

# Economic and Social Council

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## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial

### Information Management

#### Fifteenth session

New York, 6– 8 August 2025

Item 10 of the provisional agenda\*

#### Geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience

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### Note by the Secretariat

#### Summary

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the reports prepared by the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management and the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience which will be available in the language of submission only from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the reports prepared by the working group and the task team and express its views on efforts to strengthen the use of geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience.

At its fourteenth session, held in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision [14/108](#), in which the Committee welcomed the reports of the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience and the working group on geospatial information and services for disasters, and the efforts made by the task team to further position the Committee to address climate resilience with integrated geospatial information, and by the working group to revitalize its working modalities with renewed membership, revised terms of reference and an updated workplan for the period 2024–2025.

The Committee also recalled earlier consideration on the importance of a “joined-up” approach to addressing climate resilience and disaster risk management, requested the task team and the working group to continue with their current working modalities, planned work and activities for the forthcoming intersessional period and to continue to report under the current agenda item, and decided to rename the working group as the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management, with a renewed focus on access and utilization of integrated geospatial information that supports all aspects of disaster risk management.

Also at its fourteenth session, the Committee requested the Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to holistically consider climate resilience and disaster risk management as part of the development of the strategic framework of the Committee of Experts for the period 2025–2030, considering all current working modalities, planned activities and deliverables of the task team and the working group.

In its report, the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management outlines the progress it made and intersessional activities it carried out,

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\* [E/C.20/2025/1](#).

including collaboration on and contributions to the development of a common statistical framework on disaster-related statistics and the joint hosting of a webinar on disaster risk reduction highlighting the importance of collaboration and partnerships supporting the use of geospatial information during all disaster phases by Member States, citing Hurricane Beryl as a relevant case study. Also noted in the report are working group's efforts to cultivate partnerships that advance robust discussion and facilitate greater understanding and the identification of synergies between disaster risk management and climate resilience. In the report, the working group encourages collaboration and partnership among national disaster agencies and national geospatial information agencies with a view to increasing awareness and implementation of the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters; addresses the development and distribution of structured forms to collect information on national challenges relating to the use of geospatial information for disasters risk management; and presents its revised workplan for the period 2024 - 2026.

In its report, the task team on geospatial information for climate resilience provides details on progress made to deliver its stated outcomes during the intersessional period. This includes the focus to develop and launch a paper entitled "Applying geospatial information to climate challenges", as well as support for the convening of the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Mexico City in October 2024. Noted in the paper, which is provided as a background document, is the importance of having political leaders involved in advocating for and investing in geospatial infrastructure to increase resilience. The vital role of the Committee of Experts and its frameworks, such as the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, in supporting Member States in developing the capacity to withstand increasing risk and to recover from disasters, in a manner that is transformative and that can become the basis for long-term resilience, is highlighted in the paper through national case studies. The task team also notes in its report that, as the tasks set for it by the Committee of Experts have been delivered, it will conclude its activities at the fifteenth session of the Committee.

Both reports contain information on the meetings and discussions held between the two groups in the later part of the intersessional period with a view to forging coordination and coherence on strategic orientations and synergies with regard to activities related to geospatial information for climate, environment and resilience. The reports also include points for discussion for the Committee of Experts related to providing inputs and guidance on the substantive content associated with the agenda item; encouraging Member States and relevant interested experts to contribute to forthcoming consolidated activities under the agenda item; and expressing its views on the preparation of a single holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and resilience are considered, to be presented to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

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## I. Introduction

1. Acting on climate resilience is not just an imperative for the Committee of Experts; it is an imperative for the world. Through the work of the Task Team, since its thirteenth session, the Committee has advocated for and raised awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience. It has done so through a variety of fora, notably as part of a side event on the margins of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) and by supporting the convening of the Seventh High-level Forum, with the theme “Accelerating Implementation: Achieving Resilience”.

2. Provided as a background document to the report, the paper “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges” advocates that in order to build long-term resilience, countries and communities need to develop systems that can prevent disasters or better manage risk. This can include taking actions such as investing in resilient infrastructure that can withstand climate impacts, and improving economic and social opportunities to reduce underlying social vulnerability to hazards by increasing community resilience. Through national case studies, the paper highlights and recognizes the vital role of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) as an enabling framework that can support Member States in developing the capacity to withstand increasing risk and recover from disasters in a manner that is transformative and forward-looking, providing a foundation for long-term resilience.

3. In its decision 13/107, the Committee of Experts emphasized that acting on climate resilience is now imperative, that we should not delay this item further, and that it is critically important to advocate for and raise awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience. It is with this urgency in mind that the Task Team on Geospatial Information for Climate Resilience was established.

4. In its decision 14/108, the Committee re-emphasized that acting on climate resilience remained an urgent imperative for the Committee of Experts and that it was critically important to advocate for and raise awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience, commended the progress made by the task team during the intersessional period and its consideration and development of a paper entitled “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges”. Furthermore, the Committee also appreciated the many and varied contributions of national experiences that complement the paper, promoting awareness and understanding of the importance of geospatial information in all its forms to address climate challenges and resilience, further encouraged Member States and relevant stakeholders to share their national, regional and global experiences demonstrating the role and relevance of geospatial information for climate resilience and to use that body of evidence to advocate for local, national and regional actions, and in that context appreciated the contribution of the task team to the substantive programme of the Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management.

5. Moreover, the Committee recalled earlier consideration on the importance of a “joined-up” approach to address climate resilience and disaster risk management, requested the task team and the working group to continue with their current working modalities, planned work and activities for the upcoming intersessional period and to continue to report under the current agenda item, and decided to rename the working group as the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management with a renewed focus on access and utilization of integrated geospatial information that supports all aspects of disaster risk management.

6. This report summarizes the activities and tasks delivered since its inception at the thirteenth session. Additionally, it reaffirms the discussions and decisions made at the fourteenth session to acknowledge the crucial importance of geospatial information for climate and resilience. It notes that as the tasks set by the Committee of Experts have been delivered, the Task Team will conclude its activities at this present session. This report will guide the Committee of Experts in considering the topics of environment, climate, resilience, and sustainability holistically, and provide some considerations on how the Committee of Experts could advance this agenda item in alignment with the Strategic Framework 2025-2030. Points for discussion and decision are in paragraph 28.

## **II. Activities in the intersessional period**

7. The task team has been led by Barbados, Tonga, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the). The following Member States have contributed to the work of the task team since its inception in 2023: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Ethiopia, Germany, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Singapore, South Africa, Tonga, Türkiye, The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the), and United States of America. This wide cross-section of Member States has ensured that the task team's work is relevant to all Member States.

8. The task team has met on an ad hoc basis during the intersessional period, on a roughly quarterly schedule. The three main areas of focus have been to finalize the report of the task team, support and deliver elements of the Seventh High-Level Forum, and prepare for the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

9. The co-convenors and leadership team within the Task Team have taken a proactive approach to promote the paper "Applying geospatial information to climate challenges" during the intersessional period. This has been supported by a series of events designed to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of geospatial information in addressing climate challenges and enhancing resilience, as well as to increase awareness of the Committee's work more broadly. This includes:

- (a) In October 2024, the task team supported the convening of the Seventh High-level Forum of UN-GGIM. During this event, the task team presented and launched the report, showcasing examples of how geospatial information is currently being used to make a difference at local, regional, and global scales. More details can be found below.
- (b) In February 2025, the Bureau and Expanded Bureau met in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. This regular meeting brought together the leadership elements of the Committee of Experts to consider the strategic direction and priorities for the Committee and to progress the decisions agreed upon at the fourteenth session. The topic of climate, environment, and resilience was discussed during the meeting, and the task team provided guidance and options to the Bureau and the Expanded Bureau on how to progress this activity and align the work within the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework 2025-2030, which will be adopted at this fifteenth session.
- (c) Additionally, in February 2025, the task team published an article in GIM International's Business Guide 2025. The article 'How to transform climate action' discussed how, while we can have a positive impact in tackling the climate change crisis as individuals, collectively our voice becomes even more powerful. Policymakers, decision-takers, activists, and champions all have a role to play. This has been

a core set of messages within the task team, aligned with the overall objectives and tasks outlined in the work plan.

10. There has also been a positive shift in the adoption of discussions around climate and resilience, and this has been seen within the activities of the UN-GGIM Regional Committees, by way of example:

- (a) In May 2025, the UN-GGIM: Europe Line of Work on the Sustainable Development Goals hosted a webinar focused on SDG 15.3.1 – the proportion of land that is degraded over the total land area. The webinar brought together leaders from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the GEO Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship (GEO-LDN) and the Task Team on Geospatial Information for Climate Resilience to explore the different institutional frameworks and methodologies that can be used to meet the aims of SDG 15.3.1. This is linked closely to the objective of the task team to strengthen the use of geospatial information, in all its forms, to address climate and resilience; and,
- (b) In June 2025, UN-GGIM: Europe incorporated the theme of resilience as a core concept into the agenda of the Twelfth Plenary, held in Brussels, Belgium, on 24 to 25 June 2025. This included focused sessions on Resilience – operating context; Resilience – solutions to global challenges; and, Resilience – data we trust. This demonstrates the increased importance of climate and resilience, linking the global priorities of the Committee of Experts through to the regional context.

11. The task team has continued an active dialogue with the Committee’s working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management and believes that the Committee of Experts, the Bureau, and the Secretariat all have important roles and responsibilities to accelerate the impact and focus on embedding geospatial information within discussions on climate, environment and resilience.

12. High-level political engagement has been a core aspect of the task team’s work throughout its operation. This engagement has included support from the Hon. Prime Minister of Barbados for the High-level Forum in October 2024, as well as the involvement of the Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations and the United Kingdom’s Special Envoy to SIDS during the side event at the SIDS4 conference in May 2024. Participants at the side event during the fourteenth session heard firsthand from the Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations, who discussed how this political engagement demonstrates the increased need and demand for trusted, reliable geospatial data to inform and impact climate- and resilience-related decision-making.

### III. The Seventh High-Level Forum on UN-GGIM

13. The second objective of the task team was to convene an appropriate and relevant international forum or event on geospatial information for climate resilience, bringing together relevant stakeholders to establish an effective programme of work. In this regard, the Seventh High-level Forum of UN-GGIM was convened in Mexico City from 8 to 10 October 2024, on the theme “Accelerating Implementation: Achieving Resilience”. Detailed information on the forum can be found in the paper entitled *Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements* (E/C.20/2025/4) also tabled at this present session.

14. To avoid duplication and overlap, it was decided that the task team would contribute to the development and delivery of the High-level Forum, rather than convening a separate event. The convenors of the task team played an active role

on the Forum's Advisory Committee and were responsible for delivering a substantive part of the agenda, anchored on day two of the event, which focused on 'Achieving a resilient planet with geospatial information'.

15. Day two of the event included keynote speeches, presentations, discussion opportunities, and a platform to formally launch the paper "Applying geospatial information to climate challenges". A highlight for the task team was the participation of the Hon. Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister, Barbados who delivered the opening remarks which focused on the trust we need to place in our data and our systems, highlighting that to foster resilience we must be bold in our approach to transformation and that together we can build a world where resilience is woven into the fabric of our societies.

16. In the closing remarks on day two, the task team provided three calls to action: i) as experts you know how your organisations are using geospatial information for climate resilience, share those stories and learn from one another; ii) as a geospatial community we need to reach out and connect to other communities; iii) our geospatial community, in all its forms, should be advocates, enablers and agents of change.

#### **IV. The paper "Applying geospatial information to climate challenges" and its compendium of national experiences**

17. The third objective for the task team was to develop a more detailed concept paper. An advanced unedited draft was launched at the High-Level Forum, in October 2024 and has been available on the website of the Committee of Experts'. The paper entitled "Applying geospatial information to climate challenges", including its compendium of national experiences, is provided in the background document accompanying this report.

18. Since the establishment of the task team, the development and refinement of the paper have been key tasks. The paper has always been intended to serve as a starting point for discussion. Given the breadth and depth of related content, the paper is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of geospatial information for climate resilience, but rather to increase awareness and support for the Committee's work programme in this area. In publishing the final version of the report, these principles remain.

19. It can be summarized that the paper and its compendium are anchored in two key principles: 1. The UN-IGIF is vital to building the institutional capacity necessary for climate and resilience; and, 2. Acting on climate resilience is not just an imperative for the Committee of Experts; it is an imperative for the world.

20. A set of national experiences and good practices, provided by members of the task team, provide an evidence base that demonstrates that geospatial information is already being used to drive impact at local and national levels. It also highlights the importance of geospatial information in combating the climate challenge, which has and remains a key topic for the Committee throughout all its activities. The Committee and Member States are encouraged to continue using the paper in discussions on climate, environment, and resilience.

#### **V. Concluding the work of the Task Team**

21. Acting on climate resilience is not just an imperative for the Committee of Experts; it is an imperative for the world. This has been the guiding principle for the task team's work since its inception at the thirteenth session. Since then, the task team and the Committee have advocated for, and raised awareness of, the potential of geospatial information in all its forms for climate resilience.

22. The task team had three objectives: i) establish a task team ii) convene an appropriate and relevant international forum, iii) develop a more detailed concept paper. During the intersessional period, and with support from the wider global geospatial information management community, these three tasks have been successfully undertaken. In line with good practice and good governance arrangements, the task team will conclude its activities at the fifteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

#### **Next steps for the topic of climate, environment and resilience**

23. This report, along with the discussions within the Committee of Experts, has demonstrated that a coordinated approach to addressing climate, environmental, and resilience issues is necessary. The topic of climate, environment and resilience is now embedded within the UN-GGIM Strategic Framework 2025-2030. This should serve as a foundation for any future activities.

24. During the intersessional period, numerous discussions have taken place between the task team, the working group on geospatial information for disaster risk management, the Bureau, and the Secretariat on advancing this agenda item after the fifteenth session.

25. A standalone working group on climate, environment and resilience may appear to be an elegant solution. If this approach were followed, it should only be considered as part of a wider programme review of current activities within the Committee that focus on the topics of climate, environment and resilience. Any future proposal should be adequately scoped, resourced, and supported by a broad consensus of Member States to enable successful outcomes.

26. The Committee of Experts could consider how it can successfully act as ambassadors to embed geospatial information, and the work of the Committee more broadly, within other parts of the United Nations System. This consideration could include requesting the Secretariat to seek opportunities to engage in discussions on behalf of the Committee to embed geospatial information within broader discussions on climate, environment and resilience.

27. It is recommended that the Secretariat continue to collaborate with the Bureau and interested Member States to develop a proposal for how the Committee can further integrate climate, environment, and resilience into its work and report back to the Committee at its sixteenth session.

## **VI. Points for Discussion**

28. The Committee of Experts is invited to:

- (a) Take note of the present report and express its views on the progress by the Task Team, including its paper “Applying geospatial information to climate challenges” and its compendium of national experiences;
- (b) Express its views on the contribution of the Task Team to the Seventh High-level Forum on Global Geospatial through the organization of a segment on Climate resilience and its contribution to the Forum’s advisory Committee;
- (c) Express its views on the efforts and contribution of Barbados, Tonga and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the) for their leadership to raising political awareness and advancing geospatial information for climate and resilience;
- (d) Continue to focus on integrating geospatial information into discussions on climate, environment and resilience;

- (e) Express its views on the successful completion of the tasks laid out in the Task Team's Terms of Reference and decision 13/108 of the Committee of Experts, and, note in line with good practice, future activities will cease;**
- (f) Provide guidance on the substantive content associated to the agenda item, on climate, environment and resilience;**
- (g) Encourage Member States and relevant interested experts to contribute to forthcoming consolidated activities under the agenda item and express interest in participating in these consolidated activities; and,**
- (h) Express its views on the preparation of a single holistic report, including a workplan, in which climate, environment and resilience are considered, to be presented to the Committee at its sixteenth session.**