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Determining the future geospatial information ecosystem

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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 on determining the future geospatial information ecosystem, 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/12th-Session>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on how the global geospatial community and Member States can be more adequately prepared for the rapidly emerging geospatial information ecosystem and environment of the future.

Summary of the report

At its eleventh session, held virtually on 23, 24 and 27 August 2021, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 11/103, in which it emphasized that the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework now provided an overarching paradigm to further strengthen nationally integrated geospatial information management, not only for Member States that were in the early stages of adopting national spatial data infrastructures but also for those that had already successfully implemented spatial data infrastructure capabilities. However, continuous collaboration would be necessary with other emerging and complementary initiatives, such as the Geospatial Knowledge Infrastructure, the European Union Location Framework Blueprint and a geospatial ecosystem beyond spatial data infrastructures, which provided direct interlinkages with the Framework and which would ultimately extend the Framework's relevance in the future geospatial information ecosystem.

The complexity of the future geospatial ecosystem, and thus the need to give consideration thereto, was reiterated in a background paper entitled "Towards a sustainable geospatial ecosystem beyond spatial data infrastructures", which was submitted to the eleventh session of the Committee of Experts. In this regard, the need to consider ways towards an even stronger global geospatial ecosystem, including a

* E/C.20/2022/1.



comprehensive programme to encourage the modernizing of national geospatial information agencies and to address the growing geospatial needs of developing countries, was also noted by the Committee.

As the Framework has developed and its implementation has become more widespread, it is clear that the geospatial ecosystem continues to grow and evolve and that it is now more expansive than ever owing to rapid technological developments, thus leading to increased use and adoption of geospatial information across diverse government, industry and user sectors, as well as the generation of large amounts of public-good geospatial data and applications. However, obtaining a clear understanding of what the future geospatial information ecosystem beyond the Framework might look like, one in which almost all data will relate to a location in some way, may be difficult for some of the sectors involved, especially in developing countries.

In the report, the Secretariat provides information on efforts aimed at continuing to take steps with regard to exploring the geospatial landscape and determining the future geospatial information ecosystem with a view to assisting Member States and national geospatial information agencies in their thinking on future geospatial environments in which technological developments will play a crucial role. In the light of the many global geospatial leaders and senior executives in attendance at the 2022 edition of the Geospatial World Forum, held in Amsterdam from 10 to 12 May 2022, the Secretariat took the opportunity to convene a two-hour open discussion session to explore the many dimensions and perspectives of a future geospatial information ecosystem, including how it might coexist within a larger digital ecosystem. In the report, the discussion session is further elaborated on and some suggested next steps are provided. The Committee of Experts is expected to provide further inputs and guidance and to discuss elements of the future geospatial information ecosystem.
