



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
23 May 2022

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

Twelfth session

New York, 3–5 August 2022

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Strengthening global geospatial information management arrangements

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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 with the assistance of the Bureau and friends of the Co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts, on strengthening global geospatial information management arrangements, which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee (<http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/12th-Session>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the Committee's implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/27 entitled "Strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management" and, in this context, to examine the strengthening of such arrangements of the Committee, as well as the way in which the global geospatial information management community contributes to efforts by Member States to strengthen their geospatial information management arrangements.

Summary of the report

At its eleventh session, held virtually on 23, 24 and 27 August 2021, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 11/101, in which it recognized the considerable achievements and increasing importance of the Committee of Experts, whose multiple workstreams had had demonstrably positive impacts on both the global geospatial landscape and national development programmes over the past 10 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.

* E/C.20/2022/1.



The Committee of Experts 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 to be submitted to the 2022 session of the Economic and Social Council, and supported the establishment of an ad hoc task team, comprising the Bureau and friends of the Co-Chairs of the Committee, together with additional volunteered resources and expertise offered by Member States, to lead preparations and consult on the draft report 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 the Council in 2022.

The Committee of Experts also emphasized the importance of close dialogue and open engagement between geospatial information management experts in Member States, their ministries of foreign affairs and permanent missions to the United Nations in New York to sensitize them on the tangible value of the Committee for adequately addressing issues in national and global geospatial information management, and to notify them of the preparations for and nature of the report to the Council in 2022.

In the report, prepared with the assistance of the Bureau and friends of the Co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts, the Secretariat provides information on efforts to continue strengthening the coordination and coherence of global geospatial information management; reflects on the progress made by the Committee in the intersessional period, particularly with regard to an in-person meeting of the Bureau and Friends of the Co-Chairs, held in New York from 26 to 28 April 2022; and discusses the means by which the Committee, under the leadership of the Bureau and friends of the Co-Chairs, has collectively responded to Council resolution [2016/27](#) through a report on enhancing global geospatial information management, for submission to the Council prior to the conclusion of the Council's 2022 session.

The report to the Council represents the culmination of the work on this particular agenda item over the past six years and comprises four distinct parts on: (a) how the Committee has transitioned its work over the past decade from establishment to implementation; (b) the clear value proposition offered by the Committee to Member States and the United Nations, contextualizing the significant progress made by the Committee since it last comprehensively reported to the Council in 2015 and emphasizing that it is now time to invest in the Committee; (c) the case for change by highlighting the Committee's remaining challenges and gaps in implementing resolution [2016/27](#); and (d) a set of institutional arrangements and recommendations for consideration by the Council on the future modalities and programme of work of the Committee.

One of the key areas highlighted in the report is that the current institutional arrangements of the Committee of Experts are not sustainable and are limiting further progress by and the overall impact of the Committee. The Committee has operated relatively effectively through the considerable contributions and goodwill of national geospatial experts from Member States. However, that goodwill is a finite resource and in these times of constrained budgets and human resources it is neither sustainable nor sufficient for realizing the potential impact of the Committee's work in supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other development agendas. Furthermore, these contributions and goodwill require additional Secretariat resources to ensure coordination and coherence across the Committee's growing programme of work.

The report outlines how, with limited resources, the Committee of Experts has delivered significant value since its establishment and remains committed to enhancing global geospatial information management in order to respond more efficiently and effectively to the urgent needs of the 2030 Agenda and the decade of

action and delivery for sustainable development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, as well as with regard to climate change and recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. However, this ongoing commitment brings with it new requirements on the part of the Committee, namely: structure, as an expert subsidiary body of the Council with inclusive and participatory modalities for making joint decisions and setting directions by consensus with all Member States; sustainability, with regular budgetary resources so as to ensure continual coordination and coherence, including with regard to norm-setting and capacity development; and status, with meeting entitlements accorded to convene annual sessions. As a strengthened subsidiary body of the Council, the Committee would then be well placed to support the critical development work of the Council and Member States, as well as to ensure that no one is geospatially left behind.

With regard to the report prepared with the assistance of the Bureau and friends of the Co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts, the Secretariat provides the Committee of Experts with an overview of the progress made regarding the convening of the second United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, on the theme “Geoenabling the global village: no one should be left behind”, which will be hosted by the Government of India through its Ministry of Science and Technology at the Hyderabad International Convention Centre in Hyderabad, India, from 10 to 14 October 2022. The convening of the Congress is linked to the mandate entrusted to the Committee by the Council to convene global forums in order to promote comprehensive dialogue on global geospatial information management with all relevant Governments, international organizations and stakeholders. The report also contains information on the progress made towards the establishment and inauguration of the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre in Deqing, China, and a global geodetic centre of excellence at the United Nations campus in Bonn, Germany.
