

Second Session of UN-GGIM Further Acknowledges Role of Geoinformation

Geospatial information will play a key role for governments and policymakers around the world in measuring sustainable development. That was one of the conclusions of the Second Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UNCE-GGIM), which was held at the United Nations headquarters in New York, USA, from 13 to 15 August 2012. The meeting was attended by around 200 delegates from 59 UN Member States and 22 representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutes and the private sector, including companies like Trimble, Esri and Oracle and societies such as FIG, ICA, IAG and IHO as well as GIM International/Geomares Publishing. The session was chaired by Paul Cheung, director of the United Nations Statistics Division and head of the UN-GGIM, and co-chaired by Vanessa Lawrence, director general and chief executive of Ordnance Survey.

Established as the official United Nations consultative mechanism on place, locality and geography, the UN Committee of Experts on GGIM plays a leading role in setting the agenda for the development of global geospatial information. The Committee of Experts acknowledged that it should facilitate and advocate the availability of geospatial information, promoting its use to meet key global challenges such as sustainable development and ensuring that all Member States and their citizens benefit from geospatial information. The Committee agreed to explore ways of adding value to international entities' current initiatives. One project is to develop a global user-friendly knowledge base for geospatial information which would build on existing knowledge bases created by international professional organisations and would contain a list of institutions providing geospatial education and training, details of toolkits and other technical resources.

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