



Distribution: Limited  
E/ECA/GGIM/18/2  
4 October 2018

**UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

Original: ENGLISH

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM)  
Fourth Regional Committee Meeting

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
**1-4 October 2018**

**UN-GGIM: Africa**

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**Regional Committee Fourth Meeting**

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**Recommendations**

## Main Conclusions and Recommendations

### Preamble

1. *Acknowledging* that geospatial information science and technology and related disciplines are now commonly found as the driving force of many applications and services in industrial and socio-economic development, offering a radically different way in which we produce and use information required to manage our communities and economic activities;
2. *Noting* that in order to implement the 2030 Agenda and to monitor progress effectively on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, decision makers must recognize that the value in linking people, business and the economy to a geographic location, a place, can result in a fuller understanding of social, economic and environmental issues than is possible through a socio-economic information lens on its own;
3. *Acknowledging* that the need for building spatial information infrastructures for the collection, management, and dissemination of geospatial information is important to the African development agenda, much like other basic services such as road and telecommunication networks;
4. *Considering* that Geospatial Data Infrastructure is the basic infrastructure for sustainable national development;
5. *Taking cognizance* of the development and acceptance of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIG) as a reference guide for developing and strengthening arrangements in national geospatial information management;
6. *Noting* that issues associated with national security, data privacy and associated liability are potential impediments for NSDI initiatives.
7. *Noting* that the geographical names gathered by global geospatial services providers, including through crowd sourcing, are not validated and approved by national governments and also in most cases they do not reflect the true culture and heritage of the countries;
8. *Acknowledging* that the geographic dimension is increasingly considered as a key enhancement to virtually all national statistics, as it provides the geospatial framework and structure for collecting, processing, storing, aggregating and disseminating statistical data;
9. *Noting* progress made at global and continental levels on the development of the Global Statistical and Geospatial Framework;
10. *Noting* the impact of Digital Earth Australia in making open source geospatial and earth observation data analytically ready and freely available to support research, policy and decision-making, and the demand for open data cube technology as demonstrated by the Africa Regional Data Cube being implemented in five countries in East and West Africa;
11. *Considering* the importance of the contribution of resource persons who have worked for the development of geospatial information management on the African continent and in the world, and the fact that they have a vast body of knowledge and are the memory of geospatial information in Africa.
12. *We*, the representatives of National Mapping Authorities (NMAs) of African States, supported by the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the United Nations Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Secretariat, and other partners, gathered in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia from 1 to 4 October 2018 for the Fourth Meeting of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Geospatial Information Management for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa), deliberated and resolved as follows:

## **1. Recommendation on the endorsement and establishment of a statutory regional committee on geospatial information management**

13. *Request* StatCom-Africa to convey for the consideration by the African Conference of Ministers responsible for Finance, Economic and Social Development and Planning, the formal endorsement of the Regional Committee of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa), and its establishment as an overarching governance framework in the field of geospatial information management, science and technology, in order to ensure that it has the capacity to adapt policies and strategic actions to address issues of particular relevance to Africa and also to ensure that national bodies are capable of addressing the unique concerns of African countries.

## **2. Recommendation on geospatial policies and information infrastructures**

14. *Recommend* Member States to:

- Continue with the establishment of their national SDI bodies to engage the formulation of appropriate policy and institutional frameworks and facilitate co-operation amongst the stakeholders;
- Consider adopting the IGIF strategic pathways and re-aligning and prioritizing their geospatial information activities within the nascent framework as well as developing sound strategy for its implementation at national level;
- Establish legal frameworks to address the crucial legal issues relevant to geospatial information management as early as possible;
- Establish unambiguous naming conventions as a key component of their NSDI, following the guidelines produced by the UNGEGN.
- Embrace and support the concept of open data cube to facilitate free access to satellite data in order to support the delivery of sustainable development in Africa.

15. *Request*

- ECA to continue to assist Member States to harmonize national policies in various sectors, as support to integration efforts and seeking to integrate SDI policies into other plans and strategies;
- ECA to evaluate and amplify the benefits of the Africa Regional Data Cube and Digital Earth Africa for its member states, and seek to formalize a collaborative agreement with Digital Earth Africa to ensure continent-wide awareness and uptake of the products, services and capacity building opportunities to support African nations against their national development priorities, the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 - Africa's development roadmap.
- The industry and the private sector to support access to and use of appropriate earth observation data necessary for the development of fundamental geospatial datasets.

16. *Recommend* UN-GGIM: Africa

- To establish a Task Team on the need for, use, and implementation of geographical names as part of the Fundamental Data Themes while taking into account the guidance, guidelines, and procedures from the UNGEGN.

## **3. Recommendation on the integration of statistical and geospatial information**

17. *Urges* member States to give priority to the dialogues that need to take place in order to ensure that national statistical, planning and mapping authorities collaborate effectively in

the development of respective data infrastructures and systems, with a view to research optimal institutional arrangements for the shared benefit for all concerned.

18. *Re-Invites* Member States to move from NSDS 1.0 to NSDS 2.0, an innovative new generation of Geo-enabled National Strategies for the Development of Statistics that fully incorporates National Spatial Data Infrastructures (NSDI).
19. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa (UN-GGIM: Africa) to continue the development of the African spatial statistical framework and the development of guidelines for geo-enabling the national strategies for the development of statistics.

#### **4. Recommendation on capacity building and knowledge transfer**

20. *Request* ECA, working with the WG on Capacity and Capability Development, to develop a holistic capacity and capability development strategy looking beyond training and skills development. The strategy should address all levels of capacity (individual, institutional, and infrastructural), as well as core issues including knowledge, leadership, organizational mechanism that ensures engagement with all stakeholders, to make geospatial information more demand-driven and service-oriented.
21. *Recommend* existing Regional Centres of Excellence in geospatial information to review their current services in the context of the national information infrastructures agenda and ensure that appropriate services are provided to encourage the establishment and support of development agendas.
22. *Encourage* Member States to provide continuous capacity building, specifically applied at the management level, to ensure a significant contribution to institutional building and the provision of continuing professional development.
23. *Urge* the Executive Board to expedite the establishment of the UN-GGIM: Africa Web-Site and further upload all the relevant documents related to the work and procedures of the Regional Committee.
24. *Recommend* that UN-GGIM: Africa, with the support of ECA, create an expert advisory group consisting of selected resource persons to support and advise the Executive Board of UN-GGIM: Africa and Member States.

#### **5. Recommendation on International Coordination, Cooperation and Partnership**

25. *Encourage* Member States to participate in and contribute to the UN-GGIM: Africa, through regular attendance of meetings, and the work of the various working groups.
26. *Encourage* UN-GGIM: Africa to increase the development of partnership with regional and international organizations through contribution to and participation in several initiatives on geospatial information at national and sub-regional levels: Group on Earth Observation (GEO), UNGEGN, etc.
27. *Recall* the Executive Board to advance the establishment of the private sector network and the academia network within the UN-GGIM: Africa technical and institutional mechanisms.
28. *Call* on Member States to actively participate in the forthcoming United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) to be held in Deqing, Zhejiang Province, China from 19 - 21 November 2018.
29. *Request* ECA to use its convening power to continue fostering the engagement of the African continent both at internal and external level to facilitate collaboration and networking between actors of the current and future initiatives in the continent.