



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
21 September 2024

Original: English

**Economic Commission for Africa
Regional Committee of United Nations Global
Geospatial Information Management for Africa**

Tenth meeting
Addis Ababa (hybrid), 30 October–1 November 2024

Concept note

I. Background and justification

1. The Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa has been established to oversee geospatial development in Africa and to contribute to the larger global geospatial information management effort. Substantial progress has been made by the Regional Committee in generating momentum and demonstrating the commitment of the continent to that effort. In order to engage with policymakers in Africa effectively and further strengthen the initiative to use geospatial information as a catalyst for sustainable development, the Executive Board of the Regional Committee is organizing the tenth meeting of the Regional Committee, which will be held in a hybrid format in Addis Ababa, from 30 October to 1 November 2024, as a back-to-back event with the ninth session of the Statistical Commission for Africa and the fourth Expert Forum for Producers and Users of Disaster-related Statistics.

2. The three parallel and interlinked events will facilitate dialogue and knowledge-sharing among professionals, policymakers, researchers and practitioners involved in statistics, geospatial information and disaster risk management in Africa. Events to maintain and strengthen the synergies among the geospatial, statistical and disaster-risk management communities will allow for interaction, networking and the cross-fertilization of ideas among those communities, with a view to creating a shared vision for the cooperative management of national development data and information.

3. The ninth session of the Statistical Commission and the tenth meeting of the Regional Committee will be attended by directors of African national statistical offices and representatives of regional economic communities, regional statistical training centres, heads of national mapping agencies, pan-African institutions and various partners in disaster, statistical and geospatial information. In line with the implementation of the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere, participants will deliberate and discuss data flows at the national and continental levels to respond to the needs of the Sustainable Development Goals.

4. The tenth meeting of the Regional Committee will provide an opportunity to foster collaboration and partnership among countries in Africa, with the ultimate goal of promoting the effective use of geospatial information in decision-making processes. By addressing critical challenges in geospatial



information management and exploring new possibilities for leveraging geospatial data, the participants will work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa.

5. In addition, the meeting will serve as a valuable platform for sharing knowledge and innovations in geospatial technology and applications, and for promoting the integration of geospatial information into national development plans and policies. Accordingly, the formal segment of the tenth meeting will be followed on 1 November by a workshop on the integration of geospatial and statistical information.

6. The enriching exchanges and presentations that will occur at the meeting will help representatives of countries in Africa to harness geospatial information for the benefit of their people and the continent, which is a goal that the Executive Board is committed to supporting.

II. Objectives

7. The primary objective of the tenth meeting is to assess the advancements made in relation to the recommendations made and actions taken during previous meetings of the Regional Committee. Furthermore, attendees will have the opportunity to share knowledge and best practices in the development of geospatial data in Africa, raise awareness of the benefits to be gained from using geospatial information for sustainable development, and consider policies, measures and actions that could be implemented to guarantee the effective fulfilment of the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management in the region.

III. Issues to be addressed

8. The issues to be addressed during the tenth meeting will comprise, but are not limited to:

(a) Activities pertaining to geospatial information carried out by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), its members and the working groups of the Regional Committee;

(b) Issues concerning geospatial information policy at the national and regional levels, including establishing an overarching governance mechanism and appraising the strategic pathways for the modernization of geospatial information in Africa, requiring a decision, resolution or recommendation by ECA, its members, partners or other stakeholders;

(c) Technical matters brought to the attention of the members of ECA or stakeholders or presented by ECA in its role as the secretariat of the Regional Committee;

(d) New trends and developments in the field of geospatial information, such as geospatial artificial intelligence, real-time geospatial intelligence and the use of geographic information systems and drones and other unmanned aerial vehicles for geospatial data collection;

(e) A special topic, such as the growing adoption of cloud-based geospatial solutions and data standards, the increasing use of geospatial data for climate change adaptation and mitigation, or geospatial information and disaster risk management.

IV. Expected outcomes

9. The outcomes of the tenth meeting will contribute to achieving the global vision of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information

Management, thereby encouraging more substantive progress in Africa. It is anticipated that the meeting participants will play a crucial role in establishing a consensus within the Regional Committee, including by conducting a thorough evaluation of its structure, responsibilities and activities, and by determining its financing mechanism.

V. Venue and date

10. The meeting is scheduled to be held in a hybrid format in Addis Ababa, at ECA headquarters, from 30 October to 1 November 2024.

VI. Participants

11. Meeting participants will include:

- (a) Members of the Executive Board of the Regional Committee;
- (b) Convenors of the working groups of the Regional Committee;
- (c) National officials responsible for mapping, cartography, surveying, land registration, earth observation, data and statistics;
- (d) Experts selected from the academic community, research institutions, government, civil society and the private sector;
- (e) Representatives from subregional and regional organizations.

12. The official country delegation to the meeting shall be led by the head of the national mapping authority. Given the objectives of the meetings, national representatives and experts working in relevant data fields, statistics and land management may attend the events.

13. In addition to African geospatial experts who have played a notable role in promoting geospatial information in the region, observers from intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, other national, subregional, continental and international organizations, the academic community, research institutions, the private sector and related industries are invited to attend. Observers may participate in discussions, but they may not vote on statutory issues that require a decision.

VII. Administrative arrangements and logistics

14. Invitees are requested to confirm their participation to ECA, the secretariat of the Regional Committee, as soon as possible, but not later than 31 August 2024. ECA, in collaboration with the national organizing committee, will organize the local logistics, including hotel recommendations, airport receptions and transportation to and from hotels. Participants will be responsible for obtaining their entry visas and vaccinations prior to their travel and for all other costs associated with their participation in the meeting, including travel, accommodation and optional workshops.

VIII. Contact information

15. For further information, please contact the Chief of the Geospatial Information Services Section, ECA, Andre Nonguierma, by telephone, on +251 (0) 115 44 4718, or by email, at nonguierma@un.org.