

Transforming our world -  
The 2030 Agenda for  
Sustainable Development



Tenth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe  
Brussels, Belgium, 22-23 November 2023

# KEY OUTCOMES FROM THIRTEENTH SESSION OF UN-GGIM

**Greg Scott, UN-GGIM Secretariat**  
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Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations, New York



UN-GGIM

United Nations Secretariat  
Global Geospatial Information Management

*Positioning geospatial information to address global challenges*

[ggim.un.org](http://ggim.un.org)

# OVERVIEW

## **Thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, 2 – 4 August 2023, UNHQ, New York**

Attended by 282 participants from 80 Member States and representatives of 83 organizations of the United Nations system and observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations.

### **i) Bureau of the thirteenth session**

Co-Chairs:

Ingrid Vanden Berghe (Belgium)  
Fernand Eanes Bale (Côte d'Ivoire)  
Paloma Merodio Gómez (México)

Rapporteur:

Kamal Outghouliast (Morocco)



# SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA

3. Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements
4. Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda
5. Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda
6. The future geospatial information ecosystem
7. Integrated Geospatial Information Framework
8. Global geodetic reference frame
9. Geospatial information for sustainable development and climate resilience
10. Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information
11. Application of geospatial information related to land administration and management
12. Geospatial information and services for disasters
13. Integrated marine geospatial information
14. Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data
15. Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community
16. Collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names



# DECISION 13/101

## ENHANCING GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

- Noted the **ongoing budgetary process associated with resolution 2022/24** and the inclusion of performance measures and results focused on **accelerated implementation of the UN-IGIF**.
- Underscored **the importance of continued advocacy and awareness-raising among Member States and Permanent Missions in the steps and negotiations for adequate and sustainable resources** within the Secretariat and requested an update on the outcomes of the process.
- Welcomed Mexico, through INEGI, hosting the **Seventh High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, in Mexico City in October 2024**. Theme **“Accelerating implementation: Achieving resilience”**. Eleventh Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Americas on the margins.
- Welcomed and supported Saudi Arabia’s commitment to **establish the United Nations Global Geospatial Ecosystem Centre of Excellence in Riyadh**. Encouraged the Bureau and the Secretariat to work with Saudi Arabia to **clarify and refine the scope and remit of the Centre** to ensure it aligns with the work of the Committee and **complements the activities and established agendas of the UN-GGKIC and UN-GGCE**.
- Noted progress on the establishment of the UN-GGKIC and UN-GGCE to **develop and expand global geospatial capacity and capability** and to **strengthen geospatial information management arrangements in countries, especially developing countries**, and looked forward to ongoing updates at future sessions of the Committee.



# DECISION 13/101 (CONT.)

## ENHANCING GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

- Noted that **cooperation and coordination between the three centres of excellence would be key to their success.**
- Recognized the efforts of **developing countries to enhance and support the leadership roles within national geospatial and mapping agencies to ensure that effective geospatial information management contributes to increased geospatial capacities and capabilities,** and shared knowledge for geospatial enablement across and within Member States.
- Supported the suggestions to **integrate the subjects of gender equality, inclusion and diversity into the Committee's agenda items,** and encouraged its **functional groups and thematic networks to integrate that topic into their work plans.**



# DECISIONS 13/102 AND 13/103

## CONTRIBUTION OF REGIONAL COMMITTEES TO THE GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION AGENDA

- Welcomed and recognized the efforts of the regional committees to strengthen engagement and alignment among the five regions, through effective communication and collaboration, increased awareness, sharing of knowledge, experiences, good practices, tools and technical experience, and interregional capacity-development initiatives to strengthen national geospatial information management to further Member States' abilities to leverage the benefits of geospatial information, technology and innovation.
- Noted the challenges being experienced by regional committees to provide the resources and capacity required to support national mapping and geospatial agencies, particularly in Africa, to be agile and dynamic in responding to technological change, to remain relevant, and to not be left behind.

## CONTRIBUTION OF THEMATIC NETWORKS TO THE GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION AGENDA

- Appreciated the increased collaboration and partnerships between the four thematic networks and their collective efforts to achieve common goals towards promoting and strengthening the implementation of the UN-IGIF and other global frameworks of the Committee of Experts.



# DECISION 13/104

## THE FUTURE GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM

- Agreed that the definition and development of **future geospatial ecosystems was an opportune activity for the Committee of Experts to undertake** but **required further scoping and consensus** to identify and describe what the **foundations of future geospatial ecosystems would encompass** within the purview of the Committee.
- Supported progressing option 2a to **entrust the Bureau, supported by a writing team, with developing a position paper on determining the scope and an outline on the fundamental elements and principles of the future geospatial information ecosystem** for consideration by the Committee at its fourteenth session, and welcomed the multiple offers by Member States to support the Bureau.
- Noted option 2b to **consider the establishment of a working group on the future geospatial ecosystem** that could **build upon the fundamental elements and principles of the future geospatial ecosystem** and capture priority aspects for developing countries and SIDS, including capacity-building and technical support, accessible and affordable solutions, regional collaboration, funding support, data-sharing and capacity development.
- **Reiterated the need to reduce the growing geospatial digital divide** between developed and developing countries, to leverage existing exemplars and use cases within Member States, and to **ensure that the future geospatial ecosystem gives priority to the needs of developing countries and SIDS.**
- Noted the relevance to the commitment from Saudi Arabia, the **scope and remit of which would need to align** with the overall programme of work of the Committee of Experts.



# DECISION 13/105

## INTEGRATED GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION FRAMEWORK

- Acknowledged the High-level Group's **priority and urgency to refine, finalize, translate and digitally publish the UN-IGIF suite of documents**, including the Overarching Strategy, the Implementation Guide and addenda, and the resource materials to support the United Nations Recommended Approach to Design and Develop Country-level Action Plans, **all of which required adequate additional resources**.
- **Appreciated the considerable efforts of Member States**, with coordination leadership from the Academic Network of UN-GGIM: Americas, **to translate the UN-IGIF documents into several languages**, and welcomed the offer of Saudi Arabia to support the digital publication of the suite of documents.
- Recognized the vital role of the UN-GGIM regional committees, functional groups and thematic networks in **advancing the implementation of the UN-IGIF and bridging the geospatial digital divide**, and that the global advancement of the UN-IGIF required continued **cooperation, coordination and resourcing** among those groups.
- Noted the updated ToRs and membership of the High-level Group, its decision to adopt **“United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF)”** in all correspondence and documentation, and that the High-level Group would meet in person in the first quarter of 2024.
- Commended the efforts of the SDG Data Alliance, the World Bank and other regional collaborative partners to **mobilize the resources necessary to assist developing countries in strengthening the advancement of the UN-IGIF** and accelerating achievement of the SDGs.





# DECISION 13/106

## GLOBAL GEODETIC REFERENCE FRAME

- Welcomed the **establishment and inauguration** of the UN-GGCE in March 2023, and **commended the Government of Germany** and the United Nations for their considerable preparatory efforts, and expressed appreciation for the efforts of Member States, including **virtual secondments from France, Norway and Spain, in supporting and contributing to the Centre.**
- Noted the **revised ToRs of the Subcommittee** and the **establishment of 3 new working groups:** (i) detailing the needs for **geodetic infrastructure and capability**; (ii) documenting the direct and indirect **impacts of the global geodetic reference frame in support of the SDGs** and other initiatives; and (iii) continuing assessment of **capacity and capability development at national and regional levels.**
- Welcomed the establishment of the **International Advisory Committee of the UN-GGCE**, to provide the required **guidance and advice on the development, implementation and review of the substantive annual programme of work** of the Centre in a transparent and inclusive manner.
- Reiterated the **importance of consulting and engaging** with Member States to **determine their operational geodetic requirements** and encouraged the Subcommittee to work with UN-GGIM regional committees and relevant partners.



# DECISION 13/107

## GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

- Commended the United Kingdom for the discussion paper “**Geospatial Information for Climate Resilience – What Does UN-GGIM Do?**” which draws attention to the potential role that national geospatial and mapping agencies could play in delivering data and technologies that assist countries in mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- Emphasized that **acting on climate resilience was imperative and critically important** to raise awareness of the potential of geospatial information for climate resilience.
- Supported: the **establishment of a task team** to strengthen interlinkages between geospatial, statistical, climate and other relevant communities and organizations of the United Nations system; **convening an appropriate and relevant international forum** or event on geospatial information for climate resilience; and to develop a more **detailed concept paper** that expands on the relevant initiatives, activities, and frameworks under the purview of the Committee of Experts.
- Welcomed the multiple **offers by Member States to support and contribute** to the (3) options and **invited the Bureau and Secretariat to work with Member States** to determine the modalities for implementing the options and to report back on progress at the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts in 2024, **potentially under a dedicated agenda item**.



# DECISION 13/108

## INTEGRATION OF GEOSPATIAL, STATISTICAL AND OTHER RELATED INFORMATION

- Welcomed the Expert Group's (EG-ISGI) new strategic direction, focused on strengthening interlinkages between the statistical and geospatial communities and urged the Expert Group to **strengthen its collaboration with the UN-GGIM regional committees and regional commissions** of the United Nations and other relevant regional stakeholders, for the **establishment of coherent layers of guidance from global, regional to national level**.
- Acknowledged the assessment by the Expert Group that the **substantive completion of the 2020 round of censuses had provided new insights** into the ongoing implementation of the **Global Statistical Geospatial Framework (GSGF)** by Member States and further underscored the importance of **leveraging the UN-IGIF as a key enabling framework** for that effort, and the further refinement and strengthening of the GSGF through the addition of **guidance on statistical grids, common geographies, user-defined geographic units** and other topical issues.
- Noted the joint workshop to be convened by the **Economic Commission for Europe, Eurostat and UN-GGIM: Europe in Belgrade, 4-5 October 2023, hosted by the Republic Geodetic Authority of Serbia**, with the aim of bringing together industry experts, thought leaders and professionals from statistical and geospatial organizations to share innovative and best practices relating to the integration of statistical and geospatial data at the national and international levels.



# DECISION 13/109

## APPLICATION OF GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION RELATED TO LAND ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

- Emphasized that the **implementation** of the Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) at the country level **must be according to national circumstances and needs** and urged the Expert Group to further consider the **alignment between the UN-IGIF, IGIF-Hydro and the FELA**, and that those Frameworks should not exist in isolation.
- Noted the considerations on the **integration of terrestrial, maritime, built and cadastral domains**, and encouraged the Expert Group to collaborate with relevant international organizations and functional groups of the Committee of Experts, including the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information, and to include **consideration for the land/sea interface and its technical complexities**.
- Urged the Expert Group to continue to **collaborate with the UN-GGIM regional committees and thematic networks** to raise awareness and advocate for national and subnational implementation of the FELA, together with the UN-IGIF, and the role of effective land administration and management, and to consider a **special effort towards the strengthening of the capacities of SIDS and African Member States** to better mainstream land management information systems into the plans, strategies and policies of their national digital economies.
- Noted the renaming of the agenda item to **“Integrated geospatial information for effective land administration and management”** and the intention of the Expert Group to convene its next meeting, together with an international seminar on effective land administration, in Mexico in April 2024.



# DECISION 13/110

## GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION AND SERVICES FOR DISASTERS

- Welcomed the proposal to **examine and review the relevance and utility of the Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters every 3 to 5 years** and for the Working Group to **work towards integrating geospatial information with other relevant information for disaster risk reduction and resilience.**
- Noted the efforts of the Working Group to **engage a wider community of practice, to cultivate partnerships and to learn and develop various scenario options from experts within the different regions,** and encouraged the Working Group to **consider guidance on how geospatial and statistical information could be applied in the development of indicators that measure preparation, mitigation and adaptation,** in order to monitor the long-term vulnerabilities of communities and infrastructure to disasters and climate change.
- Noting the call of the Working Group to **revitalize and strengthen its modalities,** urged the Working Group, once its current workplan concludes, to **assess its working modalities with a view to identifying strategies to strengthen its operations, including its membership, and reviewing its ToRs,** in particular given the need to institute processes and structures to continuously manage the global disaster risk reduction inventory hub and maintain the completeness and currency of the data to ensure its sustainability and usefulness.



# DECISION 13/111

## INTEGRATED MARINE GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION

- **Adopted the two parts of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management, comprising Part One – The Strategic Overview, and Part Two – The Strategic Pathways, and encouraged the Working Group to provide practical support for countries to extend the nine strategic pathways of the UN-IGIF into the hydro domain and the integration of marine geospatial information into the broader national geospatial information ecosystem.**
- Welcomed the **updated workplan for the period 2023–2024**, encouraged the Working Group to raise awareness and promote the implementation of the Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management at the country level and **ensure that the Framework remains relevant through regular review and updates as necessary**, and noted the action to work with the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management and the Singapore-International Hydrographic Organization Innovation and Technology Laboratory to **advance the work of integrating activities related to the terrestrial and marine domains.**



# DECISION 13/112

## POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS, INCLUDING ISSUES RELATED TO AUTHORITATIVE DATA

- Endorsed the paper “**Authoritative data in an evolving geospatial landscape: an exploration of policy and legal challenges**”, developed through a collaborative and inclusive global consultation process to address the issues related to authoritative data.
- Given the increasing global challenges and the related need for reliable data, acknowledged the Working Group’s planned activity to **address the issue of geospatial information for public good, authoritative data and exploring fit-for-purpose authoritative geospatial data and applications in crises and disasters**.
- Encouraged the Working Group to continue analyzing the complex policy and legal issues in geospatial information and to further **consider the concept of trust in data, the associated data quality and metadata standards, and ensuring responsible and ethical utilization of data**.
- Noted the convening of the **next meeting of the Working Group in Belgium in February 2024** in partnership with UN-GGIM: Europe and EuroGeographics, to be held back-to-back with the EuroGeographics Policy Knowledge Exchange Network.



# DECISIONS 13/113 AND 13/114

## IMPLEMENTATION AND ADOPTION OF STANDARDS FOR THE GLOBAL GEOSPATIAL COMMUNITY

- Appreciated the continued alignment of the standards development organizations with the work of the Committee of Experts, and **welcomed the many examples of how countries were using the standards for advancing data access and interoperability**, demonstrating the benefits of implementing geospatial standards to **ensure standards accountability and compliance** of practice in modern information systems and applications across many business and government sectors, such as smart cities, urban digital twins, intelligent transport systems and energy.

## COLLABORATION WITH UNGEGN

- Reiterated continued support for strengthening collaboration between the Committee of Experts and the Group of Experts, in particular the project to **prepare a compendium of institutional arrangements on shared good practices for geographical names standardization** between **national mapping agencies and national names authorities**, welcomed the offers from Member States to participate in and provide nominations for the **proposed expert body joint task team**, and further suggested examining the practicality of the options provided in order to **identify a pragmatic approach towards implementation**.





# ADOPTION OF REPORT



United Nations

## Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management

Report on the thirteenth session  
(2–4 August 2023)

Economic and Social Council  
Official Records, 2024  
Supplement No. 26

On 26 October 2023, the Economic and Social Council:

- (a) Took note of the report of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management on its thirteenth session (E/2024/46).
- (b) Decided that the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts shall be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 7 to 9 August 2024.
- (c) Approved the provisional agenda and documentation for the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts.

Economic and Social Council decision 2024/303

<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/13th-Session/documents/>



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# FOURTEENTH SESSION PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Enhancing global geospatial information management arrangements.
4. Contribution of regional committees to the global geospatial information agenda.
5. Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda.
6. The future geospatial information ecosystem.
7. **United Nations** Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.
8. Global geodetic reference frame.
9. Geospatial information for sustainable development.
10. **Geospatial information for climate and resilience**.
11. Integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information.
12. **Integrated geospatial information for effective** land administration and management.
13. Integrated marine geospatial information.
14. Policy and legal frameworks, including issues related to authoritative data.
15. Implementation and adoption of standards for the global geospatial information community.
16. Collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.
17. Programme management report.
18. Provisional agenda and dates of the fifteenth session.
19. Report of the Committee of Experts on its fourteenth session.



## Seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management

- **October 2024 (likely first week)**
- Eleventh plenary meeting of UN-GGIM: Americas, Meeting of the Expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts, other meetings (tbc)

## Meeting of the Expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts

- **22 – 26 January 2024**  
**Aguascalientes, Mexico**

## Tenth Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Europe

- **22 – 23 November 2023**  
**Brussels, Belgium**

## Eleventh Plenary Meeting of UN-GGIM: Arab States

- **4 – 8 February 2024**  
**Doha, Qatar**

## Third Plenary Meeting of the High-level Group of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework

- **22 – 26 January 2024**  
**Aguascalientes, Mexico**

## Second expert meeting of the Working Group on Policy and Legal Framework for Geospatial Information Management

- **20 – 22 February 2024**  
**Brussels, Belgium**

## Sixth expert meeting of the Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information

- **4 – 8 March 2024**  
**Indonesia**
- **International Seminar**

## Fourth Plenary Meeting of the Subcommittee on Geodesy

- **Week of 18 March 2024**  
**UN-GGCE, Bonn, Germany**

## Fourth meeting of the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management

- **April/May 2024**  
**Mexico**
- **International Seminar**

## Expert Group Meeting on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information/Expert meeting of the IAEG Working Group on Geospatial Information

- **September 2024**  
**Nairobi (UNON), Kenya**

## Expert meeting of the Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters

- **Date and host/venue to be decided**



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Thank You 😊



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