

Newsletter October 2021

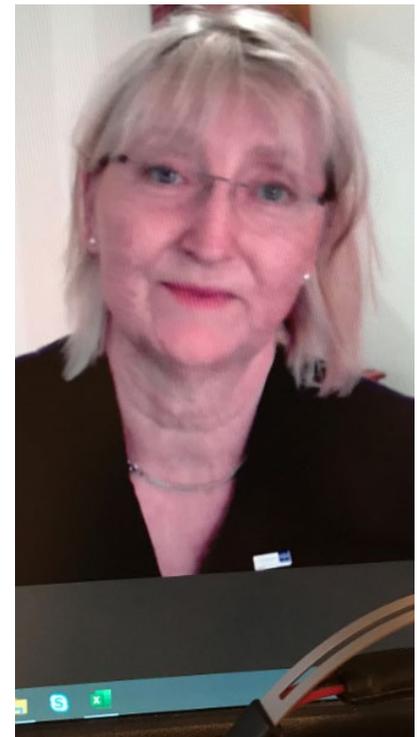
Members and liaisons of ISO/TC 211, geospatial colleagues,

This newsletter will most likely be my last one, as I am completing my 3-year term as chair of ISO/TC 211 at the end of this year.

Who could have known that we during most of this time would be meeting on-line, looking at each other through the screen of our computers? Much can be said about this, and I am sure it will occupy researchers for decades ahead, and the children born now will be told as they grow up about the big pandemic in 2020/2021 that totally shut down and changed the world.

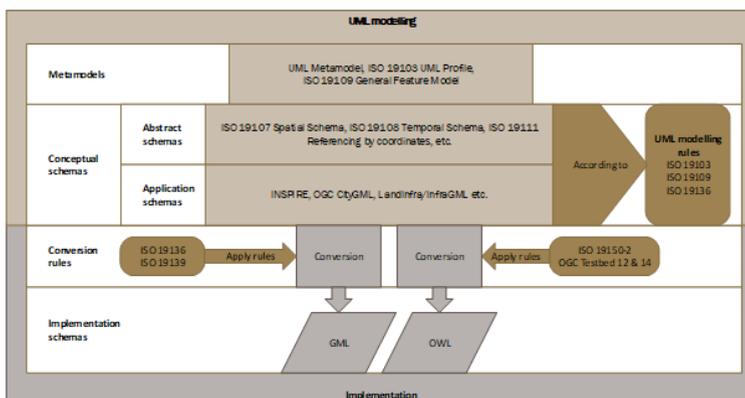
I am proud over where we are in the committee now, and at the same time humble about the challenges ahead. I often hear confirmation that the committee co-operative work and relations are becoming more visible now to the geospatial community, but still we are aware of the need for the committee to continuously keep up with the user needs and the evolving technologies.

It is busy season in the committee this time of year. I will start with a few news topics from the recent months, and then share some thoughts with you.

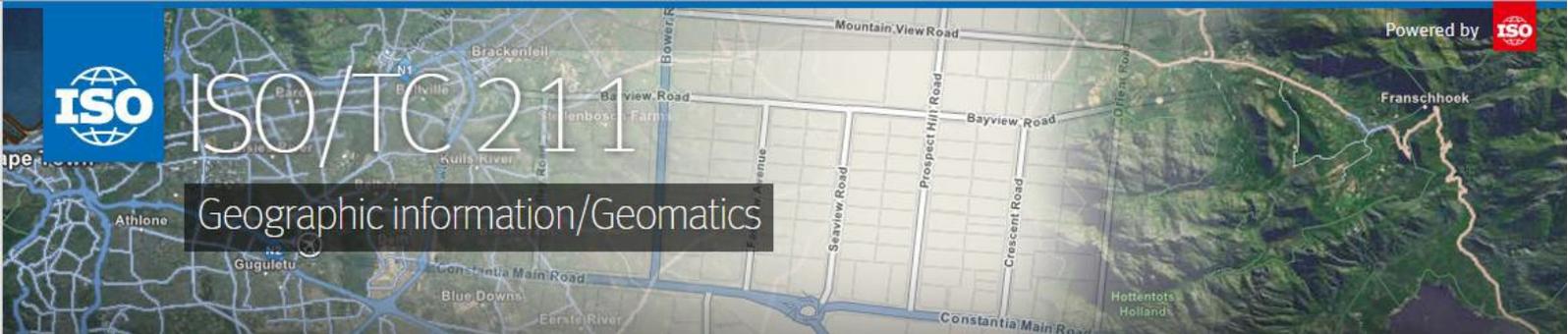


ISO/TC 211 web site, news feed and blog

By following us on social media you will get direct access to the TC web site <https://committee.iso.org/home/tc211>, [news](#), [blog](#) and may other useful resources. In the blog there are interesting posts on ISO/TC 211 addressing standards and the Harmonized UML Model and Resources for implementation of standards.

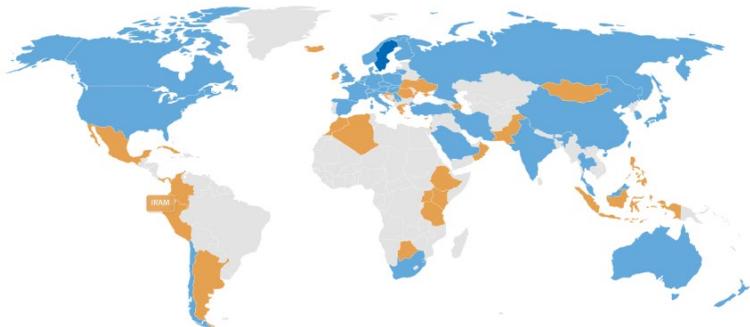


The Harmonized Model is based on the fundamental principle that modelled concepts shall be defined only once and reused in other models. The reuse of elements from existing models is an essential part of information modelling. UML models in the Harmonized Model follow this principle and reuse elements from other ISO/TC 211 standards and models developed by other ISO technical committees.



Successful 52nd plenary week in June

ISO/TC 211 held its 52nd meeting week, virtually, on the week of June 7th. Over one hundred participants from thirty countries and liaison organizations attended; some twenty working groups and advisory groups convened; the open seminar addressing geospatial data in various domains was very well-attended; the plenary session was attended by over ninety delegates; and a set of substantive technical committee resolutions affecting the future work was proposed and passed. Links: [resolutions](#) (committee decisions); [Standards in action](#) seminar presentations and video recordings.



This map is designed to visually demonstrate the geographic distribution of our Members. The boundaries shown do not imply an official endorsement or acceptance by ISO.

We are pleased to welcome the *UN-GGIM Subcommittee on Geodesy* as liaison to ISO/TC 211, and we hope to soon conclude the final liaison arrangements for the UN-GGIM Regional Committee Africa. Liaison relations are crucial for reaching out to other organizations that has a direct relationship with ISO/TC 211 work program or uses/references our standards.

The Standards Guide Edition 3 now endorsed by the UN-GGIM expert committee

On September 1st, the [11th session of UN-GGIM](#) committee of experts adopted the Third Edition of the Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management (the Standards Guide), jointly developed by the Standards Development Organizations (SDO): Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC), International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and ISO/TC 211. The UN-GGIM committee urged the UN Member States and relevant stakeholders to continue with the broad review and refinement of the Standards Guide as a living and online resource aligned with the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF). A huge congratulations to the joint SDO revision team for this accomplishment.

Links:

[Decisions with Decision 11/111 on Standards](#)

[SDO Annual report](#)

[SDO Introductory Statement](#)

[SDO Draft Standards Guide \(un.org\)](#)

[Side event page – with Standards Guide and AG 13 Land Cover Land Use](#)

Why are standards important and what is needed?

ISO/TC 211 is the ISO entry point to geospatial standards, also providing standards for integration with other domains in need of location outside the traditional mapping sector.

In the accelerating rate of digitization, standards are required to support Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR) data and in meeting global development goals. I believe it will become more and more important to show that organizations are compliant to geospatial standards. Data needs to be reliable and understandable.

Participation is the key to standardization and is needed at all levels:

- **Decision-makers** – who recognizes the benefits of standards and sets the policy framework and allocate funding.
- **Developers of interoperable solutions** – who develops standards while also ensuring national needs.
- **Standards users** – who uses standards in their organizations e.g. for compliance and participates in standardization by expressing needs.
- **Practitioners of all kinds** – who discovers standards as a toolbox of good practices.



This means that SDO work is driven by requirements and practical needs identified by the global user community. Member input and stakeholder participation is key to our success.

Participating in standards development is an opportunity for member countries to gain experience and increase their knowledge as this gives access to a broad network of experts from all around the world facing similar problems that needs solving.

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I believe there is a risk that organizations may not leverage the full potential of digitization and standardization if not all levels above are engaged in setting the requirements, thus making it more difficult to adapt to future challenges. There is a great need of defining priority geospatial needs, ensuring the resources (as well as to encourage young people to study geospatial sciences).

In addition, there will probably always be a mismatch between on the one side the expectations as to what a standardization organization can or should achieve, and on the other side the resources made available by the members. Those interested in contributing to

communication work in making standards easier to understand are especially welcome to nominate participants. Just let the committee secretariat know! *We are our members and liaisons.*

Standards development - our core business

After consultation with OGC, IHO, International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), United Nations Office of Legal Affairs' Division for Ocean Affairs and Laws of the Sea (DOALOS), the World Bank, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and UN-Habitat, to ensure that organizational requirements are covered, the revision of ISO 19152:2012 "Land Administration Domain Model (LADM)" is now agreed to result in a multi-part standard: 1) Land Administration Fundamentals; 2) Land Registration; 3) Marine Space Geo-regulation; 4) Land Valuation; 5) Spatial Planning; and, 6) Implementations. Work proposals for parts 2, 3, 4, and 5 have been presented to the committee for comments. After final proposals, member voting, and a synchronized planning, the projects should be up and running.

The development of ISO 19160-2 "Assigning and maintaining addresses for objects in the physical world" started in July 2021. The standard will facilitate the implementation of address assignment and maintenance, contributing to addressing the un-addressed. The World Bank and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) are engaged as liaisons in the development of the deliverable.

One of the general-purpose geospatial standards of ISO/TC 211 is ISO 19103:2015 "Conceptual schema language" and its revision process has just started and with a great interest from many of our members and liaisons.

It is difficult to here give justice to all the ongoing 25-30 projects within the working groups on standards development including revisions. Add to that the advisory groups, and the ad hoc groups assigned to investigate new user areas or technologies. ISO/TC 211 consists of 18 convenors with responsible roles in the progress of the committee work. The project leaders have an important duty of keeping the focus, timeline, and consensus within the expert group. The committee manager and secretariat provide other pre-conditions necessary.

Join us for the 53rd plenary week

I hope to see you at the 53rd Plenary meeting virtual week, scheduled for November 26th to December 4th. Keep an eye on the the website and on social media. As from 2022, the chair seat will be taken over by Mr. Peter Parslow from the Ordnance Survey, UK, and nominated by the National Standards Body of the UK.

It has been a great pleasure, privilege, and honor to serve as the chair of ISO/TC 211 Geographic Information/ Geometrics during 2019 - 2021.

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[ISO/TC 211 LinkedIn page](#) □

This newsletter is published by ISO/TC 211 Outreach. At the [committee website](#) find more on published standards, ongoing projects (programme of work), and meetings. Find earlier versions of the newsletter [here](#). For questions or comments, contact committee manager Mats Åhlin, Swedish Institute for Standards (SIS) mats.ahlin@sis.se.

