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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Contribution of thematic networks to the global geospatial information agenda

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Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report containing the contributions of the four United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management thematic networks, namely the Academic Network, the Geospatial Societies, the Private Sector Network and the United Nations Geospatial Network, to the global geospatial information agenda, which will be available, in the language of submission only, from the relevant web page of the Committee of Experts (<https://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/15th-session/>). The Committee is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the activities and achievements of the thematic networks.

Summary of the report

At its fourteenth session, held from 7 to 9 August 2024, the Committee of Experts adopted decision 14/103, in which it expressed appreciation for the continuing and valuable contributions of the thematic networks to the Committee's programme of work, including their effective representation, research, education, capacity-development activities and collaborative initiatives with the five regional committees, functional groups and United Nations global geospatial centres in advancing their workplans and in implementing the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. The Committee also expressed appreciation for the cooperation and synergies between thematic networks and Member States through open communication so as to ensure that their contributions were effective and aligned with the Committee's priorities for the benefit of Member States and contributing to their sustainable development. The Committee welcomed the support offered, including by the United Nations Geospatial Network to strengthen their contribution through the implementation of the One United Nations Geospatial

* E/C.20/2025/1.



Situation Room to bring coherence on data governance and federated data services and to provide use cases to support capacity-development activities for Member States. The Committee acknowledged the work being done in researching and exploring the use and benefits of artificial intelligence, Earth observations and other innovative technologies.

In the report, the Academic Network provides an update on its continuing efforts to develop capacity- and education-related activities within the context of the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, especially in supporting the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. The report provides information on the active involvement of the Academic Network in organizing, with all the thematic networks during the fourteenth session of the Committee of Experts, a joint side event on geospatial data, analytics and geospatial artificial intelligence: accelerating the Sustainable Development Goals and making an impact on national priorities and its participation in other events, such as the fifth plenary meeting of the High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the meeting of the expanded Bureau of the Committee of Experts and the twelfth plenary meeting of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Regional Committee for the Arab States. The newly elected Executive Committee initiated discussions with the Co-Chairs of the Committee of Experts on possible opportunities to work together in pursuit of strengthening geospatial information management around the globe by leveraging the strength of the Network. It is noted in the report that the Network began to explore collaboration with the United Nations global geospatial centres, such as the United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre. It is also noted in the report that, since the Network's most recent update on its membership, in which it reported having 70 members, 6 new members have joined the Network, with 7 additional membership applications pending review and approval. The report concludes with a discussion of the continued efforts of the Network in strategic planning and actions for: (a) working closely with all functional groups of the Committee of Experts; (b) developing capacities and training programmes to support the programme of work of the Committee of Experts; and (c) collaborating with academic communities to develop capacities and educational programmes that are more closely related to the programme of work of the Committee of Experts and in close cooperation with the established United Nations global geospatial centres.

In the report, the Geospatial Societies network provides information on its principal activities and contributions. During the intersessional period, the Geospatial Societies network reaffirmed its position as a valued partner in geospatial artificial intelligence and in the geospatial ecosystem and its engagement with the broader agenda of the Committee of Experts. The Geospatial Societies network actively participated in major events, including the eleventh plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe, the thirteenth plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific, the twelfth plenary meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States and the fifth plenary meeting of the High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, as well as proceedings on the future geospatial information ecosystem. A significant development is the new terms of reference for the Geospatial Societies network, which realigned its purpose to support the broader programme of work of the Committee of Experts. In the report, geospatial societies, such as the International Cartographic Association, the International Federation of Surveyors, the International Society for Digital Earth, the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote

Sensing, the International Geographical Union and other societies, note that congresses, annual conferences and events provide platforms through which to further discuss and promote the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals to their respective networks. It is also noted in the report that the International Science Council GeoUnions group and the Committee on Data for Science and Technology offer webinars related to geospatial artificial intelligence.

The report provides an update by the Private Sector Network on its activities and contributions during the intersessional period. In the report, the Private Sector Network reaffirms its position as a valued partner in the global geospatial ecosystem by advancing capacity development, engaging in regional initiatives and integrating private sector perspectives into the broader programme of work of the Committee of Experts. The Private Sector Network actively participated in major events, including the eleventh annual meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe, the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, the thirteenth Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific meeting, the twelfth Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States plenary and the fifth High-level Group of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, and contributed to the Framework's new "Sustainable funding guide", as well as to proceedings on the future geospatial information ecosystem. A significant development is the addition of 25 new member companies, underscoring the growing recognition of the value of the private sector. The Private Sector Network appeared on social media to enhance its outreach and visibility. The Network supported emerging talent by sponsoring student participation in the seventh High-level Forum on United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Mexico. Regionally, the Network deepened its collaboration in Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, the Arab States and Africa. The report provides details of the contribution of the Network to strategic documents and its participation in shaping the future geospatial information ecosystem, with a continued focus on innovation, climate change and sustainability.

The report also provides information on the activities of the United Nations Geospatial Network and its continued efforts to strengthen the coherence and coordination of global geospatial information management across the 42 agencies funds and programmes of the United Nations system. The Geospatial Network made progress on implementation of its updated strategy for the period 2020–2025, entitled "Blueprint: geospatial for a better world – transforming the lives of people, places and planet", and the proposal for the upcoming five-year strategic document for the period 2025–2030, both of which are aligned with accelerating the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are informed by the frameworks, norms, principles and guides developed and adopted by the Committee of Experts. The report includes details of the Network's current priorities, namely: (a) to obtain sustainable sources of funding; (b) to increase communication on and awareness of the relevance of geospatial information through events and seminars; and (c) to work towards the availability and accessibility of coordinated geospatial information through the One United Nations Geospatial Situation Room, effectively delivering, collectively, one map of integrated geospatial data services, available at onemap.un.org, for easy access to these resources. The report also contains information on other priorities, including organization of the upcoming activities of the United Nations Geospatial Network towards implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework to strengthen national geospatial capacities, especially in developing countries and the most vulnerable

communities, and strengthening geospatial data management, innovation, foresight and science to build a United Nations system that can better support Member States in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The One United Nations Geospatial Situation Room is recognized as an important resource for geospatial enablement of the United Nations data platform in the overall context of the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere. The report provides information on the continued efforts of the Network in terms of communication and outreach, including its participation in the Geospatial World Forum and collaboration with other networks of the Committee of Experts.
