

Geographisches Institut der Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn

**The UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal**  
**An Interactive Platform to Foster Space Technology Utilization in**  
**Disaster Management**

**Diplomarbeit**

vorgelegt von

**Florian Moritz Neisser**

betreut durch

**Prof. Dr. Jürgen Pohl**

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**Abstract:**

Disaster Management is an issue of global importance which requires timely and accurate information as well as clear and suitable communication technology to guarantee coordinated efforts to save lives and property. Thus, technology for gathering, retaining, managing and transferring information and the ability of linking experts plays an eminent role. This study is an observation of the setting of the web-based UN-SPIDER (United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response) Knowledge Portal based on the Actor-Network Theory to examine such a human-technology network. The Actor-Network Theory treats the Knowledge Portal as an assemblage of technical (non-human), social (human) and mental (supra-human) entities. The observation is focused on the configuration and the processes which form this actor-network with the aim to bring together the space technology and the disaster management community to support and nurture virtual Communities of Practice and enable knowledge transfer. The thesis addresses the problem of a communication gap between the space technology and the disaster management community by applying the Actor-Network Theory and analyzing this network of human and technological actors.

**Keywords:**

Actor-Network Theory; UN-SPIDER; Information and Communication Technology; Communities of Practice; Geography; Cyberspace; Hybrid Geography; Human-Technology Interaction

**Contact Details:**

Dipl. Geogr. Florian Neisser  
Research Associate  
Department of Geography  
University of Bonn  
Meckenheimer Allee 166  
53115 Bonn, Germany  
fneisser@uni-bonn.de  
florianneisser@hotmail.com