



## **BRIEF REPORT**

To

**15th United Nations - Global Geospatial Information  
Management (UN-GGIM) Session**

ON

**The UN-GGIM – Arab States Activities**

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## **1. Summary**

This report summarizes the activities carried out by the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Arab States (UN-GGIM: Arab States), as well as other activities considered as being of interest to member States and partners, since the last report presented to the Thirteen Session of United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), on August 2024.

## **2. Introduction**

The members of UN-GGIM: Arab States have been actively working together in order to develop this regional body. They have obtained active support and patronage from their respective governments and the main government bodies or associations responsible about geospatial information in their respective countries. To this effect, there has been one plenary meeting of the member states during this period. The three working groups (WGs) have also continued their activities, the summary of all activities of UN-GGIM Arab States is presented in Sections 4 and 5.

## **3. Objectives**

The UN-GGIM: Arab States plays its role as the formal Arab chapter of the UN-GGIM initiative with the core objective of coordinating, facilitating and enhancing the regional cooperation in the realm of geospatial information management as well as cooperating with other regional and international entities for promoting best practices in geospatial information management in the region.



## 4. Activities

The following table for the activities of UN-GGIM: AS during the last year:

Activity	Date	Location
Plenary meeting of HLG-IGIF	2 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Workshop on the Saudi experience on geospatial data governance, policies, & standards	2 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Joint meeting of HLG-IGIF and Expanded Bureau	3 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Workshop on Geospatial Security	3 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Plenary meeting of HLG-IGIF	3 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Workshop on Empowerment of Arab women in the field of geospatial information	3 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Meeting of the Bureau and its expanded bureau	3 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Workshop on Geospatial Leadership	3 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
UN-GGIM: Arab States' Workshop on IGIF	4 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Workshop on Legal and Regulatory Framework and emerging Technologies	4 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Workshop on Geospatial Ecosystem in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	5 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Workshop on the Asian experience in use of Geospatial Information in Land Management	5 February 2024	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
12th Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States	4-6 February 2023	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia



#### **4.1. UN-GGIM: Arab States 12<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting**

The twelfth meeting of the UN-GGIM Arab States was held in Jeddah. The meeting aimed to follow up on the committee's work, review the experiences of Arab countries in managing geospatial information, and establish the executive plans for the working groups.

Eighty-five participants from twelve Arab countries attended the meeting, along with the Secretariat of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, representatives from regional committees (European, Asian, American, African) of UN geospatial information experts, experts from the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the Statistical Center for the Gulf Cooperation Council States, and several international consultants and experts. The meeting was accompanied by a gathering of the High-Level Team for the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and a meeting of the expanded bureau of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.

Key Agenda Items:

- Approval of the agenda for the twelfth meeting of the UN-GGIM Arab States
- The annual report of the UN-GGIM Arab States
- Contributions of the United Nations and international organizations to geospatial information activities
- Workshop on "The Saudi Experience in Geospatial Data Governance, Policies, Standards, and Specifications"
- Workshop on "Geospatial Security"
- Workshop on "Empowering Arab Women in the Field of Geospatial Information"
- Workshop on "Geospatial Leadership"
- Workshop on "The Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for Arab Countries"
- Workshop on "Legal and Regulatory Frameworks and Emerging Geospatial Technologies"
- Workshop on "Geospatial Ecosystem in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia"
- Workshop on "The Asian Experience in Using Geospatial Information for Land Management"
- Geodetic Framework
- Geospatial Governance
- Integrated Geospatial Information Framework
- The thirteenth meeting of the UN-GGIM Arab States



The meeting concluded with support for the working groups in preparing their executive plans and approval of the future directions of the UN-GGIM Arab States, including attracting global geospatial organizations and companies as observer members, rationalizing expenses for committee meetings, ensuring the participation of official geospatial entities from their countries, and emphasizing the integration of the committee's work with international efforts at the United Nations.

The main recommendations from the twelfth meeting of the UN-GGIM Arab States:

- Extending appreciation to the General Authority for Survey and Geospatial Information in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for hosting the (twelfth) meeting of the Arab States Committee of Experts of the United Nations for Geospatial Information Management, and its corresponding workshops.
- Affirming that the official organization concerned with geospatial information in the Member States shall be represented in the official delegation participating in the work of the Arab States Committee of Experts of the United Nations for the Management of Geospatial Information.
- Work on preparing an implementation plan for the Geodetic Framework Working Group, in line with the tasks, responsibilities and strategic plan approved during the Doha-February 2024 meeting, in coordination with the United Nations Global Center for Geodetic Excellence.
- Calling on the Arab States Members to support the completion of the requirements for the registration of the Arab Geodetic Reference (ARABREF) under the International Geodesy Association (IAG), by nominating a competent representative from the authorities responsible for updating and developing the national geodetic references to work on forming a steering committee for this purpose under the IAG, provided that the names are provided to the secretariat of the Arab Committee before the end of March 2025.
- Inviting and encouraging Arab Member States wishing to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MMOU) to enhance the quality of global geodetic references with the United Nations World Center for Geodetic Excellence, through direct coordination with the President of the Center.
- Commencing the directions of the Geospatial Governance working group to work on preparing a Geospatial Sector Governance Questionnaire in each Arab Member State, which supports the integration of the institutional system and the exchange of necessary data among Arab countries.
- Approval of the implementation plan submitted by the UN-Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) working group.
- Encourage Member States to participate in building the UN-Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-GGIM) action plan at the national



level, and to coordinate with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) working group of the Arab Committee.

- Approval of the selection of Mr. Abdullah Theeb Al-Qahtani as the Deputy Chairman of the Geodetic Framework Working Group during the coming period (2025-2028).
- Approval of the addition of the Open Geospatial Information Consortium (OGC) as a member of the Arab States Committee as an observer.
- Approval of the addition of Esri Arabia as a member of the Arab States Committee as an observer.
- Coordination between the General Secretariat of the Arab States Committee and Esri International Company to develop a number of initiatives to support the management of geospatial information in the Arab States members, provided that the details will be presented at the next meeting of the Arab States Committee.
- Rationalizing expenditure in hosting the meetings of the Arab States Committee, provided that the host country does not bear the costs of housing and accommodation for the members of the Arab countries and international experts participating in the meeting, provided that the duration of the meeting is only two days.
- The Chair of each working group shall submit a report on the progress of the work to the General Secretariat before the end of May 2025 to submit the annual report of the Arab Committee to the fifteenth meeting of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management.
- Encourage the members of the Committee to attend the Fifteenth United Nations Expert Meeting on Global Geospatial Information Management, which is expected to be held at the United Nations Headquarters from 6-8 August 2025 in New York City. Communicate with their country's permanent delegations to the United Nations in New York to facilitate this.
- Hosting the (thirteenth) meeting of the Arab States Committee of Experts of the United Nations for Geospatial Information Management in the Republic of Tunisia during the period from 3-4 February 2026.

## **5. Fifth Plenary Meeting of the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework**

The Fifth Plenary Meeting of the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (HLG-IGIF) will take place on February 2-3, 2025, at the Jeddah Hilton in Saudi Arabia. This meeting follows significant progress made since the group's establishment of strategic goals in 2021, which focused on improving communication, strengthening capacity development, and mobilizing sustainable



funding. After creating three work groups in 2022, the HLG-IGIF reviewed its Strategic Plan in January 2024, resulting in a streamlined approach with four key priorities. These include enhancing communication strategies, finalizing and publishing UN-IGIF documents, establishing a central repository for resources, and evaluating the group's role in relation to the newly formed UN Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC).

The agenda for the Fifth Plenary Meeting includes a strategic overview, updates on key deliverables such as the Global UN-IGIF Survey Results and the launch of a Sustainable Funding Guide, and discussions on specific priorities identified by various work groups. The meeting will involve collaboration among the HLG-IGIF, UN-GGIM Regional Committees, and other partners like the SDG Data Alliance and UN-GGKIC, focusing on clearly defining roles and responsibilities. The outcomes will help finalize the HLG-IGIF work plan and establish a roadmap for 2025, taking into account anticipated resources from the UN-GGKIC and the UN-GGIM Secretariat.

## **6. Conclusion**

The period since the submission of the last report in June 2024 has been that of well-organized and sustained efforts by all the member states of UN-GGIM: Arab States to further the agenda of improved management of regional geospatial information. The three working groups have been active working on their respective mandates in an extremely cooperative manner. Efforts have been made to strengthen the activities of the working groups by encouraging them continue working on their strategic goals and plans as well as enhancing them.