



**8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee of Experts  
On Global Geospatial Information Management**  
“Positioning geospatial information to address global challenges”

**Side Event Summary Template**

**Academic Network Forum**

**Date, Time, Conference room:** Monday, 30 July 2018 | 14:00-18:00 | Conference Room 3

**Side event title:** The SDGs Connectivity Dilemma: Urban Settlements, Resilience and Sustainability

**Number of Attendees:** 60

**Moderator(s): (Name, Job title, Organisation)**

**Prof. Abbas Rajabifard** (Chair, UN-GGIM Academic Network | Director, Centre for SDIs & Land Administration, The University of Melbourne, Australia)

**Prof. Harlan Onsrud** (Advisory Board, UN-GGIM Academic Network | Director, School of Computing & Information Science, University of Maine, USA)

**Prof. Josef Strobl** (Advisory Board, UN-GGIM Academic Network | Lead, Interfaculty Department of Geoinformatics, University of Salzburg, Austria)

**Prof. Joep Crompvoets** (Advisory Board, UN-GGIM Academic Network | KU Leuven, Belgium)

**Dr. Carmelle Terborgh** (Lead Account Manager, Esri Nonprofit and Global Organizations)

**Speakers: (Name, Job title, Organisation)**

The list of Speakers is available in Appendix A.

**Organized by:**

UN-GGIM Academic Network

**Objective(s) of the event: (1-2 paragraphs)**

In line with emerging and critical issues identified by the UN-GGIM, the Forum will:

- a. Identify current challenges of urban communities and settlements and opportunities for integrating geospatial and statistical information;
- b. Examine how geospatial information will support and inform inclusive and even urbanization, resilient development, and the SDGs; and
- c. Present and develop roadmaps for a more sustainable and resilient future for all, particularly in light of growing disaster risks.

**Name of Note taker:** UN-GGIM Academic Network



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### **Key messages:**

With over 60 percent of the world population projected to live in cities by 2050, various sectors are planning for urban areas across different scales. Rapid urbanization is taking place in developing regions, where the majority of megacities are located in Asia and Africa. Given the complexity of urban challenges across the globe, forum presenters and panelists tackled three major themes of connectivity, sustainability, and resilience.

#### **Connectivity**

Different Member States are working towards the SDGs, Sendai Framework, and Paris agreement, which connects social, economic, environmental, and governance challenges creating a complex network of problems across different sectors and scales. While the lack of data hinders efforts to measure progress and make informed decisions to implement the SDGs and other global frameworks, existing data is not always well connected. For that reason, our forum speakers emphasized on the need to:

- strengthen capacity building and education of experts and users alike to utilize data, maps, and geospatial systems more effectively;
- understand the interactions between the SDGs across different scales and domains;
- develop more tangible frameworks that reach everyone; and
- bring awareness to the legal aspects intertwined with our global challenges.

#### **Sustainability**

Achieving the SDGs within a limited timeframe of 15 years requires the involvement of everyone including citizens, scientists, civil organizations, and decision makers. We need to shift our view to the view of the wider community to better understand their need for solutions. Consequently, the speakers outlined a number of requirements to achieve the SDGs for everyone, everywhere:

- precise positioning, which contributes to construction, agriculture, port operation, urban infrastructures, land titling, transport networks, and disaster management;
- secure land rights and sustainable land administration;
- enhancing SDI capabilities to measure SDG indicators;
- develop a range of standards to assist the SDGs;
- increase access to information for sustainability; and
- be aware of what we see and how we map it in order to make the challenges of all states visible.

#### **Resilience**

Every city has established different priorities to create solutions that have long-term sustainable and resilient impacts. A more integrated and inter-disciplinary approach to decision making, planning, and research can contribute to transformative capabilities of communities and infrastructures for sustainable cities. Hence, the speakers pointed out a number of capacity building efforts to strengthen the resilience of communities and infrastructures:

- undertake (big) data analytics and predictive modeling to assist with achieving the SDGs;
- invest in disaster risk reduction efforts and reduce the negative impacts of natural and human induced disasters;
- integration of geospatial information into urban planning;



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- understanding that models are context dependent;
- translating research into action and developing real-world solutions and practices; and
- identifying the different and unique requirements of developing and developed countries for sustainable development.

The different challenges outline in the SDGs are each part of the bigger puzzle; geospatial information is one of the important pieces of that puzzle. The presentations and panels indicated that enhancing the spatial data ecosystem, developing real-time geographic information systems, raising awareness and capacity building for the use of geospatial data, and integrated SDIs will play a critical role in achieving the SDGs and ensuring that our future cities are sustainable and resilient for generations to come.

### Take-away Messages

#### Data, information, and knowledge



Capacity development, training, and interdisciplinary collaboration

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### Recommendations:

- Identify the responsibilities of different sectors to achieve sustainable urban development.
- Offer our knowledge to partners and other sectors.
- Remain realistic in planning and decision-making efforts.
- Strengthen the link between the Academic Network and Private Sector Network.
- Move away from the “business as usual” approach in our complex environments.
- Think sub-nationally to expand reach: Academia and private sectors will have to do the heavy lifting in countries that the government cannot help.
- Become “data literate,” not all the data is useful and we need to know how to connect and produce results from the vast amount of geospatial data available to us.
- Education needs to transcend traditional boundaries of disciplines.

**Photos:** Please take photos using a camera or your smart phone and ensure they are taken in landscape/horizontal format.



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## Appendix A

### Academic Network Forum Speakers

| TIME  | DETAILS   |
|---|---|
| <b>OPENING SESSION</b>  |   |
| 14:00 – 14:20   | <b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b><br>Mr. Stefan Schweinfest (Director, United Nations Statistics Division)<br>Dr. Wael Zakout (Global Lead, Land Policy and Geospatial, The World Bank)<br>Prof. Abbas Rajabifard (Chair, UN-GGIM Academic Network/Director, Centre for SDIs & Land Administration, The University of Melbourne)   |
| <b>SESSION 1</b>  |   |
| <b>Strategic Pathways to Improve the Achievement of the SDGs in the Context of Urban Resilience</b> |   |
| 14:20 – 15:00   | Dr. Stuart Minchin (Chief of Division, Industry Innovation & Science, Environmental Geoscience)   |
|   | <a href="#">How a Global Framework on Land Administration Can Contribute to Achieve the SDGs</a> – Mr. Kees de Zeeuw (Chair, UN-EG-LAM/Director, Kadaster International)  |
|   | <a href="#">Monitoring Progress with Cloud Services</a> – Prof. Josef Strobl (Advisory Board, UN-GGIM Academic Network/Lead, Interfaculty Department of Geoinformatics, University of Salzburg)   |
|   | <a href="#">GeoSpatial Data Science for Urban Resilience: Challenges and Opportunities</a> – Prof. Monica Wachowicz (Advisory Board, UN-GGIM Academic Network/University of New Brunswick)  |
|   | <a href="#">Mapping SDG Interactions for Cities</a> – Ms. Maryam Rabiee (Research Associate, Centre for SDIs & Land Administration, The University of Melbourne)  |
| <b>Panel Discussion: International Organisation Perspective</b>                                     |   |
| 15:00 – 16:00   | Dr. Chryssy Potsiou (President, FIG)<br>Mr. Greg Scott (Inter-Regional Adviser, UN-GGIM)<br>Mr. Alvaro Barra (Land Administration & Geospatial Specialist, Global Land & Geospatial Unit, Social Urban, Rural & Resilience GP, The World Bank)<br>Prof. Menno-Jan Kraak (President, ICA)<br>Prof. Dieter Fritsch (Vice Chair, UN-GGIM PSN)<br>Mr. Chris Body (ISO/TC 211)                                       |
| 16:00 – 16:10   | <b>BREAK</b>  |
| <b>SESSION 2</b>  |   |
| <b>Requirements and Enabling Tools for Implementing the SDGs in Urban Settings</b>                  |   |
| 16:10 – 16:50   | <a href="#">Developing a Governance Framework</a> – Prof. Joep Crompvoets (Advisory Board, UN-GGIM Academic Network/KU Leuven)  |
|   | <a href="#">What Do We See? Key Consideration While Mapping SDG Indicators</a> – Prof. Menno-Jan Kraak (Advisory Board, UN-GGIM Academic Network/University of Twente)  |
|   | <a href="#">Improving Resilience and Resilience Impact of National Land and Geospatial Systems</a> – Mr. Alvaro Barra (Land Administration & Geospatial Specialist, Global Land & Geospatial Unit, Social Urban, Rural & Resilience GP, The World Bank)   |
|   | <a href="#">Towards More Resilient Cities</a> – Prof. Tom Veldkamp (Dean, ITC Faculty, University of Twente)  |
|   | <a href="#">Spatial Infrastructure and Urban Analytics</a> – Prof. Abbas Rajabifard (Chair, UN-GGIM Academic Network/Director, Centre for SDIs & Land Administration, The University of Melbourne)  |
| <b>Panel Discussion: Legal and Organisational Perspective</b>                                       |   |
| 16:50 – 17:50   | Prof. Harlan Onsrud (Advisory Board, UN-GGIM Academic Network/Director, School of Computing & Information Science, University of Maine)<br>Dr. Kyoung-Soo Eom (Chief, United Nations Cartographic Section)<br>Ms. Irma Britton (Senior Editor, Environmental Engineering and Environmental Science, Taylor and Francis Group)<br>Mr. Frank Swiaczny (Assistant Director, UN DESA-Population Division, New York) |
| <b>CLOSING SESSION</b>  |   |
| 17:50 – 18:00   | <b>Way Forward and Closing Remarks</b><br>Prof. Abbas Rajabifard (Chair, UN-GGIM Academic Network/Director, Centre for SDIs & Land Administration, The University of Melbourne)   |