

Press Material on Addis Ababa Regional Workshop for the African Continent Addis Ababa, 6-9 July 2010

Space-based Solutions essential for Disaster Management, Emergency Response for Africa

AddisAbaba, July 6, 2010 (Addis Ababa) - Space-based Solutions found essential for Disaster Management and Emergency Response for Africa, United Nations /UN/ Office for Outer Space Affairs and Economic Commission for Africa /ECA/ said.



Director, ICT and Science and Technology Division in UN-ECA Aida Opoku, said it is time in Africa to maximize the accessibility of special data and the use of geospatial information technologies in government day-to-day business process and service delivery.

The director was speaking here on Tuesday at the opening of a workshop organized under the theme Building Upon Regional Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response for Africa.

She said Africa is one of the regions where different types of natural and man-made disasters happen and crises cannot be mitigated and overcome without well-structured and comprehensive geospatial data foundation.

The director said emphasis should be given to exploitation of geospatial technology to define relevant indicators for the evaluation of disaster impact, assess risk level and magnitude for vulnerable zones.

Hence, she said capacity should be built, partnerships be forged and sound policy actions be undertaken to harmonize human resource development across Africa in geospatial technology, increase indigenous African Earth Observation, encourage linkage with international programs and African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology and develop data access and sharing principles.

The workshop, which lasts from 6-9 July 2010 is expected to discuss on the overarching topics of climate in Africa with special emphasis of the contribution of space-based technologies to mitigate the impact of disaster, among others.

Delegates from Ethiopia, South Africa, Nigeria, Sudan, Ghana, Namibia, Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda Malawi, Burundi, Somalia, and Togo, among others, are taking part at the workshop organized and supported by UN Office for Outer Space Affairs, ECA, Austrian government and Secure World Foundation.

Source: [Ethiopian News Agency](#)

Environnement : Ethiopie: Les solutions régionales spatiales pour la gestion des catastrophes en Afrique , thème d'un atelier à Addis-Abeba

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

Un atelier sur "les solutions régionales spatiales pour la gestion des catastrophes et des interventions d'urgence en Afrique" sera organisé, du 6 au 9 juillet, au siège de la Commission économique pour l'Afrique (CEA) à Addis-Abeba.

Initié conjointement par le Programme des Nations Unies pour l'exploitation de l'information d'origine spatiale aux fins de la gestion des catastrophes et des interventions d'urgence (UN-SPIDER) et la CEA, cet atelier débattera du phénomène du changement climatique et de la contribution des technologies spatiales à atténuer son impact, à améliorer l'adaptation au changement climatique et à faire face à la dégradation des terres à travers l'utilisation d'outils novateurs d'analyse.

Les participants à cette rencontre auront à examiner les moyens à même d'harmoniser les différentes initiatives existantes pour aider les pays africains à avoir accès et à utiliser les technologies spatiales pour la gestion des catastrophes et la réduction des risques.

Ils devront également mettre au point une stratégie visant à obtenir le soutien des bureaux d'assistance régionaux pour renforcer les capacités institutionnelles des pays africains en matière d'utilisation des technologies de l'information spatiale.

L'atelier, qui verra la participation d'experts en gestion des risques de catastrophes naturelles, en télémédecine et en médecine des catastrophes, des chercheurs, des représentants d'Agences de la cartographie et d'organisations de technologies spatiales, sera financé par le gouvernement autrichien.

Créé en vertu de la résolution de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU 60/110 du 14 décembre 2006, UN-SPIDER permet à tous les pays et à toutes les organisations régionales compétentes l'accès à tous les types d'informations et de services spatiaux pertinents pour la gestion des catastrophes, destiné à appuyer le cycle complet de la gestion des catastrophes.

Ce programme sert de trait d'union entre la communauté de la gestion des catastrophes et la communauté spatiale, et facilite la création de capacités et le renforcement des institutions, notamment dans les pays en développement.

Il a été mis au point pour faire face aux effets dévastateurs des catastrophes qui causent des pertes humaines et matérielles, obligent les populations à abandonner leurs foyers et détruisent leurs moyens de subsistance, et provoquent d'énormes dégâts dans les pays touchés.

L'utilisation des techniques spatiales actuelles, telles que les satellites d'observation de la Terre et de météorologie, les satellites de télécommunications et les systèmes de navigation et de localisation par satellite, ainsi que leurs applications jouent un rôle crucial dans la gestion des catastrophes en fournissant en temps opportun des informations fiables qui permettent de prendre des décisions et de rétablir les communications en cas de catastrophe.

Source : <http://www.casafree.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=47920>

Les solutions régionales spatiales pour la gestion des catastrophes en Afrique, thème d'un atelier à Addis-Abeba

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

Un atelier sur "les solutions régionales spatiales pour la gestion des catastrophes et des interventions d'urgence en Afrique" a ouvert ses travaux, mardi, au siège de la Commission économique pour l'Afrique (CEA) à Addis-Abeba.



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Les participants à cette rencontre auront, trois jours durant, à examiner les moyens d'harmoniser les différentes initiatives existantes pour aider les pays africains à avoir accès et utiliser les technologies spatiales pour la gestion des catastrophes et la réduction des risques.

Ils devront également mettre au point une stratégie visant à obtenir le soutien des bureaux d'assistance régionaux pour renforcer les capacités institutionnelles des pays africains en matière d'utilisation des technologies de l'information spatiale.

L'atelier est marqué par la participation d'experts en gestion des risques de catastrophes naturelles, en télémédecine et en médecine des catastrophes, des chercheurs, des représentants d'Agences de la cartographie et d'organisations de technologies spatiales.

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Source: [aufait](#)

Space Technology to Reduce Africa's Vulnerability to Disasters

Wednesday, 07 July 2010

African disaster management experts met with the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) experts, here in Addis Ababa to discuss on how the continent minimizes its vulnerability to disasters using space technology.



The three days meeting, which began yesterday July 6, 2010, attempts to promote the access to and use of space-based technologies and solutions for disaster management and emergency response within relevant communities in Africa. It is also expected to identify strategies to bridge the gap between the space and the African disaster management experts.

The organizers also told journalists that the meeting will enable them to obtain elements to define the strategy to support UN-SPIDER in Africa, including capacity building and institutional strengthening. Improving the communication and coordination among existing initiatives in African countries regarding access to and use of space-based technologies for disaster-risk management, emergency response, climate change, and health-related issues is also mentioned expected results from the gathering.

In her paper presented the meeting, Aster Deneke, from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) indicated that due to poor wetland management, especially unsustainable use of water resources, is the root cause of the totally drying up of wetlands in Africa. Among other disasters that Africa is experiencing, lakes such as Ethiopia's Haromaya and Lake Naivasha of Kenya are dying dramatically as a result of wetland degradation and climate change, she said.

UN-SPIDER was established in December 2006 by the United Nations General Assembly resolution. As a program of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, UN-SPIDER's aim is to provide universal access to all countries and all relevant international and regional organizations to all types of space-based information and services relevant to disaster management to support the full disaster management cycle.

The space technology, which Africans have not yet benefited the most from, aims to help disaster management agencies in the continent to adapt to an increasing number of natural disasters mainly caused by floods and drought using early warning space information.

Between 2008 and 2009, UN-SPIDER conducted four Technical Advisory Missions (TAM) to African countries (Ghana, Namibia, Burkina Faso, Togo); it became a partner in the Namibian Sensor Web Pilot Project on Flood Management; supported training activities in various countries; mobilized experts from African nations to regional and international events; and cooperated with various space and disaster management communities at regional and national level.

Source: [New Business Ethiopia](#)

UN body urges Africa to use space-based solution to tackle disaster

Thursday, July 8th, 2010

APA-Addis Abba (Ethiopia) A United Nations agency, the UN-SPIDER programme has urged Africa to use space-based solutions for disaster reduction, which is among the continent's development challenges.

The UN-SPIDER programme, coordinated by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA), is currently promoting the use of space-based information and space-based services for disaster reduction and response.

This UN body is currently hosting an international forum, "Building Upon Regional Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response for Africa", in Addis Ababa in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) on how to boost space-based solutions to tackle disaster in the continent.

Juan-Carlos Villagran of UN-OOSA told journalists that currently only few African countries are using this technology to tackle the problem.

Nigeria, according to Mr. Villagran, is currently using space-based solutions to tackle disaster while few African countries are undertaking activities to launch the use of the technology.

Villagran indicated that UN SPIDER is establishing networks of regional support offices and national focal points in the continent in order to contribute to efforts conducted at the national level by government agencies.

Source: [APA](#)

Amidst Policy Gaps Africa on Track to Use Space-based Information, Say Experts

Wednesday, 07 July 2010

Some countries and lack of awareness of politicians about space technology, Africa is said on the right track to use space-based information for risk-disaster management, said experts.

Africa on the right track to use space based information for disaster-risk management and reducing unexpected natural disasters, said Juan Carlos, UN-SPIDER of the United Nations Program Director for the outer space.



The three days meeting of African disaster management experts with the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) experts is opened here in Addis Ababa on July 6, 2010.

Briefing media on progress of the meeting, which will be concluded tomorrow July 9, 2010, "even though some countries in the continent like Zimbabwe have some limitations, Africa is on the right track to use space-based information for disaster-risk management," he said.

Mentioning the presence of two space related training centers based in Kenya and Nigeria, he noted that the continent has the capacity to train people on how to assess the space-based information. “But I do not say they are fully capable of using the information,” he noted.

Agreeing with Mr. Juan Carlos, “We are getting the information, but we have problem in analyzing this information” says Mr. Josue Dione, Acting Head and Director of UNECA’s Food Security and Sustainable Development.

African politicians know less interested about space-science and lack of policy and governments’ political and financial support is being observed, according to Mr. Josue Dione. “Using space-based information is not cheap. African politicians have to provide financial and political support to this area,” he said.

Around 100 decision-makers and senior experts on disaster-risk management are attempting to promote the access to and use of space-based technologies and solutions for disaster management and emergency response within relevant communities in Africa.

The organizers also told journalists that the meeting will enable them to obtain elements to define the strategy to support UN-SPIDER in Africa, including capacity building and institutional strengthening.

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Source: [New Business Ethiopia](#)

Satellite pictures show Tunisia sinking, effects of global warming on Kilimanjaro

Friday, 9 July 2010

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - The layers of ice on Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest point, have changed colour due to the increasing air pollution in Africa, while Tunisia - the continent's northern tip - is increasingly sinking due to mining activities, satellite images show.

'The disappearing glaciers on Mt Kilimanjaro are a result of global warming. The ice used to be blue. The colour of the ice has changed because the ice is absorbing the pollutants from the air,' Dr Lothar Beckel of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts told PANA.

Satellite images compiled by Dr Beckel's Institute for Global Mapping and Research (IGM), part of the European Academy based in Austria, show the ice on the Mountain is disappearing.

'The glaciers on Mt Kilimanjaro used to be blue, it is no longer blue,' he noted. 'This is however not unique to the glaciers on Mt Kilimanjaro alone, the glaciers on the Alps is also changing.'

The changing colour of the ice on Mt Kilimanjaro and the sinking land mass in Tunisia have been captured in new map recently published by the Institute after years of research.

'The sinking of Tunisia means the streets could fall apart and the houses also might sink. This is a result of the mining activities in Africa,' Dr Beckel said, adding that the Institute is compiling an Atlas specifically dedicated to Africa.

The map will showcase environmental changes taking place in the continent. So far, the Institute has published a worldwide map, which has shown the effect of heavy air pollution on Africa.

'It took us 15,000 man-hours to produce the map. It captured 1,100 satellite images. We are producing a new one specific to Africa which will certainly not be out tomorrow. It might be out in three years time,' Dr Beckel said.

Dr Beckel, who attended a meeting of scientists to discuss the use of space technologies in enhancing Africa's climate change effects preparedness, said the maps so far produced clearly point out 'hotspots' for possible landslides, earthquakes and breeding grounds for diseases.

The UN Office for Outer Space Affairs, (UN-SPIDER) based in Vienna, Austria, convened the meeting, which discussed the use of space technologies to help African countries tackle climate-related disasters.

'We brought together scientists and representatives of disaster management agencies to plan activities of how to better put space technologies into use in Africa,' Juan Carlos Villagran, the Programme Officer at UN-SPIDER told PANA.

Scientists who attended the meeting said it sought to catch the attention of African governments on the need to pay close attention to scientific information.

The European Union Commission has recently announced it planned to oversee the implementation of the science, information and space technologies initiatives, which were approved in a 2008/10.

The plan aims to help the African Union (AU) to establish an African Space Agency, and it is expected to be finalized during the next AU-EU Summit in November in Libya.

Source: afriquejet.com

Des images satellite montrent la fonte des neiges du Kilimandjaro

Saturday, 10 July 2010

La calotte glaciaire du Mont Kilimandjaro, le sommet le plus élevé du continent africain, a changé de couleur à cause de la pollution de plus en plus importante de l'air, tandis que la Tunisie - la pointe extrême du continent - s'affaisse du fait des activités minières, révèlent les images prises par satellite.

"La disparition des glaciers du Mont Kilimandjaro est le résultat du réchauffement global. La calotte qui était bleue a changé de couleur car elle absorbe les polluants de l'air", a expliqué Dr Lothar Beckel de l'Académie européenne des sciences et des arts.

Les images satellite recueillies par l'Institute for Global Mapping and Research (IGM) du Dr. Beckel, un démembrement de l'Académie européenne basée en Autriche, montrent que la calotte glaciaire est en train de fondre.

Les images du changement de couleur de la calotte du Mont Kilimandjaro et de l'affaissement de la masse terrestre en Tunisie ont été répertoriées sur une nouvelle carte récemment publiée par l'Institut après des années de recherches.

Le Dr Beckel, qui participait à une réunion de scientifiques portant sur l'utilisation des technologies dans le renforcement de la préparation aux effets du changement climatique en Afrique, a indiqué que les cartes produites jusqu'ici montraient clairement "les zones dangereuses" susceptibles d'être exposées à des glissements de terrain, des séismes et des maladies.

Source : afriquejet.com

Interview: China contributes to space-based information access a lot: UN official

ADDIS ABABA, July 8 (Xinhua) -- The United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) said on Thursday China plays a large role in providing technical support to national and regional organizations that they will have access to and use space-based information to mitigate the negative impact of global climate change.

The UN-SPIDER will officially open its third office in Beijing, China where it will effectively coordinate its entire program in ensuring the access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full management of disaster management cycle.

Juan Carlos Villagran, Representative of UN-SPIDER, told Xinhua in an exclusive interview that the governments of China, Germany, and Austria have displayed special commitment to supporting UN-SPIDER program towards its objectives.

He said the UN-SPIDER has three major offices including the one in China which will be playing significant role in providing technical advisory support to the program.

"The UN-SPIDER Office in Beijing will be officially opened in November this year; the Beijing Office has been conceived since the UN-SPIDER was designed to be in charge of the national and regional technical advisory support of the national and regional level; so it plays a large role

complementary to the UN Office which focuses on capacity building in our objectivity, complementary to the Office in Bonn, Germany, so the entire program will be coordinated through these Offices,” said Villagran.

“Beijing will have a very important role in assisting in providing technical advisory support to national organizations and regional organizations such as United Nations Economic Commission for Africa,” he added.

“We have been benefited from data which has been gathered through Chinese satellite for disaster around the world so that will be another contribution that we are hoping will be available from the Beijing Office mobilizing Chinese satellite that we can provide satellite information to countries which are experiencing disaster; it is part of the technical advisory support from Beijing,” said him.

According to Villagran, the government of China has special commitment to support the UN-SPIDER program. UN-SPIDER is a program of the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs established on the 14th of December, 2006 by the UN General Assembly, to provide universal access to all countries and all relevant international and regional organizations to all types of space-based information and services relevant to disaster management.

The UN-SPIDER coordinates its program through its three major offices in Beijing, China, Venna, Austria, and Bonn, Germany.

Source: Xinhuanet.com