

## **Eleventh session of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management 23, 24 and 27 August 2021**

Third informal meeting  
27 August 2021

### **Agenda item 17**

#### **Report of the Committee of Experts on its eleventh session**

Informal paper containing draft decisions of the eleventh session with agreed refinements and edits

#### **Decision 11/101.**

##### **Strengthening of geospatial information management**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Secretariat and the expanded Bureau (E/C.20/2021/4) and noted with appreciation the considerable efforts in continuing to take strategic and practical actions to champion and strengthen geospatial information management and related interlinkages for Member States in line with the mandate of the Committee pursuant to Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution [2016/27](#);
- (b) Noted the efforts to improve and strengthen national geospatial information capacity-building and cooperation in countries, especially developing countries, including through the provision of extra-budgetary resources via several funding options and mechanisms, and the need to ensure these resources be made available in an even more transparent manner to scale up efforts to avoid widening the geospatial digital divide and to avoid duplication of efforts;
- (c) Recognized the considerable achievements and increasing importance of the Committee of Experts, whose multiple workstreams have had demonstrably positive impacts on both the global geospatial landscape and national development programs over the last ten years, but which needs to be sustainably resourced to effectively guide and support Member States in their efforts towards building and maintaining integrated geospatial information capabilities going forward;
- (d) Noted that the Committee of Experts is considering ways towards an even stronger global geospatial ecosystem, inclusive of a comprehensive program to encourage modernizing national geospatial information agencies and addressing the growing geospatial needs of developing countries;
- (e) Welcomed the convening of the Second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, with the theme 'Geo-Enabling the Global Village: No one should be left behind', planned during the week of 10-14 October 2022, at the Hyderabad International Convention Centre in Hyderabad, India, and hosted by the Government of India through its Ministry of Science and Technology;
- (f) Appreciated the efforts by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs to establish a Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China and a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence at the United Nations Campus in Bonn, Germany; each of which will, in an open and transparent manner, provide opportunities to build and expand global geospatial capacity,

competence, and capability, and to strengthen geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries;

- (g) Appreciated the efforts of the governments of the Netherlands and Sweden for their tangible contributions through the secondment of virtual staff to support the work programme of the Committee of Experts and encouraged Member States to mobilize similar extra-budgetary resources and to consider practical means to not only sustain the current working modalities of the Committee's work, but to strategically strengthen its operations and stable resourcing for the future;
- (h) Welcomed the initiative taken by the Bureau and Secretariat towards the preparation of the timeline, modalities and main elements of the proposed report of the Committee of Experts to be submitted to the 2022 session of ECOSOC, and supported the establishment of an ad-hoc task team, comprising the Bureau and friends of the co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts, together with additional volunteered resources and expertise offered by Member States, to lead preparations and consult on the draft report, initially guided by the provided Draft Briefing Note, in an inclusive and transparent review process, and to entrust the Bureau and friends of the co-Chairs to finalize the report for the consideration of the Committee prior to its submission to ECOSOC in 2022;
- (i) Emphasized the importance of a close dialogue and open engagement between geospatial information management experts in Member States, their Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York to sensitize them on the tangible value of the Committee of Experts to adequately address issues in national and global geospatial information management, such as amongst others the delivery of the goals of the 2030 Agenda and other missions of the United Nations, the importance of multilateral cooperation in global geospatial information management, and to notify them on the preparations and nature of the report to ECOSOC in 2022.

#### **Decision 11/102.**

#### **Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report compiled by the Secretariat (E/C.20/2021/5), congratulated the five United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management regional committees and four thematic groups on their work and achievements during the intersessional period, including their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, recognized that their outputs, including technical background documents, provided vital knowledge for the development and strengthening of geospatial information capabilities and decision-making for Member States, and that strong and relevant regional committees and thematic groups are significant contributors to the realization of the overall vision and work programme of the Committee of Experts;
- (b) Urged for concerted efforts in the strengthening, coordination, and coherence of geospatial information management, including the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF), among the regional committees and noted the call by the regional committee of UN-GGIM: Africa for Member States and interested partners to assist the region in determining and supporting the modernizing of national geospatial information agencies to leverage geospatial information technology, and to support post-COVID-19 recovery efforts;

- (c) Welcomed the continued support of the thematic groups, namely, the Academic Network, the Geospatial Societies, the Private Sector Network, and the UN Geospatial Network, including in research, education, the use of innovative technologies, and capacity development, in advancing the SDGs with geospatial products or services, in promoting the IGIF, and for considering collaborative and joint initiatives amongst the groups to advance the mission and work programme of the Committee;
- (d) Commended the regional committee of UN-GGIM: Americas for advancing key activities and projects to coordinate and build national and regional geospatial capacity for Member States, including: the establishment of a strategic partnership with the Americas Group on Earth Observations (AmeriGEO) solidified by the Aguascalientes Declaration; the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information project (Central America project); the Caribbean Geospatial Development Initiative (CARIGEO) and the hosting of the CARIGEO Geoportal Webinar 2021 series; and the Statistical and Geospatial Framework for the Americas (MEGA) version two with the addition of new indicators, to promote the improved sharing and use of geospatial information management practices and solutions;
- (e) Noted the accomplishments of the UN Geospatial Network over the intersessional period, recognized its renewed steering group, the strengthened partnerships and communication among stakeholders, and the three background reports prepared, inclusive of the 'Generic Geospatial Job Profiles for the United Nations System', 'Geospatial for Humanity', and 'Geospatial in Action', which reflect the breadth of geospatial activities being performed within the UN system;
- (f) Welcomed the background report 'Geospatial Infrastructure for Advancing Sustainable Development' provided by the Private Sector Network, which highlighted for Member States the role of geospatial infrastructure in the fourth industrial revolution and how geospatial technology and innovation can increase productivity, transform working methods, and enable governments to provide citizens new and improved goods and services, and welcomed the growing interest and support from multiple industry actors;
- (g) Acknowledged the new Executive Committee and Advisory Board of the Academic Network, inclusive of its updated terms of reference and website, noted the publication of 'COVID-19 Pandemic, Geospatial Information, and Community Resilience', a collection of contributions of members of the Network in response to the pandemic's challenges, and noted the publication of 'Mapping for a Sustainable World', a collaborative effort between the International Cartographic Association (ICA) and the Geospatial Information Section of the United Nations;
- (h) Noted that the plenary meetings of all five regional committees would be convened in hybrid or virtual modes between November 2021 and February 2022, encouraged Member States, the thematic groups, and stakeholders to participate and contribute actively to these regional processes, and expressed its appreciation that the regional committees had seized opportunities to convene their plenary meetings in conjunction with other geospatial and related technology events.

**Decision 11/103.**

**Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, prepared with assistance from the Secretariat (E/C.20/2021/6), and recognized the efforts by the High-level Group, under the leadership of Ethiopia and Sweden, to quickly establish itself and develop an ambitious plan to provide the strategic leadership, guidance, and leading at this fundamental phase of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF), which continues to be globally important and adopted;
- (b) Endorsed the Strategic Plan of the High-level Group, inclusive of its six defined goals and focus actions, as an essential step towards the continued success and relevance of the IGIF, and supported the three priority goals identified for immediate attention – improve communication, strengthen capacity development, and mobilize sustainable funding – as a means for developing the High-level Group’s initial Plan of Work to guide its focus and activities for the next 1-2 years;
- (c) Recognized the relevance and urgency to adequately resource the refinement and finalization of the IGIF’s Implementation Guide, update the IGIF Overarching Strategic Framework, and complete related resource materials to assist Member States in the development of their respective Country-level Action Plans as a means of strengthening national geospatial information management at the institutional level and supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (d) Emphasizing the importance of maintaining the impact and continuity of the IGIF at the national level, and that is applicable for all Member States, noted suggestions for the High-level Group to consider in its Plan of Work:
  - (i) The refinement and finalization of the IGIF Implementation Guide remains a high priority for Member States, and an important basis for the development of a global community for sharing knowledge and harmonizing the integration of geospatial information at the country level, without which there is a risk that the core focus of the IGIF may become diluted and inconsistent in its adoption and implementation;
  - (ii) The pressing need to obtain sustained funding for the implementation and iterative development of the IGIF so that it endures as a living instrument, is reviewed in a constant process, kept up-to-date, and based on the practical implementation experiences of Member States;
  - (iii) Noting the geospatial community often faces challenges in effectively communicating and promoting the knowledge and awareness of the IGIF, especially with decision-makers in non-geospatial global institutions, the convening of ‘IGIF Forums’ at the global and regional level to share good practices and successful strategies of IGIF implementations at the country-level, would be beneficial in strengthening capacity development;
  - (iv) Noting the variability in the levels of national circumstances and conditions (governance, technology, capacity, etc.) between developed and developing countries when establishing a Country-level Action Plan, a set of performance indicators or diagnostic measures may assist countries as they determine which priority goals, activities, and actions to apply in their respective IGIF Country-level Action Plans;
  - (v) Embedding the IGIF, as a tangible Framework, into existing UN-Conventions, Agreements and Frameworks, such as the SDGs and the IPCC, to guarantee its high-level political awareness and long-term sustainability;

- (vi) Clear mechanisms to provide adequate resources to support the implementation of the IGIF in developing countries, to develop national Country-level Action Plans that can be effectively operationalized, and with a view to having a significant impact for geospatially enabled e-services, embarking on the path towards digital transformation, and to bridge the geospatial digital divide;
- (vii) That the High-level Group continues to engage with the UN Regional Commissions and Regional Committees of UN-GGIM to promote and implement the IGIF and support the strengthening of regional geospatial information management;
- (e) Appreciated the valuable efforts of the World Bank and multiple Member States for their initiative to convene the IGIF virtual knowledge learning series through the World Bank's Open Learning Campus in early 2021, and for sharing their expertise and guidance to interested partner organizations in Member States developing their Country-level Action Plans, thereby increasing IGIF capacity-development for many countries;
- (f) Congratulated those experts, working, and thematic groups of UN-GGIM who have aligned their activities to the IGIF over the last year and who have initiated guidance and reference documents to support the IGIF strategic pathways, and encouraged other groups to continue to strengthen the interlinkages with the High-level Group and IGIF;
- (g) Emphasized that the IGIF now provides an overarching paradigm to further strengthen nationally integrated geospatial information management, not only for Member States that are in their early stages of adopting national spatial data infrastructures (SDI) but also for those whom have already successfully implemented SDI capabilities, and that continuous collaboration will be necessary with other emerging and complementary initiatives, such as the Geospatial Knowledge Infrastructure, European Union Location Framework Blueprint and Geospatial Ecosystem Beyond SDIs, which provide direct interlinkages with the IGIF and which will ultimately extend the IGIF's relevance in the future geospatial information ecosystem.

**Decision 11/104.**

**Global geodetic reference frame**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Subcommittee on Geodesy (E/C.20/2021/7) and the progress made during the intersessional period, including the Subcommittee's considerable efforts to address the many complex issues related to the global geodetic reference frame (GGRF), inclusive of the communication and outreach to non-expert audiences, and to grow the critical understanding and importance of the GGRF as a vital infrastructure for the global geospatial community;
- (b) Noted with appreciation the substantial focus of the Subcommittee, under the leadership of its Bureau, on the broad global consultation, and subsequent finalization with Member States and relevant geodetic stakeholders, of the 'Position Paper on Sustaining the Global Geodetic Reference Frame' and the 'Concept Paper on Establishing a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence' and adopted the two papers as key guidance documents to ensure the sustainability and enhancement of the GGRF;

- (c) Welcomed the discussion on the proposed work package items described in the Position Paper to address the critical issues facing the GGRF, with initial areas of focus to consider: establishing the governance of the Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence; undertaking a global geodesy needs assessment; conducting a reference frame competency and education needs assessment; and developing complementary communication, advocacy, and capacity development mechanisms to engage current and future stakeholders in geodesy;
- (d) Appreciated the convening of the high-level Global Geodesy Forum titled ‘The Power of Where: The Value of Geodesy to Society’ on Earth Day 2021 and followed by targeted regional geodesy forums in the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Arab States and Europe, as critical elements of the global consultation process that further raised awareness and understanding of the GGRF within Member States;
- (e) Further welcomed the progress made by the Government of Germany and the United Nations to host and establish a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (GGCE) at the United Nations Campus in Bonn, Germany to support and sustain the GGRF; enhance global cooperation and coordination; support education, training and capacity building; and improve awareness and knowledge resources of the GGRF for the wider geodetic community;
- (f) Encouraged the future GGCE to collaborate and coordinate closely with the Subcommittee on Geodesy, regional GGRF Working Groups, the International Association of Geodesy, the International Federation of Surveyors, as well as stakeholder international organizations such as the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), to foster greater planning and international coordination in pursuit of strengthening partnerships and opportunities enabled by geodesy;
- (g) Noted the Subcommittee’s desire to review its working modalities, including its Terms of Reference and structure to align with the future working arrangements outlined in the Position Paper on Sustaining the Global Geodetic Reference Frame and the Concept Paper on Establishing a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence to ensure an even more efficient and relevant Subcommittee, and in this regard, encouraged active participation from developing countries in the Subcommittee and its working groups;
- (h) Noted the Subcommittee’s intention to convene its third plenary meeting in 2022 when global conditions permit.

**Decision 11/105.**

**Geospatial Information for sustainable development**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report prepared jointly by the Secretariat and the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/C.20/2021/8) and commended the valuable work towards strengthening the alignment of the work of the global geospatial information community with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

- (b) Appreciated the inclusive development of the working draft of the SDG Geospatial Roadmap as an excellent guide in communicating the value of geospatial information and other technologies in generating geospatially integrated statistical data for the SDG indicators and allowing Member States to learn from the many examples and take note of the key actions relevant to their respective national circumstances;
- (c) Welcomed and supported the SDG Geospatial Roadmap's vision and ambition to see geospatial and location-based information being recognized and accepted as official data for the SDGs and their global indicators and noted the importance of working in closer cooperation with custodian agencies and other stakeholders in terms of strategies for building the bridges and understanding between statistical and geospatial stakeholders working with the global indicator framework;
- (d) Recognized that the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap clearly communicates how the broader frameworks of the Committee of Experts, such as the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes, and the Framework for Effective Land Administration, have an important 'integrative' role in advancing the 2030 Agenda;
- (e) Noted the progress of the Federated Information System for the SDGs initiative and welcomed the formation of the SDG Data Alliance, both as integrated system-of-systems approaches, that will focus on how geospatial information is, and can be, used to support local to global SDG indicator initiatives, and encouraged further communication and updates of these activities to support the integration of geospatial information and enabling technologies in sustainable development and to help face current and near-future global challenges, including the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, climate change mitigation, and disaster resilience and adaptation.

**Decision 11/106.**

**Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information (E/C.20/2021/9) and noted the continued efforts of the Expert Group to support the integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information to realize national priorities and global development agendas;
- (b) Urged Member States to continue to implement and operationalize the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF) as a tool for attaining geospatially enabled statistical data for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2020 Round of Population Censuses, and recognized that addressing the many data integration challenges presented by the global COVID-19 pandemic and other complex issues, such as climate change and disaster resilience, requires the implementation of the GSGF at the national and regional level;
- (c) Expressed its appreciation for the significant progress in the development of the GSGF Implementation Guide, which provides both the geospatial and statistical communities with valuable guidance to identify methodologies, techniques, and approaches to implement the GSGF and, in this regard, invited the completion of the GSGF Implementation Guide to provide pragmatic and



understandable guidance on the implementation and operationalization of the GSGF by Member States;

- (d) Welcomed the many use-cases and good practices describing how the GSGF has been implemented and operationalized within national and regional contexts, as elaborated within the document 'National and Regional Experiences of Implementing the GSGF' and requested the inclusion of relevant case studies as part of the process of finalizing the GSGF Implementation Guide;
- (e) Recognized the promising initial results of the 'Global survey to diagnose readiness at the country level for implementing the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework' and urged National Statistical Offices and National Geospatial Information Agencies within Member States to submit their responses if they had not yet done so; and suggested that the future work plan of the Expert Group address the gaps identified by the global survey and develop the interlinkages between the GSGF and Integrated Geospatial Information Framework;
- (f) Welcomed and encouraged efforts to strengthen coordination with the regional committees of UN-GGIM, UN Regional Commissions and other regional stakeholders, and expressed its appreciation for the implementation of the GSGF at the regional level.

**Decision 11/107.**

**Application of geospatial information related to land administration and management**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management (E/C.20/2021/10), its focus on updating its work plan for the period 2020-2022 and appreciated the efforts of the Expert Group in continuing to take practical outreach actions to advocate and raise awareness of the importance of timely and effective fit-for-purpose land administration that must be affordable and accessible by all;
- (b) Appreciated the Expert Group utilizing the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) Implementation Guide as a reference resource when considering guidance to implement the Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) at the country level and noted contributory efforts of the Expert Group to support the implementation of the IGIF;
- (c) Noted the initial consideration of the five key elements for implementing the FELA at the country level that translate concepts into practical guidance, and that the focus of these elements should include: modalities for sharing and exchanging knowledge, information, and experiences, including relevant use cases, practices, and examples; an assessment mechanism that considers the nine pathways of the FELA and national circumstances of Member States; and appropriate collaborative efforts with regional committees, functional and thematic groups of the Committee and relevant international stakeholders;
- (d) Urged the Expert Group's further consideration on the increased and complex rights, restrictions and responsibilities associated with land; the increasingly digital and mobile access to land information; the integration of building information modeling (BIM) and the cadastre; and the cybersecurity and data security mechanisms needed to protect vital land information assets;



- (e) Welcomed the volunteered efforts from Member States to translate the FELA into languages other than English as an important step in continuing advocacy, raising awareness, and promoting the merits and benefits of effective land administration and to improve access and understanding of the FELA, and encouraged further volunteered efforts from other Member States to translate the FELA into additional languages, such as the proposition of Belgium to provide the translation to French;
- (f) Noted the Expert Group plans to convene a formal meeting, together with an international seminar on effective land administration, when global conditions permit.

**Decision 11/108.**

**Geospatial information and services for disasters**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters (E/C.20/2021/11) and noted the continued efforts and commitment of the Working Group to promote the importance of geospatial information and services in disaster risk reduction and management, and the work towards implementing the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters, especially its relevance during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant need for a multi-hazard response approach by Member States and disaster risk reduction and management related organizations in addressing the pandemic and other hazards;
- (b) Appreciated the preparation of the Working Group's Work Plan 2020-2023 and endorsed its implementation, acknowledging the importance of its four targets which will guide the initial activities and operations of the Working Group, and invited Member States and relevant experts to contribute as members of the Working Group to actively progress its activities as outlined in its Work Plan;
- (c) Congratulated the Working Group for successfully undertaking its many activities in raising awareness on the Strategic Framework, inclusive of the enhanced engagement and collaboration with multiple key stakeholder groups and international organizations, especially the recent Open Geospatial Consortium's Disaster Pilot project 2021, and the Working Group's contribution to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Global Assessment Report 2022, all which ensures consistent communication and coherence, avoidance of duplication of effort, and creates synergies among the many groups and organizations undertaking disaster risk reduction and management activities;
- (d) Noted the opportunity to integrate geospatial information from science and technology agencies with responsibilities for hazards, to strengthen the provision and uptake of geospatial information for disaster risk reduction and management, and welcomed the recommendation to consider the broader engagement by the Working Group with relevant science and technology agencies across Member States;
- (e) Supported the development of a global disaster risk reduction inventory on organizations, services and platforms, and invited Member States, disaster risk reduction and management organizations and relevant academia, private sector and UN System organizations, to participate in the global administration of the developed inventory surveys, and further invited the Working Group to include existing datasets and platforms in the inventory, and examine potential linkages with developments

of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group (Earth Observation Risk Toolkit) and other disaster risk reduction and management initiatives, in an effort to create synergies and cooperation;

- (f) Acknowledged the importance of the results and recommendations included in the 'Assessment 2020 Results - Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters' as a tool to assist the Working Group to better understand the status of the national geospatial information and services landscape across all phases of disasters, noted that the differences between countries and regions need to be addressed and recommends that further capacity building and outreach efforts be pursued to enhance the implementation of the Strategic Framework, and additionally noted the low response from Africa and non-response from Arab States and therefore recommends reopening the Assessment survey to both regions towards providing another opportunity for completion and the subsequent development of a second edition of the Assessment 2020 Results document that would better facilitate a global monitoring of the Strategic Framework's implementation;
- (g) Welcomed the Working Group's support for the development of a statistical framework on disaster-related statistics, appreciated the establishment of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Disaster Related Statistics (IAEG-DRS) and encouraged the IAEG-DRS to focus on existing reporting mechanisms and frameworks, such as the reporting systems of the Sendia Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the SDGs.

#### **Decision 11/109.**

##### **Marine Geospatial Information**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information (E/C.20/2021/12) and noted the work plan for the period 2021 – 2022 and progress made, including the practical collaboration with the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), the IHO Innovation and Technology Laboratory and the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC), and in noting the leadership transition, welcomed Singapore as co-Chair and expressed sincere appreciation to Burkina Faso for its leadership and contribution to the Working Group;
- (b) Appreciated the continuing efforts to align the work of the Working Group with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) in modernizing the geospatial ecosystem, and welcomed the development of an integrated policy guidance and operational framework (draft operational framework) for the marine domain that embraces all water related elements including oceans and seas, coastal zones, deltas and tributaries, inland water bodies and waterways as an important contribution in this modernization, whilst reiterating that the Working Group must not replicate the IGIF;
- (c) Recognizing that the draft operational framework, tentatively named IGIF-Hydro, promotes and advises on practical considerations regarding the integration of the marine domain, a domain that in general does not include every element of 'hydro' within the geospatial ecosystem, suggested further deliberation on how the draft operational framework for the marine domain should be named;

- (d) Noted that the integration of the terrestrial, maritime and cadastral domains remains a priority for Member States, and encouraged further considerations to ensure that institutions collaborate together to consider and develop interoperable arrangements, standards, and infrastructures for the integration of all types of geospatial information leveraging the IGIF, and to advocate guidance, standards and practices that will facilitate seamless integration of datasets spanning the terrestrial, maritime and cadastral domains;
- (e) Urged the marine domain to be recognized as being cross-thematic and cross-jurisdictional, covering hydrography, oceanography, marine geology, marine biology, human related activities, and maritime governance, and that the draft operational framework serves as a bridge between the IGIF and marine geospatial information management practices, particularly in support of developing effective and inclusive integrated marine geospatial information management and programs;
- (f) Encouraged support and consideration for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) Seabed 2030 Project to contribute to the goal to conserve and sustainably manage the oceans, seas and marine resources with the draft operational framework, and in this regard, noted the importance of engaging the ocean science and policy and legal communities towards developing integrated solutions;
- (g) Requested the Working Group to focus on developing and completing the draft operational framework in a timely manner in consultation with Member States and relevant stakeholders; and noted the planned webinar series in October 2021 as precursor activities for the third expert meeting of the Working Group expected to be convened in April 2022 together with an international seminar, and thanked Singapore for hosting these important events.

**Decision 11/110.**

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

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management (E/C.20/2021/13) and commended the progress made, under the leadership of Sweden and Australia, in updating its work plan for the period 2020-2022, whereby the Working Group transitioned from hypothetical to real-world policy and legal situations, and began legal considerations on authoritative data, geospatial data for public good and ethical use, and the implementation of the Policy and Legal Strategic Pathway of the of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF);
- (b) Appreciated that policy and legal frameworks for geospatial information management within and across Member States are a complex mixture of interlinked issues in which established legal systems and jurisdictions are diverse and at different levels of maturity, presenting a challenging and important area of work for the Committee and for the implementation of the IGIF, and noted the importance to effectively communicate and raise awareness of these issues to policy and decision-makers, relevant stakeholders and the general public;
- (c) Requested the Working Group to continue its consideration on the policy and legal settings impacting privacy, national security, commercial-in-confidence concerns, authority, diversity of geospatial

information sources, liability, and multiplicity of use; and recognizing policy and decision-makers seek trust, timeliness, and fitness-for-purpose in geospatial information, and in this regard, the importance of maintaining trust in geospatial information for evidence-based policies and decisions;

- (d) Encouraged continuing consideration of policy and legal issues related to authoritative data and public good, noting that defining authoritative data can be complex and challenging with differing national circumstances, that the production of geospatial information and services are no longer exclusive to nationally mandated agencies due to the changing digital and technological landscape and diversity and innovative use of geospatial information, and in this regard, to collaborate with relevant international organizations;
- (e) Welcomed the progress in developing and preparing a policy and legal resource kit to support Member States in improving data sharing and exchange, noted that these resources are foundational for implementing the IGIF with appropriate national-level policy and legal frameworks, and encouraged continuing collaboration with functional groups and regional committees of the Committee of Experts to further understand policy and legal factors and implications, and to advance the implementation of the IGIF at the country-level;

#### **Decision 11/111.**

##### **Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the three standards development organizations, namely, the International Hydrographic Organization, technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization, and the Open Geospatial Consortium on the implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community (E/C.20/2021/14), noted the broad range of geospatial standards considered, and expressed its appreciation to the three standards development organizations (SDOs) for their valuable work and continuing support;
- (b) Appreciated the collaborative efforts and work of the SDOs in developing and preparing standards for the measurement and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, advancing data access and data sharing, including towards the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, disaster risk reduction and management, and welcomed continuing development of the open API standards, Land Administration Domain Model (LADM), and the S-100 suite of marine data product specifications;
- (c) Welcomed and endorsed the Third Edition of the Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management (Standards Guide), the purpose of which is to promote the recommendations regarding the use of standards for geospatial information management, and urged Member States and relevant stakeholders to continue with the broad review and refinement of the Standards Guide as a living and online resource aligned with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF), and to actively use the Standards Guide for standards-based solutions;
- (d) Encouraged Member States and relevant stakeholders to contribute practical examples on the implementation of geospatial standards to further strengthen the Standards Guide, as a means to ensure standards accountability and compliance of practice, and to demonstrate the benefits of implementing geospatial standards, to further participate in the development of geospatial standards

together with the SDOs, and for the SDOs to consider means to expand the capacities of Member States towards the adoption and implementation of geospatial standards.

**Decision 11/112.**

**Collaboration with the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management:

- (a) Welcomed the report prepared by the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (E/C.20/2021/15), congratulated the Group of Experts on the adoption of its Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021- 2029 at its session held virtually in May 2021, noted that the Strategic Plan will assist the Group of Experts to fulfill of its goals, encourage and assist in the creation of geographical names authorities, provide information to external bodies including the Committee of Experts, and promote collaboration between UN bodies towards wider standardization of geographical names;
- (b) Supported efforts and actions for strengthening interaction and collaboration between the Bureaus of the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts, including opportunities for partnership such as sharing technical expertise and geographical names data, pursuing joint capacity-building initiatives, raising awareness on the importance of toponymy, sharing guidelines, methods, and practices for the standardization of geographical names, and the preservation of native place names derived from indigenous languages, as part of the cultural heritage of a country;
- (c) Encouraged Member States to improve communication, coordination and cooperation between geospatial information management authorities and geographical names authorities at the national and regional levels, including across thematic areas, to strengthen geospatial information management, noting that geographical names are an essential referencing component for geospatial data infrastructures, geospatial knowledge networks, and a vital part of a country's linguistic and cultural heritage;
- (d) Acknowledged the importance of standardized geographical naming for integrative information management, underpinned by innovations in methodology and technology for the development of national geographical names data bases and web services for a variety of purposes, including in healthcare and emergency response, the management of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (e) Noted the recommendations of the Group of Experts to revitalize and activate its Geographic and Linguistic Divisions, national names bodies and establish a Trust Fund to support the implementation of its Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029 with emphasis on capacity-building for Member States focused on training initiatives to strengthen skills on principles and techniques of geographic naming, and its suggestion to explore collaborative projects to safeguard cultural heritage;
- (f) Noted the slow progress in the development of the new interface to enhance the current version of the GeoNyms system and the Africa Gazetteer project to produce a ubiquitous application for the capturing and validating of geographical names nationally and in the continent, invited interested partners to join in the efforts for the redevelopment of the Africa Gazetteer project, and also noted

the European Open Regional Gazetteer being delivered through the new Open Maps for Europe project to provide easy access to pan-European datasets by EuroGeographics.

**Decision 11/113.**

**Programme Management Report**

The Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management noted the oral report delivered by a representative of the Secretariat on the programme management of the Committee.