

Stronger. Together.

The United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE) vision is a future where all countries have strong political support for geodesy which enables them to – together – implement the General Assembly Resolution 69/266 'A Global Geodetic Reference Frame for Sustainable Development', and accelerate the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals to derive social, environmental

un.org/globalgeospatial/en/centre-of-excellence/geodesy

STORIES, PROGRESS, AND PERSPECTIVES FROM GLOBAL GEODESY

From Mandate to Action

Member States back a consultation on global geodesy governance, as the State of Geodesy 2026 sets the baseline.

Shared Responsibility, Global Security: Charting the Future of Geodesy Governance

Outcomes from the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts 16th Session

Modern economies, critical infrastructure and satellite-enabled services depend on geodesy, but much of the system that supports them works out of sight. The *State of Geodesy 2026* found that the global geodesy supply chain remains fragile, with governance and strategy emerging as its weakest area. At GGIM-16, Member States agreed to advance a structured consultation on options for international governance for geodesy.

That decision followed discussions earlier in the week, including the International Governance for Geodesy side event on August 3rd. Participants discussed what the report's findings mean in practice and considered possible ways to improve the governance and long-term sustainability of the supply chain.

Speakers at the side event kept coming back to the need for shared responsibility. Prof. Dr. Steffen Schön of Germany's Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy said, "Geodesy is a global team project. Through national contribution, we all have to actively strengthen components of the global geodetic supply chain."

Nicholas Brown, Head of UN-GGCE, said the Centre is ready to support the next phase: "It is clear that governments, the scientific



PHOTO: Allison Craddock / UN-GGCE

Speakers at the UN-GGIM-16 Side Event on International Governance for Geodesy. From left: Fernand Bale (Cote d'Ivoire and UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy Co-chair), Johnny Welle (Norway), James Norris (United Kingdom and UN-GGIM Europe Co-chair), Steffen Schön (Germany), Nicholas Brown (UN-GGCE).

community, and the private sector all recognize the importance of international governance for geodesy. We look forward to supporting the UN Subcommittee on Geodesy as it engages with the community to define what good governance looks like and to help build a robust global geodesy supply chain."

During the formal discussion on the Global Geodetic Reference Frame, Member States raised concerns about the financial and governance risks facing the global geodesy supply chain. The Committee agreed to move forward with a structured consultation on options for international governance for geodesy. The process will include Member States, the scientific community and the private sector, with support from UN-GGCE.

Public Recognition for the Work of UN-GGCE

UN-GGCE has been awarded the 2026 Future Prize by the Deutscher Verein für Vermessungswesen (DVV, the German Association for Geodesy, Geoinformation and Land Management), which honors "groundbreaking ideas and outstanding achievements in geodesy, geoinformation, and land management that significantly advance international science and technology." The jury commended the Centre's tireless work to help countries worldwide build critical geodetic infrastructure and to strengthen international cooperation for precise

"The need is real. The momentum is now. The timing is critical... The global geodesy supply chain is simply too important to the world's economies, safety and digital infrastructure for us to rely on business as usual"

Johnny Welle

Kartverket Director General (Norway)

These and all other decisions of the Committee of Experts are available here: <https://www.un.org/globalgeospatial/sites/default/files/2026-08/Informal-paper-part-I-and-II-16th-session-GGIM.pdf>



REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT:

The Americas

Two regional gatherings will bring geospatial and geodetic communities across the Americas together in the coming months.

The 13th Session of UN-GGIM: Americas will take place from 13 to 16 October in Panama City, Panama. Member States and regional partners will share national experiences, discuss common challenges and look at ways to strengthen regional cooperation around the region's strategic geospatial priorities.

This will be followed by the SIRGAS 2026 Symposium from 3 to 6 November in Montevideo, Uruguay. SIRGAS, the Geodetic Reference System for the Americas, brings together government, academic and scientific institutions working to maintain and strengthen the region's geodetic reference framework. This year's symposium will cover reference frame development and applications, Earth system studies, gravity field modelling and regional geodetic capacity.



PHOTO: UN-GGIM

"We remain committed to strengthening geodetic cooperation across the Americas and supporting the implementation of the Global Geodetic Reference Frame for sustainable development. Through collaboration, innovation, and capacity development, SIRGAS continues to provide the geodetic foundation that enables accurate positioning, Earth observation, and infrastructure development."

Sandra Bolaños
Vice President, SIRGAS

COMING UP:

3rd UN World Geospatial Information Congress

16-19 November 2026, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

The theme, *"Navigating the Next Frontier: Embracing Digital Renaissance and a New Geospatial Paradigm"*, reflects the urgency and opportunity for the global geospatial community to go beyond incremental progress and to reimagine the role of geospatial information management for the betterment of humanity.

More information through this link: <https://www.un.org/globalgeospatial/en/events/2026/3unwgic>

Progress in Brief

State of Geodesy 2026

This is the first comprehensive maturity assessment of the global geodesy supply chain. The report assessed 58 capabilities across six areas and found an overall maturity score of 2.3 out of 5. The system is currently meeting operational needs, but remains fragile and relies heavily on voluntary and in-kind contributions. The report gives Member States and partners a shared evidence base for understanding where the supply chain is most vulnerable and where further work is needed.

Link to access: <https://www.un.org/globalgeospatial/sites/default/files/2026-05/stateofgeodesy.pdf>

UN-GGCE Highlights 2024-2026

Since March 2023, UN-GGCE has been turning what it heard from Member States and the geodetic community into practical work. The first Joint Development Plan for Global Geodesy set out a shared plan for strengthening the supply chain, while participation in the Multilateral MoU has grown from 36 founding participants to 57 entities.

The Centre has also released the first State of Geodesy assessment, hosted four regional capacity development workshops involving 216 professionals from 100 countries, and worked with more than 150 scientific experts and 34 partner organizations. This report brings these efforts together and shows how the Centre's work has developed since it began full operations.

Link to access: https://www.un.org/globalgeospatial/sites/default/files/2026-07/20260721-UN-GGCE-highlights-report-2024-2026_1.pdf

By the numbers

The State of Geodesy 2026 report rated governance as the weakest capability in the global geodesy supply chain (scoring 1.8 out of 5). **At the 16th meeting of UN-GGIM over 40 member states gave interventions in support of the global geodesy supply chain, with the majority noting a need for strengthening international governance for geodesy.**

