



UN-SPIDER April 2009 Updates

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

1. UN-SPIDER prepares Technical Advisory Support Mission to Togo

UN-SPIDER provides support in assessing national capacity and in evaluating disaster and risk reduction activities and policies with regard to the use of space-based technologies. In Africa, UN-SPIDER has provided such support to Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, and Namibia. Recently, the Government of Togo has also requested UN-SPIDER to carry out such a Technical Advisory Support Mission. UN-SPIDER has indicated that it will carry out this Mission in July 2009.

For more information >> please contact Mr. Shirish Ravan (shirish.ravan [at] unoosa.org)

2. UN-SPIDER active in regional DRR meetings

UN-SPIDER experts are participating in regional disaster risk reduction meetings to establish a proposal for a global thematic partnership on space-based information for disaster risk reduction. This proposal will then be discussed at the second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva on 16-18 June 2009. Mr. Shirish Ravan (shirish.ravan [at] unoosa.org) will be participating in the upcoming Second Africa Regional Platform for DRR Consultative Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya on 5-7 May, and Mr. David Stevens (david.stevens [at] unoosa.org) will be at the upcoming Fourth Annual Meeting of the Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network in Nadi, Fiji on 11-15 May. Participants to these meetings are invited to email Messrs. Ravan and Stevens to arrange in-person discussions.

3. Italy earthquake analyzed with satellite imagery

Studying data from Earth Observation satellites, scientists have analyzed the April 6 earthquake that shook the medieval town of L'Aquila in central Italy. For example, the Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia (INGV), responsible for seismic monitoring in Italy, used satellite imagery from the COSMO-SkyMed constellation to measure the surface displacement field. The high quality of the data, the short revisit time, and the spatial resolution allowed for detailed analysis. Their main result was the identification of the seismogenic fault through a combination of earth observation and in-situ data.

Full Story >> [Italian Space Agency \(Italian language\)](#), [ESA](#), [Google Italy \(Italian\)](#)

4. Launch of EXPRESSMaps, an online service to deliver satellite imagery maps in 6 hours

Spot Image and Infoterra, subsidiaries of EADS Astrium, have launched an online service to deliver detailed basemaps at a scale of 1:50 000, covering over 75% of the Earth's land surfaces, to be delivered electronically to users in 6 hours. The service is principally aimed at first responders — civil protection agencies, as well as military and humanitarian aid teams — in crisis management situations. EXPRESSMaps supplies detailed maps of an area of interest derived from recent high-resolution archive satellite imagery.

Full Story >> [Infoterra \(pdf\)](#)

5. FAO donates African spatial data to OpenStreetMap

Africover is a project of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) dealing with land cover assessment for the African continent, based on remote sensing and GIS techniques. Africover maintains shapefiles containing rivers, roads, towns, and administration boundaries for a number of countries. FAO has granted permission to add this data to OpenStreetMap, a free editable map of the world.

Full Story >> [DevelopmentSeed](#)

6. Africa–India medical and educational satellite links to expand

A project to link up African Union countries with Indian hospitals and universities via satellite will accelerate this year after a pilot project in Ethiopia proved successful. The project, costing more than US\$100 million, aims to connect universities and hospitals of all 53 countries of the African Union with Indian counterparts for telemedicine and tele-education activities. It uses video conferencing and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services for communication. Satellite ground stations are being installed at universities and hospitals in several African countries.

Full story >> [SciDev.net](#)

7. NASA experiment stirs up hope for forecasting deadliest cyclones

In the wake of last year's Cyclone Nargis – one of the most catastrophic cyclones on record – a team of NASA researchers re-examined the storm as a test case for a new data integration and mathematical modeling approach. They compiled satellite data from the days leading up to the May 2 landfall of the storm and successfully "hindcasted" Nargis' path and landfall in Burma. In their modeling experiment, the team detected and tracked Nargis' path by employing novel 3-dimensional satellite imagery and atmospheric profiles from the Atmospheric Infrared Sounder (AIRS) instrument aboard NASA's Aqua satellite to see into the heart of the storm. "With this approach, we can now better define cyclones at the early stages and track them in the models to know what populations may be most at risk," said Oreste Reale, the study's lead author.

Full Story >> [NASA](#)

8. Satellites show arctic literally on thin ice

The latest Arctic sea ice data from NASA and the National Snow and Ice Data Center show that the decade-long trend of shrinking sea ice cover is continuing. New evidence from satellite observations also shows that the ice cap is thinning as well.

Full Story >> [NASA](#)

9. CALL FOR PAPERS: Special issue on disasters and geoinformation technology

Two special issues of the journal "Disaster Advances" will deal with disaster and geoinformation technology. These issues are to be published in July and October 2009. Details of the journal, instructions to authors, and sample papers can be accessed at the website. The guest editor is Dr. Saied Pirasteh of Malaysia. The deadline for submission is 30 May 2009.

For more information >> [Disaster Advances](#)

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>

“3rd Regional Training Course GIS for Disaster Risk Management – An Introductory Course” organized by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), in Bangkok, Thailand, 11-22 May 2009

This course organized with the collaboration of the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC) Enschede, The Netherlands and the Geoinformatics Center, Asian Institute of Technology (AIT-GIC), aims at creating awareness and providing knowledge to disaster management practitioners on the importance of spatial data and GIS in disaster risk management. Participants will learn about application of spatial data in hazard and vulnerability assessment, disaster preparedness, recovery and reconstruction.

For more information >> [ADPC](#)

3rd Central Asia GIS Conference - GISCA'09, “GIScience for Environmental and Emergency Management in Central Asia”, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 27-28 August 2009

This conference will be hosted by the Kyrgyz State University for Construction, Transportation & Architecture and supported by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA); the conference will bring together practitioners from Central Asian countries. Topics to be discussed include GIS for Environmental Management, Emergency Management, and Health; New Trends and Technologies in GIS&T; Spatial Data Infrastructures; and Educational Programmes. UN-SPIDER will be organising a pre-conference meeting on 26 August 2009 and will be providing funding support for experts from the disaster management community to attend this meeting as well as the conference. The deadline for submission of abstracts is 1 May 2009.

For more information >> [Austria-Central Asia Centre for GIScience](#)

AfricaGIS 2009: “Geo-spatial Information and Sustainable Development in Africa” in Kampala, Uganda, 26-30 October 2009

The "AfricaGIS 2009" International Conference is one of the leading geospatial conferences in Africa and provides a platform where geo-information professionals from Africa and around the world come together to learn and interact about geo-information technology and its applications. UNOOSA is supporting this Conference and will be co-organising a special session on space-based information for risk and disaster management. Funding will be available for travel support for selected participants that have their paper accepted to be presented in this special session. The deadline for submission of abstracts is 30 April 2009.

For more information >> [Conference website](#), [Conference flyer](#), [Funding Support from ISPRS](#)

CALL FOR PAPERS: “3rd International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) African Regional Conference” in Abuja, Nigeria, 24-26 November 2009

The conference aims to provide a forum for the presentation and discussion of topics related to the theme, “Space for Africa: Joint Participation, Knowledge Development and Sharing”. Papers are invited in the following areas of the conference subthemes: integrated earth observation system for development, space communications and navigation systems, space transportation and propulsion systems, space debris and near earth objects, earth observation sciences and related technologies, basic space science, capacity building and the space enterprise. Deadline for abstract submission is 15 June 2009.

For more information >> [IAA](#)

Upcoming UN-SPIDER Outreach Activities:

Further information on the following planned workshops can be obtained from the outreach activities section of the UN-SPIDER webpage: <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/unspider/workshops.html>

United Nations International UN-SPIDER Workshop: "Promoting the Use of Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response", in Vienna, Austria, 2-4 June 2009 >> [Download application form](#), [Useful information for participants](#)

UN-SPIDER Regional Workshop "Promoting the Use of Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response in Latin America", Quito, Ecuador (15-18 September 2009)

Third United Nations International UN-SPIDER Bonn Workshop: "From Concepts to Application", in Bonn, Germany, 21-23 October 2009

"6th UN-wide Meeting on the Use of Space Technologies for Emergency Response and Humanitarian Assistance", in New York, USA (October 2009)

UN-SPIDER Regional Workshop "Building Upon Regional Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response for Africa", Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (24- 27 November 2009)

Upcoming Events Supported by UN-SPIDER

Capacitación en Teledetección Aplicada a la Reducción del Riesgo por Inundaciones, Córdoba, Argentina (Organized by CONAE and OAS), 4-8 maio de 2009

3rd Central Asia GIS Conference - GISCA'09, "GIScience for Environmental and Emergency Management in Central Asia" in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 27-28 August 2009

II Escuela de Primavera sobre Soluciones Espaciales para el Manejo de Desastres Naturales y Respuestas de Emergencias (UN-SPIDER/GEOSS Spring School), Argentina (Organized by UN-SPIDER/GEOSS/CONAE/CRECTEALC (October 2009)

AfricaGIS 2009: "Geo-spatial Information and Sustainable Development in Africa" in Kampala, Uganda, 26-30 October 2009

*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.*