

UN-GGIM Marks a Decade of Global Geospatial Data Cooperation



Globally adopted frameworks developed in the first decade of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) are enabling Member States to unlock the true power of location-based data.

At its eleventh session, the Committee focussed on consolidating these achievements to meet future challenges, such as the on-going pandemic and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to ensure that no one is left behind. [UN-GGIM](#) convened its [eleventh session](#) in a scaled-down virtual format consisting of three two-hour meetings on 23, 24 and 27 August 2021. It was successfully concluded through a modality that allowed the Committee of Experts to collectively consider, consult and agree [decisions](#) that set the agenda and work programme for the period ahead.

In his [opening statement](#) of the eleventh session, Liu Zhenmin, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs said: “This important annual gathering – now being convened virtually for the second time – underpins the ongoing global stress arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“Impacting the entire world, the pandemic has reinforced that – as with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) themselves – the most vulnerable countries continue to face the greatest challenges in collecting, analysing, maintaining, and using timely and reliable data, including geospatial and other disaggregated location-based data.”

Comprehensive and integrated approach to data

Noting that adversity can also bring new opportunities, Mr Liu added that Member States can “achieve a more comprehensive and integrated data approach through the implementation of the frameworks and methods that have been developed by this Committee of Experts, during its first decade of work. The United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, or UN IGIF, is one such globally adopted framework”

Described by Stefan Schweinfest, director, UN Statistics Division, as the ‘creme de la creme’ of the complex architecture and achievements in the past ten years of UN-GGIM, the [UN IGIF](#) is the globally agreed paradigm for Member States to achieve a comprehensive and integrated approach to data. The Committee’s endorsement of the [Strategic Plan](#) of the High-Level Group on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (HLG-IGIF) will sustain the considerable progress towards implementation made by countries, by providing strategic leadership and oversight for its continued development and improvement.

Recognizing Location-based data

Greg Scott, Inter-Regional Advisor on UN-GGIM said: “Geospatial information is the glue that enables the integration of all digital data with a specific location, allowing us to unlock the true power of data. Geospatial information can be as simple as a name on a map. It can also be as complicated as a dashboard that models COVID-19 hotspots, enabling the allocation of resources by countries and sectors.”

“UN-GGIM is at the centre of global decision-making and direction setting for the production, availability and application of geospatial information. Over the three days of deliberations, the Committee addressed several emerging, critical issues related to integrated geospatial information management in national, regional and global settings.”

In addition to the HLG-IGIF [Strategic Plan](#), the Committee also endorsed the third edition of the Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management ([Standards Guide](#)). The Guide is a living online resource aligned with the UN IGIF to promote the use of standards for geospatial information management.

UN-GGIM also noted the [SDGs Geospatial Roadmap](#) and its role in recognizing location-based data as official data for the SDGs and their global indicators. The Roadmap will directly bring the global geospatial and statistical communities closer and foster greater geospatial-statistical integration in advancing the 2030 Agenda.

Global geospatial community

The '[Position Paper on Sustaining the Global Geodetic Reference Frame](#)' and the '[Concept Paper on Establishing a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence](#)' was adopted by UN-GGIM and will serve as key guidance to ensure the sustainability and enhancement of the Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Member States.

Next year will see two major events for the global geospatial community. The second UN World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) will be held in October 2022 in Hyderabad, India with the theme 'Geo-Enabling the Global Village: No one should be left behind'. The twelfth session of UN-GGIM will be held at the UN Headquarters in New York from 3 to 5 August 2022.

Further information on UN-GGIM and its work can be found on its website <http://ggim.un.org>.

<https://www.gim-international.com/content/news/un-ggim-marks-a-decade-of-global-geospatial-data-cooperation>
