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UNGIWG-12 Plenary Meeting, 28 to 30 (and 31) March 2012, VIC Vienna (AT)

Notes from the Convenor of the WG TDFG of UNGEGN

28 March 2012

The Convenor of the WG TDFG of UNGEGN did not participate at the UNGIWG-12 Plenary Meeting the first day. The official representative of the German Federal Ministry of Interior attended the first day and conveyed that, amongst others, the Centre of Excellence for UNSDI initiative (CoE4UNSDI) was officially launched. Of special interest to UNGEGN is the UNSDI Gazetteer Framework Project. A demonstrator was presented by CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation), the project leader for the UNSDI Gazetteer Framework Project in Indonesia. CSIRO aims to push forward the concept of 'Linked Data'.

Linked Data is about using the Web to connect related data that wasn't previously linked, or using the Web to lower the barriers to linking data currently linked using other methods. More specifically, Wikipedia defines Linked Data as *"a term used to describe a recommended best practice for exposing, sharing, and connecting pieces of data, information, and knowledge on the Semantic Web using uniform resource identifier (URIs) and Resource Description Framework (RDF)."* Linked Data extends the methods to describe (metadata) and share information in a way that can be read automatically by computers. This enables data from different sources to be connected and queried.

How geographical names issues are to be tackled within the UNSDI Gazetteer Framework Project is to be monitored and shaped by the partners. UNGEGN, particularly the WG TDFG, is involved directly through the convenor being a member of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) of the UNSDI Gazetteer Framework Project. The convenor will inform UNGEGN experts regularly about the status and developments of the UNSDI Gazetteer Framework Project and will involve the WG TDFG members where appropriate and needed.

It has been agreed with UNGEGN Chairperson and Secretariat that CSIRO/UNSDI will present the objectives and methods UNSDI Gazetteer Framework Project at the next UNGEGN Session in New York in July/August 2012.

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- **Presentations** by the following UNGIWG members and partners on their geospatial information management and technology activities

By members: IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency), CTBTO (Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization), UNODC (UN Office on Drugs and Crime), UNOOSA (UN Office for Outer-Space Affairs), UNEP (United Nations Environment Program), UNIDO (UN Industrial Development Organization), ICPDR (International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, Permanent Secretariat at UN Office Vienna), UNICEF (UN Children's Fund), UNDSS (UN Department of Safety and Security Field Support Service), UNDP (UN Development Programme)

All presentations have in common that an enormous number of web applications has been developed using different system technology (from proprietary to open source GIS and database solutions) for different purposes and based on different data sources within the UN-

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System. Furthermore an increased use of satellite imagery and remote sensing for spatial information management can be identified.

The convenor would like to raise particular interest on the “Eye on Earth” network of UNEP as a result of a public-private partnership joining expertise from industry and public organisations. It is considered to be a global and public information service for environmental assessment. It is accessible through: <http://network.eyeonearth.org/home/>

By partners: JRC (Joint Research Centre), CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation).

All presentations will be available soon at: <http://unqiwg.ctbto.org/meetings/12th-unqiwg-plenary-meeting-0>

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- **Panel discussion** on SDI-Private-Public Partnership models and the technical opportunities and legal constraints and risks for UN bodies using Cloud Computing implementations.

Moderated by the Wageningen University, several private and public organizations contributed to the panel discussion.

Contributors: OGC (Open Geospatial Consortium), DigitalGlobe, Dutch Kadastre, ESRI, CCSS (Czech Centre for Science and Society).

Although many benefits (monetary and capacity building) for PPP could be identified by all contributors, some PPP activities (e.g. within UN-SPIDER) has shown that constraints and restricting conditions for the usage of the infrastructure and products generated could not be avoided within the negotiations of the PPP. The key message is to be flexible for any PPP establishment and to avoid constraints for the usage of results as much as possible.

All presentations will be available soon at: <http://unqiwg.ctbto.org/meetings/12th-unqiwg-plenary-meeting-0>

- **Lightning Talks** of 5 minutes each have been given by several partners

Contributors: UNHCR (UN Office of High Commissioner for Refugees), ESRI, GeoCat on GeoNetwork OpenSource, FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organization), GICHD (Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining), ITACHA (Information Technology for Humanitarian Assistance, Cooperation and Action), CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation), UNICEF (UN Children’s Fund)

The convenor would like to raise particular interest on the <http://gisfortheun.com> forum & tools of ESRI as a result of a public-private partnership as well as of the global (social) network platform of the UN for the UN through <https://unite.un.org/homepage/login/>. The latter one is freely accessible by UN staff. For experts, member states representatives and collaborating organizations the access to the global (social) network can be facilitated. Amongst others, all peacekeeping missions are highlighted as well as a linked system of references between UN Security Council resolutions on a timeline.

Furthermore, GeoCat announced the donation of unlimited premium licenses for UNSDI.

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All presentations will be available soon at: <http://ungiwg.ctbto.org/meetings/12th-ungiwg-plenary-meeting-0>

- **Presentation** on GGIM and its linkages with UNGIWG/UNSDI

The presentation on GGIM and its linkages with UNGIWG/UNSDI was removed from the agenda. However, UNSDI representatives presented some thoughts on the linkages between both initiatives/groups.

In essence, GGIM is a new committee/global forum established by ECOSOC for coordinating geospatial issues between UN Member States and between Members States and UN organizations.

UNGIWG several years ago had agreed upon a recommendation requesting such a global forum before GGIM was formerly established. Expectations by UNGIWG are that UNGIWG represents the “UN interface” for geospatial information at UN level and that probably a formal liaison should be established.

- **Closing Session**

- UNGIWG Co-Chairs will formulate and compile a statement describing responsibilities, linkages and possible interactions and engagements of GGIM and UNSDI in order to be presented to Member States underlining the complementary functions of GGIM and UNGIWG/UNSDI.
- All members are requested to check the actions listed at the UNGIWG website in order to monitor UNGIWG tasks and measures.
- Next UNGIWG-13 Plenary Meeting is to be scheduled in 2013 and will be held either in Istanbul, Turkey, or in New York, USA, in conjunction with a “ESRI GIS-for-UN-Conference”.
- It has been requested to increase the presentations of activities and projects from regional organizations at future UNGIWG Plenary Meetings.
- The report on UNGIWG-12 Plenary Meeting will be made available in April 2012 (for commenting it) and will be published on the UNGIWG website (after finalizing it).

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