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Economic Commission for Africa
Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial
Information Management for Africa
Twelfth meeting
Addis Ababa (hybrid), 19–23 October 2026

Item 8 of the provisional agenda*
Adoption of the report of the twelfth meeting

Draft conclusions and recommendations

I. Introduction

1. The twelfth meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa was held in Addis Ababa, in a hybrid format featuring both in-person and online participation, from 19 to 23 October 2026. It was attended by representatives of national geospatial and mapping authorities and national statistical agencies in Africa, with the support of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission and other partners.

II. Governance of the Regional Committee

A. Conclusions

2. Participants noted that the composition of the Executive Board elected during the previous meeting, held in Accra from 17 to 21 November 2025, would remain unchanged during the period 2025–2026.

3. The rules of procedure originally adopted at the first meeting of the Regional Committee, held in 2015, were reviewed, along with the structure of the Executive Board.

4. A representative of South Africa reported on progress made in the ongoing engagement of the Regional Committee with the country's Minister of Land Reform and Rural Development to secure high-level political support, including a high-level meeting of the Executive Board with the Minister and the preparation of a policy note on strategic imperatives for geospatial information in Africa.

B. Recommendations

5. In the light of the discussion, the Regional Committee made the following recommendations:

* E/ECA/GGIM-A/12/1/Rev.1.



- (a) Members of ECA should:
 - (i) Maintain the current structure of the Executive Board until the next in-person meeting of the Regional Committee;
 - (ii) Maintain the current rules of procedure unchanged;
 - (iii) Continue to actively participate in the work of the Executive Board and its thematic working groups to enhance coordination, collaboration and the delivery of the strategic priorities of the Regional Committee.
- (b) The Executive Board should:
 - (i) Consult members of ECA on governance and institutional arrangements and promote inclusive participation, transparency, accountability and sustainable leadership to advance the objectives of the Regional Committee;
 - (ii) Continue to engage with the Minister of Land Reform and Rural Development of South Africa and other stakeholders, in order to continue building political momentum and to identify the next steps towards the institutional establishment of the overarching governance mechanism;
 - (iii) Establish a network for women and young professionals as a standing consultative mechanism of the Regional Committee, with ECA serving as its secretariat, in order to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of young professionals and women in its work and decision-making;
- (c) ECA should submit the terms of reference of the future network for women and young professionals to the Regional Committee at its next meeting.

III. Integrated Geospatial Information Framework

A. Conclusions

6. Participants recognized that the Regional Committee was leading the adaptation and phased implementation of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework across Africa. Crucial activities included the development of country-level action plans, the establishment of hubs for data on the Sustainable Development Goals and the formulation of integrated geospatial governance strategies.
7. Participants noted that countries continued to face challenges in respect of the implementation of geospatial governance frameworks, including the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework.
8. Participants said that the implementation of the Framework was progressing steadily, notwithstanding challenges and varying levels of readiness among countries. The achievements recorded in several countries demonstrated growing commitment to strengthening the national management of geospatial information and to leveraging geospatial data for sustainable development. However, continued collaboration and national ownership remained essential for accelerating the implementation of the Framework and for realizing its full benefits.
9. Participants expressed broad support for the strengthening of peer-to-peer learning and the translation of country experiences into practical evidence that could be incorporated into policymaking exercises and considered when implementing the Framework. In addition, they called for greater standardization of documentation, stronger knowledge-sharing mechanisms,

more active engagement of decision makers, enhanced capacity-building and partnerships, and improved reporting of tangible results.

B. Recommendations

10. In the light of the discussion, the Regional Committee made the following recommendations:

- (a) Members of ECA should:
 - (i) Align their national action plans under the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and their geospatial investments with domestic development priorities, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and with Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union;
 - (ii) Support their national action plans under the Framework and their geospatial investments with clear governance arrangements, needs assessments, stakeholder engagement and costed implementation plans;
 - (iii) Increase engagement with political leaders and decision makers, and align domestic geospatial initiatives with national development plans and resource priorities;
 - (iv) Secure predictable government funding as the foundation for national geospatial programmes, establish dedicated budget lines where appropriate, engage with ministries of finance early in the process of designing such programmes – with a view to demonstrating the socioeconomic benefits of geospatial investment – and diversify sources of complementary financing;
 - (v) Develop funding proposals jointly with representatives of other sectors and with partners, increase advocacy and strengthen communication with decision makers about the strategic value of geospatial information;
 - (vi) Ensure that partnerships involve government institutions, academic institutions, development partners, financial institutions and private companies and that they are focused on stronger governance, interoperability, data-sharing, leadership development and investment in artificial intelligence, Earth observation and digital infrastructure;
 - (vii) Make sure that the documentation of national experiences supports peer-to-peer learning and that integrated data systems generate action-oriented insights for policymaking, service delivery and development planning;
 - (viii) Diversify financing for geospatial information through stronger interministerial collaboration, public-private partnerships, domestically generated revenue and other home-grown financing mechanisms;
 - (ix) Strengthen legal and institutional frameworks to support predictable public financing, using country assessments and action plans under the Framework to identify and cost investment needs;
 - (x) Develop concise, evidence-based business cases and policy briefs that constitute evidence of measurable socioeconomic and environmental benefits, investment returns, quick wins and the cost of inaction;
- (b) The United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre should:
 - (i) Refine and disseminate the sustainable funding guide, the approach to pre-evaluating business cases and the case study template,

while also providing countries of a given subregion with training, including through webinars, with support tailored to varying levels of national readiness;

(ii) Support African States in developing and reviewing case studies, business cases and policy briefs and in translating implementation evidence into accessible knowledge products for decision makers;

(iii) Organize capacity-building workshops and webinars on a variety of thematic topics in all subregions of Africa;

(c) ECA should:

(i) Continue to provide technical guidance, coordination support and advisory services to accelerate the development and implementation of country-level action plans for the implementation of the Framework, including support for needs assessments, situation analyses and capacity-building activities tailored to national contexts;

(ii) Institutionalize regional peer-to-peer learning through communities of practice, through regular knowledge forums and country exchanges and through an accessible repository of case studies, policy briefs, lessons learned and implementation results;

(d) ECA, the Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre and development partners should:

(i) Strengthen regional cooperation and collaboration;

(ii) Mobilize coordinated technical and financial support;

(iii) Promote African best practices, knowledge exchanges and peer-to-peer learning;

(iv) Ensure alignment with international geospatial standards;

(v) Accelerate the sustainable implementation of the Framework across Africa;

(vi) Expand structured peer-to-peer learning through communities of practice, webinars, regular knowledge forums and an accessible regional knowledge repository.

IV. Geospatial knowledge infrastructure, capacity and services

A. Conclusions

11. Participants pointed out significant challenges in relation to the development of the African Geodetic Reference Frame, in particular owing to its slow deployment. In addition, they highlighted that restrictive cross-border data policies, limited data-sharing arrangements and the absence of automated geodetic data exchange mechanisms continued to delay the implementation of a unified continental geodetic reference frame.

12. The Working Group on the African Geodetic Reference Frame reported that, while progress had been made relating to governance, guidelines, capacity-building, technical coordination and geodetic data, significant gaps remained. It was explained that fewer African States had been reported as having complete information within the inventory of national coordinate reference systems, while several core stations were not yet contributing data. In addition, it was reported that a planned second African geodetic computation had been postponed owing to insufficient participation, and that such a

computation might be possible in the future once it had been established that African States were sufficiently prepared and committed.

13. Participants noted the opportunities presented by emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, Earth observation, cloud computing, uncrewed aerial systems and digital twins. They emphasized that, while those technologies offered opportunities to expand geospatial capabilities, innovation should remain aligned with national priorities and should be aimed at protecting rights and strengthening public institutions. Data quality and trust were especially important. Human expertise was essential for critically assessing machine-generated information, in particular where geospatial information supported decisions affecting land rights, disaster preparedness, public investment or community development.

B. Recommendations

14. In the light of the discussion, the Regional Committee made the following recommendations:

- (a) Members of ECA should:
 - (i) Share both archived and real-time geodetic data openly and freely, with a view to strengthening the African Geodetic Reference Frame and accelerating its implementation;
 - (ii) Work to increase the number of core stations contributing data to regional geodetic holdings
- (b) Development partners and regional centres of excellence should:
 - (i) Support capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening national geodetic infrastructure, technical expertise and institutional capabilities for the management and sharing of geodetic data;
 - (ii) Provide technical and financial assistance to accelerate the modernization and expansion of geodetic networks and data-sharing platforms across Africa;
- (c) The United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence should:
 - (i) Support capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening national geodetic infrastructure, technical expertise and institutional capabilities for the management and sharing of geodetic data;
 - (ii) Provide technical and financial assistance to accelerate the modernization and expansion of geodetic networks and data-sharing platforms across Africa.
- (d) ECA, and development partners, should:
 - (i) Promote the responsible use of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies;
 - (ii) Strengthen data provenance, quality assurance and African participation in the preparation of technical standards;
- (e) The Executive Board should:
 - (i) Establish a technical task team to lead the development of continental guidelines on the certification of authoritative geospatial data for use in artificial intelligence applications;
 - (ii) Mandate the technical task team to develop those guidelines and to undertake broad stakeholder consultations with African States, standards organizations, academic institutions, private companies, experts in artificial intelligence and relevant regulatory authorities.

V. Integration of geospatial and statistical information

A. Conclusions

15. Participants noted the conclusions reached at the workshop entitled “Implementing the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework in Africa: strategic avenues for the integration of geospatial and statistical information”, held on the margins of the twelfth meeting of the Regional Committee on 23 October. Participants in the workshop had emphasized that the integration of geospatial and statistical information was critical for supporting evidence-based decision-making, sustainable development, national planning and effective monitoring of progress made in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, participants in the workshop had highlighted that the Framework played a strategic role in increasing the interoperability, accessibility and use of location-based data to produce more accurate, timely and geographically disaggregated statistics.

16. While several African countries had made notable progress, further efforts were required to strengthen institutional collaboration, technical capacity, data standards and governance mechanisms, in order to fully realize the benefits of integrating geospatial and statistical information across the continent.

17. Participants also emphasized that integrating statistical and geospatial information strengthened the evidence base for identifying underserved communities, analysing inequalities and targeting investment where it was most needed. In addition, they underscored the importance of geospatial and statistical institutions operating as complementary components of an integrated national data system.

B. Recommendations

18. In the light of the discussion, the Regional Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) Members of ECA should:

(i) Adopt and implement the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, in line with national priorities and development needs;

(ii) Strengthen collaboration among national statistical offices, geospatial agencies and other relevant institutions, supported by clear governance arrangements, interoperable standards and sustainable data infrastructure;

(iii) Invest in technical and institutional capacity to produce and use geospatially enabled statistics for policymaking, service delivery and the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(b) The secretariat of the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management and its Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information should:

(i) Develop use cases pertaining to integrated statistical and geospatial data for evidence-based policymaking and for the monitoring of the progress made in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;

(ii) Facilitate the establishment of regional knowledge-sharing platforms, the implementation of capacity-building initiatives and the dissemination of best practices and lessons learned from African countries;

- (iii) Strengthen national capacity, data infrastructure and governance frameworks to improve the production and use of geospatially enabled statistics.

VI. Land administration and management

A. Conclusions

19. Participants noted the conclusions reached at the workshop on land administration and management, held on 20 October on the margins of the twelfth meeting of the Regional Committee. They recognized that land administration systems in Africa needed to evolve from the current fragmented efforts towards the establishment of strategic, sovereign and citizen-centred frameworks, and that strong leadership, modern interoperable services, coherent land management systems and inclusive partnerships had the potential to strengthen tenure security, improve land governance and advance sustainable development across the continent.

20. Participants also noted that effective land administration in Africa needed to be built on strong leadership, sound legal and institutional frameworks, reliable geospatial information, the integration of such information into decision-making processes, sustainable financing and continuous capacity development. Effective land management depended on connecting information, institutions and decisions. Countries needed both credible, current information and governance arrangements that enabled such information to be shared and used.

21. In addition, participants mentioned that the experiences shared by the countries during the workshop demonstrated that, while the challenges faced by each country differed, collaboration, innovation and knowledge exchanges could help to accelerate progress towards the establishment of modern, inclusive and sustainable land administration systems across the continent.

B. Recommendations

22. In the light of the discussion, the Regional Committee made the following recommendations:

- (a) Members of ECA should:
 - (i) Strengthen national land administration and management frameworks through modernized land information systems, improved data quality and enhanced interoperability;
 - (ii) Promote collaboration among land administration authorities, geospatial agencies, national statistical offices and other relevant institutions, in order to improve land governance and decision-making;
 - (iii) Adopt fit-for-purpose land administration approaches to enhance tenure security, improve land registration processes and increase access to land information, in particular for vulnerable and underserved communities;
 - (iv) Invest in institutional capacity development, digital transformation and geospatial technologies to improve the efficiency and sustainability of land administration systems;
 - (v) Invest in geospatial infrastructure and digital land systems, including by modernizing geodetic frameworks, spatial data infrastructure, cadastral systems and land information platforms;

(b) The secretariat of the Regional Committee and the working group on land administration and management should:

- (i) Continue to provide technical guidance, policy support, capacity-building and regional coordination in order to strengthen land administration and management systems across Africa, including support for the development of integrated land information systems, the application of geospatial technologies to evidence-based land governance and the modernization of land administration practices;
- (ii) Facilitate regional platforms for knowledge exchange, peer-to-peer learning and the dissemination of best practices, lessons learned and innovative initiatives on land governance, land information systems and fit-for-purpose land administration, in order to promote scalable and sustainable approaches in all African States;
- (iii) Document and share African case studies, including experiences from Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda, to support peer-to-peer learning and replication across the region;
- (iv) Strengthen partnerships to mobilize technical and financial resources, in order to support African States in the development of inclusive, interoperable and sustainable land administration systems aligned with international standards and with the Sustainable Development Goals.

VII. Geospatial standards

A. Conclusions

23. Noting the conclusions reached at the seminar on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework in an age of artificial intelligence and sovereignty, held on 20 October on the margins of the twelfth meeting of the Regional Committee, participants said that artificial intelligence, geospatial information and data sovereignty were not competing agendas but rather mutually reinforcing components of modern digital governance. The central message was that standards were the bridge among geospatial information, artificial intelligence and digital sovereignty.

24. Participants underscored that the future of geospatial information management would be shaped by the convergence of open standards, artificial intelligence, interoperability and trusted data governance. Moreover, the future of geospatial information management depended increasingly on the adoption of internationally recognized standards developed through such organizations as the Open Geospatial Consortium and Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization, which dealt with geographical information and geomatics. Through the application of those standards, common approaches to metadata, data quality, spatial referencing, web services, data exchange, interoperability and geospatial services were set out, thereby enabling the integration and reuse of information from different organizations and sectors.

25. While artificial intelligence was transforming the ways in which users gained access to and interacted with geospatial information, its effectiveness depended on the availability of high-quality, machine-readable and well-documented spatial data. For Africa and other developing regions, the priority should not be to compete in the development of large-scale frontier artificial intelligence infrastructure but rather to strengthen their digital foundations by building reliable data systems, interoperable services, computing capacity and energy infrastructure. Ultimately, the successful adoption of artificial intelligence models would depend less on the models themselves than on the

quality, accessibility, trustworthiness and interoperability of the underlying geospatial data.

B. Recommendations

26. In the light of the discussion, the Regional Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) Members of ECA should:

(i) Incorporate geospatial standards explicitly into national strategies for implementing the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework and digital transformation programmes;

(ii) Foster the development of national policies and legal frameworks in which innovation is balanced among the fields of artificial intelligence, data-sharing, data privacy, data security and data sovereignty;

(iii) Promote trusted cloud and hybrid data architectures that support national sovereignty, resilience and regional and subregional cooperation, while enabling access to advanced artificial intelligence capabilities;

(b) The Executive Board and ECA should:

(i) Encourage the adoption of internationally recognized standards developed by the Open Geospatial Consortium and Technical Committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization in relation to geospatial data, metadata, services, application programming interfaces and interoperability frameworks;

(ii) Strengthen African participation in the Consortium, Technical Committee 211 and other bodies involved in setting international standards, in order to ensure that the continent's priorities are reflected in emerging standards.

(c) Development partners, standards organizations and the Regional Committee should collaborate on advancing standards-based geospatial ecosystems that support interoperability, the responsible adoption of artificial intelligence and digital sovereignty across Africa.
