility and usability of geospatial information. In this regard, the report contains the outcomes of the virtual expert and consultative meetings on policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management convened by the working group, the Centre for Spatial Law and Policy and the Secretariat. Meeting participants discussed the preparation and development of these resources, which can be adapted and tailored to national circumstances, for implementation of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.

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