

FGDC Summary of the Covered Agency and Lead Covered Agency Annual Reports for FY 2023—Fulfilling Requirements of the Geospatial Data Act of 2018



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Abbreviations

CIGIE Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency

FGDC Federal Geographic Data Committee

GDA Geospatial Data Act of 2018

IG Inspector General

NGAC National Geospatial Advisory Committee

NGDA National Geospatial Data Asset

NSDI National Spatial Data Infrastructure

OMB Office of Management and Budget

U.S.C. United States Code



FGDC Summary of the Covered Agency and Lead Covered Agency Annual Reports for FY 2023—Fulfilling Requirements of the Geospatial Data Act of 2018

By the Federal Geographic Data Committee

1. Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) agencies' annual reports for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, as required under the Geospatial Data Act of 2018 (GDA). The report summarizes the performance and accomplishments of "covered agencies" (agencies identified in the GDA as having specific geospatial management responsibilities), and "lead covered agencies" (covered agencies that also have the lead responsibility for coordination and management of National Geospatial Data Asset [NGDA] data themes) in meeting the annual reporting requirements of the GDA.

All covered agencies and lead covered agencies identified in the GDA fulfilled their reporting requirements in FY 2023, which are summarized in this report. To meet these requirements, 16 covered agency reports and 18 lead covered agency reports are developed by FGDC member agencies. Each year, the FGDC agencies continue to utilize and refine an enterprise approach for tracking and reporting progress on GDA requirements. Agencies review and improve a set of online tools, using standardized criteria, to develop consistent reports in a coordinated, efficient manner. The FGDC annual summary report then summarizes the 34 required annual reports. The 34 agency reports, plus the FGDC annual summary reports, for FY 2023 and FY 2024 will be combined for inclusion in the biennially required Report to Congress. Additionally, the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) provides an annually required report to the FGDC on its review and comments of the FGDC annual summary report that are also included in the FGDC's biennial report to Congress.

The GDA defines the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) as "...the technology, policies, criteria, standards, and employees necessary to promote geospatial data sharing throughout Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments, and the private sector (including nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher education)" (43 U.S.C. Section 2801(13)). The 34 required agency annual reports also highlight the requirements of the GDA in the context of the goals and objectives of the NSDI. This report summarizes the covered agencies progress and lead covered agency's NGDA Theme progress in meeting geospatial responsibilities, GDA requirements and the goals of the NSDI.

Agency performance summary for fiscal years 2022 and 2023, by total percentage of self-evaluation responses. [FY, fiscal year; %, percent]

D. Communication	Covered agenc	y performance ₁	Lead covered agency performance ₂			
Performance standard	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2022	FY 2023		
Meets expectations	70%	77%	14%	17%		
Making progress toward expectations	29%	22%	86%	83%		
Fails to meet expectations	1%	1%	0%	0%		

¹Covered agency reporting contains a total of 208 responses across 16 agencies.

₂Lead covered agency reporting contains a total of 72 responses across 18 National Geospatial Data Asset (NGDA) data themes.



Covered Agencies FY 2023 Self Evaluation Results

Each covered agency provided a self-evaluation rating for each of the 13 GDA requirements. An evaluation of the percentage of total responses, across the 16 covered agencies, shows the following results:

- Meets Expectations: 77% (161 of 208 responses)
- Made Progress Toward Expectations: 22% (45 of 208 responses)
- Fails to Meet Expectations: 1% (2 of 208 responses)

Lead Covered Agencies

Each lead covered agency provided a self-evaluation rating for each of the 4 categories of GDA requirements. An evaluation of the percentage of total responses, across the 18 NGDA themes, shows the following results:

- Meets Expectations: 17% (12 of 72 responses)
- Made Progress Toward Expectations: 83% (60 of 72 responses)
- Fails to Meet Expectations: 0% (0 of 72 responses)

This report, as well as the underlying covered agency and lead covered agency reports are available at https://www.fgdc.gov/gda/gda-reports/.

2. Introduction

The Geospatial Data Act of 2018 (GDA) (43 U.S.C. 46) codifies responsibilities for the management of geospatial data and resources by Federal agencies in coordination with partners and stakeholders in other sectors. The GDA establishes the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) as "the lead entity in the executive branch for the development, implementation, and review of policies, practices, and standards relating to geospatial data" (Section 2802(a)). The GDA also supports the coordinated implementation of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) and the development and management of National Geospatial Data Assets (NGDAs). As of September 30, 2023, the NGDA portfolio included 172 approved NGDA datasets organized under 18 data themes. The total number of NGDAs may change based on FGDC approval of agency recommendations.

2.1. Geospatial Data Act Reporting Requirements

The GDA includes management and reporting responsibilities for "covered agencies" (agencies identified in the GDA as having specific geospatial management responsibilities), and "lead covered agencies" (covered agencies that also have the lead responsibility for coordination and management of NGDA data themes). These agencies are responsible for submitting annual reports on their performance in meeting the requirements of the GDA. The covered agency and lead covered agency reporting responsibilities are described in greater detail in Section 2.2.

2.2. FGDC Reporting Approach

The FGDC agencies have collaborated to develop an enterprise approach for tracking and reporting progress on GDA requirements that enables a consistent aggregation of responses for the required FGDC Annual Report. Agencies have developed a set of online tools, using standardized criteria, to develop consistent reports in a coordinated, efficient manner. Agencies conducted self-evaluations of their performance using these standardized tools. The FGDC agencies and the FGDC Office of the Secretariat have coordinated extensively to develop this reporting approach and to ensure consistency across the reports. The reports include the mandated ratings of "meets expectations," "made progress toward expectations,"



or "fails to meet expectations" for each of the requirements identified in Section 2802(c)(10)(A-B) of the GDA. The FGDC has refined the metrics and reporting processes based on previous reporting processes, National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) comments, and recommendations from Inspector General audits of GDA covered agencies. The FGDC has coordinated with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) on the GDA-required Inspector General audits of covered agencies.

2.3. Content of This Summary Report

As required under Sections 2802(c)(10)(A) and (B) of the GDA, this report provides a summary of the performance status of each covered agency and for each NGDA data theme. The report covers the period of fiscal year 2023, from October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023.

This report also includes links to the more detailed underlying reports that were developed by each covered agency and lead covered agency, as well as the review comments from NGAC (see link in NGAC Comments section). This summary report, along with comments from NGAC and the FGDC member agencies, will be included as an appendix to the 2025 biennial FGDC GDA Report to Congress and will also be published separately online. The FGDC maintains a web page that includes all GDA-required reports, available at https://www.fgdc.gov/gda/gda-reports/. Table 1 provides additional detail about the roles and responsibilities of the FGDC member agencies in implementing the GDA.

2.4. Changes to GDA Annual Reporting

Changes to the FY 2023 GDA reports include the following:

Covered Agency Reports

Covered agency reports continue to use online survey-based reporting tools to facilitate consistent reporting. The covered agency reporting template included minor changes from the previous reports. Questions representing each of the 13 reporting requirements include slight modifications, based on agency suggestions, to improve the online reporting tools and ensure consistency in reporting results. In addition, the template instructions were modified to request specific examples within the agency's brief summaries if a self-evaluation rating changed from FY 2022.

Lead Covered Agency Reports

For FY 2023, the lead covered agency reporting template was streamlined and brief summaries were mandatory only for those agencies whose rating had changed for any of the requirements. The lead covered agency reporting template included a new NGDA data theme summary response. This summary response allowed lead covered agencies to give a complete explanation of the status of their NGDA data theme for FY 2023.

NGAC Comments

As required by the GDA, the National Geospatial Advisory Committee (NGAC) provided comments and recommendations on the FY 2022 GDA reports. The FY 2022 NGAC comments are posted at: https://www.fgdc.gov/ngac/meetings/april-2023/ngac-paper-ngac-comments-on-fy-2022-fgdc-summary.pdf. The NGAC comments were categorized as Positive Elements/Improvements from Last Year, Areas Needing Improvement, Recommendations for Future Reports, and Other Comments. The FGDC has made a series of changes to the reports and reporting processes to address the NGAC comments. For example, FGDC guidance for FY 2023 reporting included mandatory instructions to provide examples on how a particular self-evaluation rating changed for both covered agencies and lead covered agencies. This change was based on NGAC's request for more information about how and why ratings increased or decreased. The FGDC will continue to engage with the NGAC and address their comments and recommendations on this and future reports.



Table 1. Roles and responsibilities of the FGDC member agencies under the Geospatial Data Act of 2018.

[CA, covered agency; LCA, lead covered agency; FGDC, Federal Geographic Data Committee; NGDA, National Geospatial Data Asset; GDA, Geospatial Data Act of 2018; –, none]

CA	LCA	FGDC Member Agency	NGDA Theme Lead ¹	NGDA Datasets ²
X	Х	Department of Agriculture	3	15
X	Х	Department of Commerce	8	56
X	_	Department of Education	-	_
Х	_	Department of Energy	-	_
X	-	Department of Health and Human Services	-	_
Χ	-	Department of Homeland Security	_	1
X	_	Department of Housing and Urban Development	-	12
Χ	Χ	Department of the Interior	11	59
Χ	_	Department of Justice	-	-
Χ	_	Department of Labor	-	-
X	Χ	Department of State	1	1
Χ	Χ	Department of Transportation	2	10
X	-	Department of Treasury	-	_
Х	_	Department of Veterans Affairs	-	_
Х	Х	General Services Administration	1	2
X	_	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	-	3
_	-	National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency/Department of Defense ³	_	10
_	_	Office of Management and Budget ⁴	-	-
		Nonmember Agencies/Organizations That Manage NGDAs		
_	_	Environmental Protection Agency	_	1
_	_	International Boundary Commission	-	1
_	_	International Boundary Water Commission	-	1
		Totals	26	172 ⁵

¹ The total represents the 26 theme leads and co-leads across the 18 NGDA themes. The total number of leads is greater than the total number of themes because some of the NGDA themes are co-led across agencies. A list of the NGDA themes and agency leads is available at https://ngda-portfolio-community-geoplatform.hub.arcgis.com/pages/contacts.

² Number of NGDAs managed by agency/organization. The NGDA portfolio datasets are available at https://ngda-portfolio-community-geoplatform.hub.arcgis.com/pages/portfolio.

³ Organization is not a covered agency but has specific NGDA management responsibilities.

⁴ Organization is not a covered agency but has specific NGDA management responsibilities.

⁵ Total number of FGDC Steering Committee approved NGDA Datasets as of September 30, 2023.



3. Covered Agency Annual Reports

3.1. Overview

Section 2808(b) of the GDA requires each covered agency to submit to the FGDC "an annual report regarding the achievements of the covered agency in preparing and implementing the strategy described in subsection (a)(1) and complying with the other requirements under subsection (a)." The reporting process and information on how to access the results are described below.

Common Reporting Process

The FGDC covered agencies continued to utilize a common reporting process based on a standardized online questionnaire, to facilitate consistent reporting on covered agency GDA responsibilities. Using a common template and criteria, each agencycompleted a self-evaluation of their performance in addressing the thirteen covered agency GDA responsibilities found in Section 2808(a). The agency reports also reflect the goals in the covered agency geospatial strategies, which were developed in 2021, as required by GDA Section 2808(a)(1).

Agencies are responsible for maintaining documentation to support the responses provided for their self-evaluations. Each agency's annual report includes details about the agency's performance and achievements, including a narrative description of agency activities in addressing each of the 13 GDA requirements for covered agencies.

The FY 2023 self-evaluation template included two additional optional summaries. The first allowed agencies to briefly highlight a key achievement in making progress towards meeting GDA requirements or advancing geospatial activities. Four agencies highlighted achievements within their covered agency report, they are the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Transportation. The second allowed agencies to submit a two-page overview document (Appendix B of the covered agency reports) to support a more comprehensive picture of agency achievements and related activities. In FY 2023, two agencies included this two-page overview document, these agencies are the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Commerce.

Access to Summary Reports

The results of the self-evaluations of the covered agencies' progress in meeting GDA requirements are summarized in table 2. Links to the pdf versions of the final annual reports for each GDA covered agency are listed after table 2.



Summary of Results—Covered Agency Annual Reports 3.2.

Table 2. Summary of covered agency evaluations.

[Evaluation results: M, meets expectations, P, made progress towards expectations; F, fails to meet expectations.]

Requirement	USDA	DOC	ED	DOE	HHS	DHS	HUD	DOI	DOJ	DOL	DOS	DOT	TREAS	VA	GSA	NASA
(1) Covered agency geospatial																
strategies	M	M	M	M	M+	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
(2) Support data sharing	M+	M	M	Р	Р	Р	М	Р	М	P	M	М	M	Р	M	M+
(3) Promote data integration	M+	М	М	Р	М	M+	М	М	М	P-	М	М	М	М	М	М
(4) Ensure records retention																
schedule for geospatial data	M+	M	М	Р	Р	Р	M	М	M	M	M	M	M	M	P-	Р
(5) Allocate resources for																
geospatial data management																
responsibilities	M+	M	Р	Р	Р	Р	M	P-	M	P+	Р	M	M	Р	M+	M
(6) Use data standards	M+	M+	Р	Р	Р	Р	М	P-	Р	Р	М	Р	M	Р	M+	М
(7) Support coordination and																
partnerships	M+	M	M	Р	M	Р	М	М	М	P	M+	М	M	Р	M	M+
(8) Promote application of																
geospatial data assets	M+	М	М	Р	P	M+	М	М	М	P	М	М	М	P-	М	M+
(9) Protection of privacy and																
confidentiality	M	М	М	М	P	M+	М	М	М	P-	М	М	M	Р	М	М
(10) Declassified data	М	М	М	F	М	F	М	М	М	М	М	М	М	М	М	М
(11) Non-duplication of data	M+	М	M	Р	Р	M+	M	M	M	P-	M+	М	M	М	M	М
(12) Ensuring high-quality data	M+	М	М	Р	M	М	М	М	М	М	M+	М	М	М	М	М
(13) Point of contact	М	М	М	М	M	М	M	М	M	М	М	M	М	М	М	M

Table data as of September 30, 2023

2023 Reports

The covered agency annual reports in pdf format are accessible at https://www.fgdc.gov/gda/gda-reports and through the following links:

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Department of Commerce (DOC)

Department of Education (ED)

Department of Energy (DOE)

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Department of the Interior (DOI)

Department of Justice (DOJ)

Department of Labor (DOL)

Department of State (DOS)

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Department of Treasury (TREAS)

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

General Services Administration (GSA)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)



4. Lead Covered Agency Annual NGDA Data Theme Reports

4.1. Overview

Section 2805(b)(3)(E) of the GDA requires lead covered agencies responsible for NGDA data themes to submit annual performance reports to the FGDC. These reports document "the activities relating to and implementation of the National Geospatial Data Asset data theme, including progress in achieving the requirements under subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), and (D)" of Section 2805(b)(3). The reporting process used and information on how to access the results are described below.

In FY 2023, the NGDA Theme community finalized a common NGDA Theme Strategic Plan template that can be specifically tailored to each NGDA data theme. The NGDA Theme Strategic Plans are required by GDA Section 2805 (b)(3)(B). The NGDA Theme Strategic Plan template provides a consistent framework for agencies to develop goals, objectives, and actions that directly align with GDA requirements. The intent of a common template is to provide flexibility, allowing agencies that manage NGDA data to identify actions and accomplishments that align with the established goals, objectives, and anticipated outcomes, while also reflecting the technological, economic, and organizational constraints and opportunities of the agencies managing NGDA data. Moving forward, lead covered agency annual reports will highlight agency actions and accomplishments associated with the strategic plan in support of standards, nationwide population of NGDA datasets, strategic planning that aligns with the NSDI Strategic Plan and other guidance, and meeting user needs. The template was approved by the FGDC Steering Committee on June 30, 2023, for use by all NGDA themes, with a projected completion date of the end of FY 2024.

Common Reporting Process and Approaches

The FGDC lead covered agencies continued to use a common reporting process to facilitate consistent and efficient reporting on NGDA data theme responsibilities. The lead covered agency theme reports highlight ongoing strategic activities related to the data themes and the FGDC portfolio management activities that align with GDA requirements...

In FY 2023, the lead covered agency reporting template was streamlined and condensed. FGDC lead covered agencies continued to utilize online tools for reporting progress made by the data themes. These self-evaluation tools provide consistency and comparability in reporting across the FGDC NGDA data themes. The brief summaries following the self-evaluation responses were made mandatory only if an agency's rating changed from FY 2022. The lead covered agency reporting template also included a new NGDA data theme summary response. This summary response allowed lead covered agencies to give a holistic annual view on the status of their NGDA data theme.

The updated template also reflects cross-agency efforts to analyze GDA requirements and develop a common approach and strategies across FGDC at both the theme and portfolio level that document progress in meeting GDA requirements. At the theme level, these reports provide updates to the previous year's reporting cycle, summaries and information for ongoing processes, procedures, and actions within agencies that manage NGDA datasets. At the portfolio level, these reports highlight continued efforts across the FGDC agencies and the NGDA themes to evaluate the requirements of the GDA in the context of the goals and objectives of the NSDI Strategic Plan.

Summary Report

The common template allows FGDC to efficiently summarize the progress made across all NGDA data themes. The agency evaluations of their performance in meeting GDA requirements for the NGDA data themes are summarized in table 3. Links to the pdf versions of the final annual reports for each NGDA data theme are listed after table 3.



4.2. Summary of Results—Lead Covered Agency Annual NGDA Data Theme Reports

Table 3. FGDC summary of lead covered agency National Geospatial Data Asset data theme evaluations.

[Evaluation results: M, meets expectations, P, made progress towards expectations; F, fails to meet expectations.]

	GDA 43 U.S.C. § 2805 (b)(3) (A) - (D) Requirements								
Theme and Number of NGDA Datasets (172 total)	(A) Geospatial data standards	(B) Nationwide population of the data theme	(C) Establish actions that support the goals and objectives in the NSDI strategic plan	(D) Addressing user needs					
Address (1)	P	Р	Р	Р					
Biodiversity and Ecosystems (8)	M	Р	Р	Р					
Cadastre (17)	P	Р	Р	Р					
Climate and Weather (4)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Cultural Resources (3)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Elevation (13)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Geodetic Control (4)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Geology (6)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Administrative and Statistical Boundaries (34)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Imagery (10)	Р	М	Р	M					
International Boundaries (1)	М	M +	M	M					
Land Use – Land Cover (13)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Real Property (15)	M +	Р	М	Р					
Soils (5)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Transportation (15)	Р	М	М	M					
Utilities (2)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Water – Inland (5)	Р	Р	Р	Р					
Water – Oceans & Coasts (16)	D	D	Р	Р					

2023 Reports

The lead covered agency NGDA data theme annual reports, in pdf format, are accessible at https://www.fgdc.gov/gda/gda-reports/index_html through the following links:

Address Geodetic Control Real Property

Biodiversity and Ecosystems Geology Soils

Cadastre Governmental Units Transportation

Climate and Weather Imagery Utilities

Cultural Resources International Boundaries Water–Inland

Elevation Land Use–Land Cover Water–Oceans and Coasts



5. Conclusion

5.1. Key Observations

- All covered agencies and NGDA themes identified in the GDA fulfilled their reporting responsibilities in FY 2023, which are summarized in this report.
- Since the enactment of the GDA, the FGDC agencies have placed significant focus on developing streamlined and common reporting processes to enable comparative results and consistent FGDC-wide reporting. The common reporting approach includes the agencies' self-evaluations of their progress on GDA reporting requirements.
- The continued development of coordinated and consistent GDA reports and processes requires significant agency resources and FGDC Office of the Secretariat staff and contract support, to support the volume and frequency of the reporting responsibilities of the GDA, as summarized in table 4.
- Results from the covered agency and lead covered agency reports show that agencies are making progress in addressing the requirements of the GDA. However, significant work remains to fully meet the vision of the GDA.
- The FGDC will continue to refine the GDA reporting approach based on feedback from users and stakeholders, including the GDA required annual reviews of the FGDC annual summary report by the NGAC.
- The findings and recommendations from the 2022 biennial Inspector General audits, required by the GDA, may impact future FGDC GDA implementation and reporting activities.
- The GDA includes significant and complex reporting requirements. A National Geospatial Advisory Committee Resolution, approved in June 2020, included the following recommendation: "Given that the GDA planning and reporting requirements are considerable and highly complex, the NGAC recommends streamlining of the reporting processes to ensure focused, efficient, and consistent reporting across government" (National Geospatial Advisory Committee, 2020). Based on the experience gained through four years of GDA reporting, the FGDC agencies continue to look for efficiencies to simplify and streamline the reporting process while still ensuring transparency and accountability for results.

5.2. Challenges

The GDA provides a constructive framework for development of national geospatial data assets and processes to ensure accountability and transparency in geospatial investments. The intent of the GDA is to ensure widespread accessibility and useability of Federal geospatial data, however, agencies face a number of challenges for the successful implementation of the statute. Table 4 below lists the significant number of recurring plans and reports required by the GDA. Continuing challenges for GDA implementation include:

- Streamlining and simplifying the reporting and audit requirements in the GDA while continuing to ensure accountability, transparency, and efficiency.
- Maintaining and enhancing geospatial data and services delivery while addressing the significant requirements of the GDA.
- Allocating staff resources to address the significant reporting and audit responsibilities required in the GDA.
- Supporting consistent, detailed, multiagency reporting and information sharing without automated reporting systems.



- Providing increased GDA-required geospatial data and services delivery through the GeoPlatform (www.geoplatform.gov).
- Ensuring timely execution of other key aspects of the GDA, including coordinating with non-Federal partners and stakeholders to implement the NSDI strategic plan.

The FGDC member agencies look forward to continuing to work with Congress in meeting the intent of the GDA to provide an integrated, sustainable, and world leading NSDI while ensuring efficiency and transparency.

Table 4. Summary of GDA planning and reporting requirements.

[GDA, Geospatial Data Act of 2018; Sec, Section; #, Number of reports]

GDA Sec	Requirement	Туре	Periodicity	#
2802	OMB Guidance (section 2802(b)(3))	Guidance	Periodic	1
	FGDC NGDA/Covered Agency Evaluation & Summary Report (sections 2802(c)(10)(A) and 2802(c)(10)(B))	Report	Annual	1
	FGDC response to comments from NGAC on Annual Summary Report (section 2802(c)(11)(B))	Response	Annual	1
	FGDC Report to Congress (sections 2802(c)(11)(C) and 2802(c)(12)(B))	Report	Biennial	1
2803	NGAC Comments on FGDC Annual Summary Report (section 2802(c)(11)(A))	Comments	Annual	1
2804	FGDC NSDI Strategic Plan (section 2804(c))	Plan	Periodic	1
2805	Lead Covered Agency NGDA Plan and Standards Plan (sections 2805(b)(3)(B) and 2805(b)(3)(A)(iii))	Plan	Periodic	18
	Lead Covered Agency Annual Performance Report (section 2805(b)(3)(E)(ii)(I))	Report	Annual	18
2808	Covered Agency Strategy (section 2808(a)(1))	Plan	Periodic	16
	Covered Agency Annual Report to FGDC (section 2808(b)(1))	Report	Annual	16
	Covered Agency Annual Report to Congress identifying Federal-wide geospatial data assets (section 2808(b)(2)(C))	Report	Annual	16
	Audits – IG Reports to Congress on Covered Agency compliance (section 2808(c))	Report	Biennial	16
	Recurring Planning/Report	ting Docume	nts – TOTAL	106



6. Selected References

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