

Private Sector Network (PSN) of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)

Terms of Reference

Background

The value and utility of geospatial information in society and the world economy has been expanding exponentially in line with its growing maturity and is now finding relevance in almost every human endeavour. Geospatial information is not just an enabler for our day to day activity, but is a driver for innovation, development and excellence in and across countries, bringing disruption to business models, but ultimately creating significant social and economic value; to such an extent as to aggregate an economy around itself.

This value has been recognized by the United Nations in the context of global development and prosperity, particularly for developing countries and the most vulnerable. Recognizing the urgent need to take concrete action to strengthen international cooperation in the area of global geospatial information management, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) in July 2011 (ECOSOC Resolution 2011/24). In making its decision, ECOSOC encouraged the Committee of Experts to hold regular high-level, multi-stakeholder discussions on global geospatial information, including through the convening of global forums, with a view to promoting a comprehensive dialogue with all relevant actors and bodies.

From its inception UN-GGIM has recognized the integral role of academic, research, professional and private sector stakeholders in achieving its goals of promoting the global use of geospatial information for evidence-based decision making, and more recently exploiting the role of geospatial information in assisting with the measurement and monitoring of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Through many individual stakeholders, the private sector have been actively participating in and contributing to the process of UN-GGIM at the global and regional levels over the past five years. However, there has been recognition that a more coordinated network would provide greater benefit and improved connection and communication for both private sector stakeholders and the Committee's Member States.

The Beijing Declaration on Sustainable Development with Geospatial Information, issued at the conclusion of the Third UN-GGIM High Level Forum in Beijing, China on 24 October 2014, encouraged global, regional and national collaboration and capacity building in the promotion and development of geospatial information management for measuring and monitoring sustainable development, and in partnership with the contribution and ongoing role played by other intergovernmental organizations, international non-government organizations, academia and industry in supporting this important global process.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development called for the promotion of transparent and accountable scaling-up of appropriate public-private cooperation to exploit the contribution to be made by a wide range of data, including earth observations and geospatial information, while ensuring national ownership in supporting and tracking progress (Para 76). The 2016 Progress Report towards the Sustainable Development

Goals (E/2016/75) specifically noted that new data sources and technologies for data collection will need to be explored, including through partnerships with civil society, the private sector and academia. The integration of geospatial information and statistical data will also be essential for the production of a number of indicators (Para 147).

Establishment

Based on the above background and contributions by academia and industry for the past five years, at its sixth session, convened in New York in August 2016, the Committee of Experts discussed the proposal to endorse the establishment of the UN-GGIM Academic and Private Sector Networks. In making decision 6/101 the Committee of Experts, noting that the 2030 Agenda calls for stronger public-private partnerships in order for new data sources and technologies to be harnessed, agreed to the establishment of the Academic Network and the Private Sector Network (E/C.20/2016/15).

Vision

An active Private Sector Network (PSN) of representatives working in a mutually beneficial collaboration with the members of UN-GGIM to play a leading role in setting the agenda for the development of global geospatial information and to promote its use to address key global challenges, enable citizen services and support the initiatives of the United Nations, particularly the global development agenda.

Purpose

It is recognized that whilst the formal membership of UN-GGIM is limited to Member States, the delivery of global geospatial solutions can only be achieved through the collaboration of all sectors of the industry including, government, science and technology, research and academia, and the private sector. In its establishment, UN-GGIM recognized that governments could not maintain and deliver the national geospatial information base and related policy alone, and nor could the private sector. Therefore, a collaborative partnership is required to address global issues and contribute collective knowledge as a community with shared interests and concerns.

This Private Sector Network (PSN) is intended to facilitate a direct connection and communication for the private sector to work with Member States towards achieving success in global geospatial initiatives. The PSN shall facilitate an ongoing dialogue for collaboration between and amongst members of UN-GGIM and participants of the PSN to develop, build and extend the world's capacity to benefit from geospatial information, enabling countries to build capacity in geospatial information, technologies and services. Recognizing the expertise of the private sector, the PSN shall create opportunities for this expertise to assist UN-GGIM in developing policies, processes, practices, capacities and recommendations for geospatial information infrastructure at national, regional, and global levels.

Guiding Principles

Pursuing its vision and purpose forward, the UNGGIM Private Sector Network (UNGGIM-PSN) shall evolve its activities around a set of guidelines as detailed below:

1. UNGGIM-PSN is an integral part of UN-GGIM stakeholders and shall mobilise resources and knowledge for serving the larger societal and public good;
2. UNGGIM-PSN shall involve, engage and represent the entire spectrum of geospatial and associated companies, including small and medium enterprises and associated industry associations, and extend UN-GGIM outreach to a larger

network of private companies, while maintaining the dignity and spirit of service to society;

3. UNGGIM-PSN shall represent a spirit of interdependence and reliance of public-private partnership and shall encourage collaboration and align itself with the values and purpose of commonality and cohesiveness of UN-GGIM;
4. UNGGIM-PSN shall be an interface between geospatial information agencies and end user communities and evolve a knowledge pool offering case studies, practical evidences, and best practices. It shall develop and demonstrate the value of geospatial information to non-conventional user communities; and
5. UNGGIM-PSN shall engage and collaborate with UN-GGIM regional groups and contribute through its participation in committees at the global and regional levels.

Structure

The UNGGIM-PSN will be an informally structured network guided by these Terms of Reference and, following endorsement by UN-GGIM, will be recognised as an official observer of UN-GGIM and will report annually to the Committee of Experts as a thematic group on global geospatial information management. The PSN members shall meet to determine a practical structure and appoint representatives to the necessary roles to ensure communication and development of a work plan in collaboration with the UN-GGIM Secretariat.

UNGGIM-PSN members met at a side event during the sixth session of UN-GGIM in New York on 4th August 2016. A proposed initial structure is as follows:

1. Sanjay Kumar, CEO – Geospatial Media (elected by members as Chair).
2. Denise McKenzie, Executive Director, OGC (elected by members as Vice Chair - Secretariat).
3. Open Geospatial Consortium (nominated by members as PSN Secretariat).
4. Co-chairs for Regional Groups of UN-GGIM to be elected from respective regions.
5. Representatives to be nominated for different working committees.

Detailed plan of action to be prepared post approval of these ToR.

6. Participation

Participation in the PSN will be free and open globally to all private sector organisations and related industry associations, and will enable such entities to contribute to and expand the global policy capabilities to develop the tools and services to enable geospatial information to be mainstreamed within and across countries.

The Founding members of the UN-GGIM PSN include:

- OGC & OGC Europe
- Esri (USA)
- Geospatial Media (India)
- Co-operative Research Centre for Spatial Information - CRCSI (Australia)
- AAM Pty Ltd (Australia)
- Association of Geospatial Industries - AGI (India)
- DigitalGlobe
- European Association of Remote Sensing Companies (EARSC)
- USGIF

- Hexagon
- Harris Corporation
- Oracle
- DataWorld Holdings
- Metaspatial
- Google
- (Please let us know if you would like your organisation to be listed here)

Several additional members have taken interest and called for their participation to be put in the public domain post approval of these ToR.