



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2013

Original: English

Tenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas

New York, 19-23 August 2013

Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**Conference papers: invited papers on recent developments in
geospatial information management in addressing national,
regional and global issues**

Geospatial data collection, management and dissemination

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Tenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas a technical paper on geospatial data collection, management and dissemination.¹ The technical paper is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Conference (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/RCC/unrcca10.html>). The Conference is invited to take note of the technical paper.

Summary of the technical paper

The technical paper indicates that the Secretariat has traditionally played a prominent role in collecting global information on the status of mapping in the world since the 1960s. In 2011, the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management and the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) agreed to launch a new initiative to collect information on authoritative governmental mapping by the States Members of the United Nations.

A jointly compiled questionnaire was sent to national mapping agencies. The questions not only covered information on existing national map coverage on different scales but also the age of the latest maps produced. Since traditional vector mapping is cost and time intensive, and the provision of aerial and high resolution satellite imagery without the interpretation of objects is a faster process, questions on imagery procurement were also included. In addition, in order to assess infrastructures for mapping, the questionnaire contained questions on the use of

* E/CONF.103/1.

¹ Prepared by Gottfried Konecny, International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and Leibniz University, Hannover, Germany.



digital imagery and the means of distributing imagery and maps through the use of modern information technologies. The role of cadastral mapping was also addressed.

Answers to the questionnaires have been received from about half of the Member States. The results are summarized in the technical paper. For the remainder of the countries, an assessment of their map coverage and the age of their authoritative maps has been made based on information obtained from map vendors.

At a time when new technologies have paved the way to supplement governmental mapping, in part by industry efforts to use imagery, the technical paper attempts to assess the global coverage of such efforts, in which even crowdsourcing may play a role. The paper also addresses critical issues related to the timely provision of geospatial information.
