



UN-SPIDER November 2008 Updates

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<http://www.ungiwg.org/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/unspider>

1. UN-SPIDER Conducts Technical Advisory Mission to Burkina Faso

In June 2008, the Government of Burkina Faso officially requested a UN-SPIDER Technical Advisory Mission (TAM) to assess the use of space-based information for disaster management and emergency response in Burkina Faso, and to identify potential areas where space-based information could play a greater role. On 17-21 November 2008, a five-member team of international experts conducted the Technical Advisory Mission in Burkina Faso. The team included experts from CNES (French Space Agency), ASAL (Algerian Space Agency) and OCHA. Among other issues, the mission team discussed how space-based technology could contribute to information management in different sectors of disaster management, such as drought and flood monitoring, control of epidemics, or locust invasion. The International Charter "Space and Major Disasters," a mechanism to support emergency response services worldwide with satellite-derived disaster information, was presented to national institutions. Also presented were successful early warning systems in the region, such as locust invasion warning systems.

2. UNOOSA and UNECA to Co-chair UN Geographic Information Working Group in 2009-2010

The United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG) is a UN inter-agency coordination body established in 2000, presently with some 220 geospatial expert staff members from over 30 UN Agencies. From 4 to 7 November 2008, the Office for Outer Space Affairs co-hosted the 9th Plenary Meeting of UNGIWG in Vienna, Austria together with CTBTO. The Plenary, attended by representatives from some 17 UN agencies as well as numerous partner organizations and private companies, included discussions on the progress and future of the Task Groups, and the way forward for the UN Spatial Data Infrastructure (UNSDI) initiative.

The UN Office for Outer Space Affairs, together with the UN Economic Commission for Africa, were elected to co-chair UNGIWG for the next two years. The new co-chairs intend to extend the collaborative information exchange and reach of UNGIWG, identifying and inviting all potential GIS and remote sensing experts within the UN System. It is estimated that well-over 500 such experts are currently in the system.

More information on the progress of these efforts will be shared in future updates.

3. Pakistan, Kenya, and Brazil Receive Free Satellite Imagery from Charter with UN-SPIDER Support

The International Charter "Space and Major Disasters" was activated for the Pakistan Earthquake by USGS on behalf of SUPARCO on 03 November 2008. UN-SPIDER received communications from CARE International, USAID and SUPARCO and subsequently closed the loop between SUPARCO and USGS.

On 16 November 2008, UNOOSA triggered the International Charter for floods and landslides in Kenya at the request of UN OCHA Kenya. The Project Manager for this call is the Famine Early Warning System – FEWSNET in Kenya.

On 28 November, the Charter was triggered by the Argentinean Civil Protection Agency - SIFEM, in collaboration with Argentina's National Commission on Space Activities - CONAE for the floods in Brazil on behalf of the Civil Protection Agency of Santa Catarina, Brazil. UN-SPIDER facilitated this

activation, which is also Brazil's first ever use of the Charter. The Project Manager is Brazil's National Institute for Space Research – INPE through its GEODESASTRES-SUL programme.

For further information: <http://www.disasterscharter.org>

4. Atelier Régional sur L'Outil Spatial au Service de la Gestion des Catastrophes

Un workshop intitulé "L'Outil Spatial au Service de la Gestion des Catastrophes et des Situations d'Urgence en Afrique – Aspects Techniques, Organisationnels et Juridiques" a eu lieu du 10 au 12 novembre 2008 à Rabat (Maroc). Le programme et les communications sont accessibles sur: http://www.emi.ac.ma/OSGC_CRASTE_2008/. (The presentations are only available in French).

5. African Association of Remote Sensing for the Environment (AARSE) Conference in Accra, Ghana

UN-SPIDER, one of the sponsors of the 2008 AARSE Conference (African Association of Remote Sensing for the Environment), co-chaired a special session on "Disaster Management and Early Warning Systems" together with UNEDRA, the University Network for Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa. The conference also offered the opportunity for a side-meeting with the National Disaster Management Office of Ghana, which brought together institutions from Ghana and the region to discuss how space-based technology could contribute to disaster management in the country.

Full story at: <http://www.unspider.org>

6. Group on Earth Observations Heralds Free, Global Access to USGS Earth Imagery

Scientists and decision-makers will soon have unrestricted global access at no charge to the USGS Landsat archive, the world's most extensive collection of continuously-acquired land imagery. USGS says that the full collection will be freely available online by the end of this year. Beginning with the launch of Landsat 1 in 1972, Landsat has produced a massive archive that spans nearly four decades and includes over two million space-based, moderate-resolution land remote sensing images. From 400 miles above Earth, the scale of Landsat imagery makes it useful in understanding natural and human-induced changes to our planet.

Full story at: <http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=2076>

7. NASA and USAID Bring Earth-Observation Benefits to Africa

NASA, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and their international partners cut the ribbon Friday in Nairobi, Kenya, for SERVIR-Africa. The SERVIR-Africa system integrates the satellite resources of the United States and other countries into a Web-based Earth information system. This effort puts previously inaccessible information into the hands of local scientists, government leaders and communities to help address concerns related to natural disasters, disease outbreaks, biodiversity and climate change. NASA and USAID are expanding the system to Africa in partnership with the Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development in Nairobi.

Full story at: http://www.nasa.gov/home/hqnews/2008/nov/HQ_08-307_SERVIR-Africa.html

8. NASA, Google Maps Track Southern California Wildfires

NASA has posted a series of photos of the Southern California wildfires that were taken with one of its research satellites. The following news blog lists several channels through which the imagery can be viewed. The images show smoke from the fires being blown west over the Pacific Ocean.

Full story at: http://news.cnet.com/8301-10784_3-10100672-7.html

9. Gujarat, India Using Space Technology for Development

Disaster Management has acquired a whole new meaning in Gujarat, with space technology helping in analysing floods and water logging. Projects underway include the use of satellite derived information in combating diseases by identifying areas at risk. Gujarat has also supported tele-medicine and long distance education by providing broadband connectivity up to the village level. Around 20,000 classrooms of various schools and colleges in the state are covered under the EDUSAT (educational satellite) programme.

Full story at: <http://www.expressindia.com/latest-news/gujarat-puts-space-technology-to-best-use-in-governance-development/386541/>

10. USEReST 2008 – Presentations Available

Second workshop on Use of Remote Sensing Techniques (USEReST) for Monitoring Volcanoes and Seismogenic Areas Naples, Italy, November 11-14, 2008.

Presentations can be accessed at: <http://www.userest.org/Presentations.html>

11. CALL FOR PAPERS: Earthzine Theme Issue on “Disaster Mitigation and Response”

Earthzine is an online source for news and educational materials about Earth observation for the international community. It is a contribution of the IEEE Committee on Earth Observation (ICEO) in support of the Group on Earth Observations and its mission. The theme issue on “Disaster Mitigation and Response” includes contributions addressing current events, techniques and applications of remote sensing, GIS, and geovisualization. The issue is scheduled for publication in the first quarter of 2009. Submission deadline for articles is January 1, 2009

Writers' Guidelines: http://www.rpsoc.org/images/uploads/Call_for_Papers_Disaster_Mitigation.pdf
Paper Submission: John Kostelnick on jkostelnick@ilstu.edu

12. SECOND CALL FOR ABSTRACTS: The International Emergency Management Society (TIEMS) Annual Conference 2009 in Istanbul, Turkey, 9-11 June 2009

Participants are invited to submit contributions to a wide series of topics, merging into the topic “Let's Meet Where the Continents meet - New Methods to Manage the Intercontinental Emergency Situations.” The deadline for submission of abstracts is 31st December 2008.

For more information:

http://www.tiems.org/fileadmin/events/TIEMS_2009/TIEMS_2009_Second_Call_for_Papers.pdf

Conferences and Workshops

We maintain a Calendar of Events with upcoming Conferences, Meetings and Events relevant to the area of space-based solutions for disaster management and emergency response. The Calendar can be viewed at:

<http://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=h1a93vb3rk6ud1tvrequisfk8s%40group.calendar.google.com>

"Second International Conference on Geoinformation Technology for Natural Disaster Management and Rehabilitation" in Bangkok, Thailand, 1-2 December 2008

The symposium will focus on the use of geoinformatics for natural disaster preparedness such as earthquake, flood, typhoon and tsunami etc., and for rehabilitation and risk management by exploring the various causative factors. There will also be deliberations on how to use GIS for better planning of risk areas. UN-SPIDER is a co-organizer of the conference.

More information at: <http://e-geoinfo.net/git4ndm.html>

"Digital Disaster Mitigation and Emergency Management" in Beijing, China, 8 December 2008

For further information, please contact

Qu Guosheng on qgsh@263.net

"Cartography and Geoinformatics for Early Warning and Emergency Management: Towards Better Solutions" in Prague, Czech Republic, 19-22 January 2009

This Symposium will tackle topics related to Early Warning and Emergency Management considering technology, user requirements for geo-information, and information providers (data and standards).

For more information: <http://c4c.geogr.muni.cz>

"III Cuban Earth Sciences Convention and Fair" in Havana, Cuba, 16-20 March 2009

The event welcomes presentations about the Geology, Resources and Geohazards of the Caribbean and Cuba, with special reference to Earth Sciences for Society, including the application of new technologies in the exploration and exploitation of natural resources, and the sustainable use of these resources. Presentations are welcome in the main subjects of the Planet Earth Initiative, such as

www.unspider.org

Ground waters, Natural Hazards, Earth and Health, Climate Change, Energy for a Sustainable World, Megacities, Deep Earth, Oceans, Soils, Earth and Life, Earth Sciences Education.

For more information: <http://www.cubacienciasdelatierra.com/>

Upcoming UN-SPIDER Outreach Activities

Further information on the UN-SPIDER planned workshops is available at the events section of the UN-SPIDER webpage: <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/unspider/workshops.html>

We have already carried out all planned Outreach Activities for 2008. We organised four workshops this year, including a regional workshop for the Caribbean region which was held in Barbados, and one for the Pacific Region which was held in Fiji. We are now planning for workshops to be held in 2009, which will include a regional workshop for Latin America to be held in **Ecuador** and one for Africa to be held in **Addis Ababa**, both in the second half of 2009, and two international workshops to be held in **Vienna** in June 2009 and in **Bonn** in October 2009. We will soon provide more details on these planned workshops.

*The **United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)** implements the decisions of the General Assembly and of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two Subcommittees, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee. The Office is responsible for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, and assisting developing countries in using space science and technology. Headquartered in Vienna, Austria, UNOOSA maintains a website at <http://www.unoosa.org>.*

*In its resolution 61/110 of 14 December 2006 the United Nations General Assembly agreed to establish the "**United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response - UN-SPIDER**" as a programme within UNOOSA. UN-SPIDER focuses on the need to ensure access to and use of space-based solutions during all phases of the disaster management cycle.*