



UN-SPIDER January 2009 Updates

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

1. UN-SPIDER Provides Technical Advisory Support to Namibia

UN-SPIDER Senior Expert Dr. Joerg Szarzynski is currently in Namibia leading a UN-SPIDER Technical Advisory Mission. UN-SPIDER has been providing support to Namibia since March 2008 when the Hydrological Service of the Namibian Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry asked for international support to access satellite images to support a national flood emergency. UN-SPIDER provided support and followed-up closely with both UNDP and the Hydrological Service of Namibia, helping Namibia take full advantage of what the international community was providing. Two experts from the Hydrological Service of Namibia had the opportunity also to participate in the Second United Nations International UN-SPIDER Bonn Workshop: "Disaster Management and Space Technology - Bridging the Gap" in Bonn, Germany, 13 to 15 October 2008, providing feedback on the lessons learned. This Technical Advisory Mission to Namibia will help the country build further the national capacity as well as the national plans and policies that will ensure that Namibia is able to build upon all existing opportunities in the future.

2. UN-SPIDER Stakeholders to Meet at COPUOUS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

UN-SPIDER Stakeholders will meet on the sideline of the Forty-sixth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOUS) to discuss the 2008-2009 UN-SPIDER activities and the Plan of Work for 2010-2011. The outcome of the discussions will then be considered by the members of the Subcommittee under the Agenda Item 8: Space-system-based disaster management support.

Further information at: <http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/COPUOUS/stsc/2009/index.html>

3. Applications of SPOT Imagery for Disaster Response

SPOT Image has had a presence of over 20 years in the market for satellite-based geographic information, where it has played a driving role through the precursor series of SPOT satellites. Its wide range of services makes it a leading supplier of satellite Earth observation geodata. This article from the Earthzine Blog Archive lists 17 example cases of the uses of SPOT imagery in disaster response.

Full story at: <http://www.earthzine.org/2009/01/20/applications-of-spot-for-disaster-response/>

4. International Recovery Platform Launches New Website

The new International Recovery Platform website, www.recoveryplatform.org, is scheduled to officially launch in Kobe, Japan during the International Recovery Forum 2009 on 26-27 January 2009. The initiative is part of International Recovery Platform's advocacy activities to promote the recovery phase as an essential process for rebuilding communities in a safer and better manner after they have been struck by disaster. The website will contain various resources such as publications, tools, guidelines, and discussion forums to increase information sharing on post-disaster recovery practices and policies.

Full story at: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/news/v.php?id=7799>

IRP Website: <http://www.recoveryplatform.org>

5. Two New Satellites to be Added to Disaster Monitoring Constellation

Two new satellites, Deimos-1 (Spain) and UK-DMC2 (UK) will supply imagery to support global environment monitoring projects when they launch later this year as part of the Disaster Monitoring Constellation. The DMC constellation is designed to react rapidly to natural disasters - as it did by capturing the first satellite images of the destruction caused by the 2004 Asian tsunami. The two new satellites will offer higher resolution images (22m) than the current DMC quintet (32m). The operators of the DMC are inviting scientists to submit their ideas for Earth observation projects. The ten winning bids for free use of the satellites will be split evenly between researchers from Spain and the United Kingdom, home of the two new satellites.

Full story at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/7785662.stm>

6. Rise in Extreme Weather Events Fuelling Demand for UN Disaster Management Expertise

The United Nations disaster management team was kept busy this year by the rise in hurricanes, floods and other natural disasters caused by extreme weather as well as by increased demand from Governments worldwide for disaster-awareness training. In 2008, the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) system – which helps disaster-stricken countries rapidly assess priority needs and coordinate relief on-site – sent teams of disaster-management professionals to 16 areas, including 10 stricken by floods and hurricanes. UNDAC also organized disaster-awareness training programmes in Russia for members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and in the Middle East. Next year, it will organize training for the West African region.

Full story at: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29405>

7. Death Toll from Disasters Surged in 2008, UN Reports

The number of people killed in natural disasters spiked in 2008, with most of the lives claimed by Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar and the Sichuan earthquake in China, according to figures released by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). The 2008 death toll of 235,816 was more than three times the annual average of the previous eight years. Asia remained the continent most affected by disasters, with nine of the ten countries with the highest number of deaths in Asia.

Full story at: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=29636>

8. Construction of Chinese Version of "Google Earth" Launched

The China State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping launched a program to set up a service platform on national geographic information for the general public. The move, disclosed at a national conference for directors of surveying and mapping bureaus held on January 14, marks fundamental changes in China's traditional services to supply basic geographic information. Upon completion, the program will provide comprehensive online geographic information services similar to "Google Earth" and "Google Maps" to all types of institutions and to the general public.

Full story at: <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90882/6575042.html>

9. New Disasters Earth Observation Monitoring Initiative in Canada: Assessment and Mitigation of Active Geohazard Sites

Abstract: Over the last decade, the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) has been involved in the support of scientific initiatives, demonstration projects and operational implementation activities related to disasters and security management. Through the Government Related Initiatives Program (GRIP), the CSA and its public and private sector partners have fostered the development of Earth Observation (EO) information and services related to geohazards. This article discusses the critical role the CSA applications development programs, projects and assets (space and ground segments) can play in ensuring the integration of EO in the management and stewardship of this sensitive area, and a greater awareness and appreciation by Canadians of the benefits that they receive from the use of EO information, services and products. It also highlights the success of the CSA and its partners from Natural Resources Canada and the Alberta Geological Survey, which developed new InSAR methods and techniques. These techniques demonstrate the potential of RADARSAT-1 and 2 to improve the assessment and mitigation of geohazards, such as ground subsidence and landslides, in Canada. This initiative is directly linked with the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) 10-Years

Implementation Plan (section 4.1.1. Disasters: loss of life and property from natural and human-induced disasters) and contributes to the GEO 2007-2009 Work Plan (i.e. DI-06-03: Integration of InSAR Technology).

Full story at:

<http://www.earthzine.org/2009/01/13/new-disasters-earth-observation-monitoring-initiative-in-canada-assessment-and-mitigation-of-active-geohazard-sites/>

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>

“Map World Forum” in Hyderabad, India, 10-13 February 2009

Map World Forum will be a medium of convergence of various stakeholders of global geospatial community and its integration with end users of geospatial information. Map World Forum will be a combination of activities in the form of seminars, workshops and panel discussions covering technology to policy to user-oriented themes at the global level. UN-SPIDER is an Institutional Partner to the Forum. **UN-SPIDER Senior Expert Dr. Jörg Szarzynski will attend as a speaker and will be available for side meetings.**

For more information: <http://www.mapworldforum.org>

1st International Workshop on "Validation of Earthquake precursors by Satellite and Terrestrial Observations (VESTO)" in Chiba University, Japan, 26-28 March 2009

The workshop will focus on the science and cross validation of earthquake precursors. Specifically, the aim is: (1) to cross examine the results of precursory detection for several major earthquakes by applying different methodologies for analysis of ground-based and satellite data, and (2) to identify the common methodology for statistical validation of the major earthquake precursory phenomena. There is a call for papers (A4 1 page) to be submitted to hattori@earth.s.chiba-u.ac.jp in PDF or MS-Word format until March 1, 2009.

For more information: <http://www-es.s.chiba-u.ac.jp/geoph/ulf/vesto/>

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: CIESIN Workshop on “Geospatial Analysis for Attaining the Millennium Development Goals” in Bonn, Germany, April 2009

The Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) of The Earth Institute at Columbia University is now accepting applications for participation in a five-day training workshop in geospatial data analysis techniques for population and demographic research focused on attaining the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development. Up to ten participants will be selected to attend the workshop. All workshop fees, travel, lodging will be covered for the selected participants along with a small per diem to cover meals. The potential applicant pool is global. Deadline for applications is Monday, February 23, 2009.

For more information: <http://m1e.net/c?31730405-DCQQbLoy3R.ys%403929089-LLiNU2obKTxnQ>

“5th GRSS/ISPRS workshop on Data Fusion and Remote Sensing over Urban Areas (URBAN 2009)” in Shanghai, China, 20-22 May 2009

This workshop on urban remote sensing is jointly sponsored by ISPRS (International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing) and IEEE GRSS (Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society).

For more information: <http://www.urban-remote-sensing-2009.org.cn>

First International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) Regional Meeting/Symposium in Yaounde, Cameroon from 22-23 May, 2009

The title of the symposium is "Space Application for the Users Community for Disaster Management and Sustainable Development in Africa." The symposium will be held in collaboration with the Global Centre for Compliance, Hazards and Disaster Management, GLOCECOHADIM CAMEROON Office of Outer Space Application and Emergency Response, Africa.

For more information: <http://www.iaaweb.org/>

2nd Regional Workshop of the Global Earth Observing System of Systems (GEOSS) Support for Decision-Making in the Coastal Zone: "Strengthening Observing Systems Capacity for Managing and Mitigating the Impacts of Human Activities and Coastal Inundation in the African Region" in Accra, Ghana, 2-7 August 2009

The Second Regional Workshop in the Workshop Series of the GEO Coastal Zone Community of Practice (CZCP) and the Integrated Global Observing System (IGOS) Coastal Theme will be organized in partnership with GOOS, GTOS, UNESCO, IOC, the African Association for Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE), Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME), Benguela Current Commission (BCC), and the Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystem (SCLME). It will focus on the specific needs, challenges and capabilities in the coastal zones of the African region

For more information: <http://www.czcp.org/workshops/ws2/>

CALL FOR PAPERS: 3rd Central Asia GIS Conference - GISCA'09, "GIScience for Environmental and Emergency Management in Central Asia", in BISHKEK, KYRGYZSTAN, 27-28 August , 2009

The GISCA series of conferences aims at building a Central Asian network of GIS professionals supporting the sustained development of this region into an environmentally friendly, secure, and prosperous society. Major themes of this conference will cover GIS for Disaster and Emergency Management in Central Asia, Health GIS, Educational programmes in Geoinformatics, Development of Spatial Data Infrastructures and more.

For more information: <http://www.aca-giscience.org/gisca09>

"Processing and Classification of Satellite Imagery" Thematic Session within the VipIMAGE2009 – II ECCOMAS Thematic Conference on Computational Vision and Medical Image Processing in Porto, Portugal, 14-16 October 2009

The session aims to be a forum in which innovative methods are presented and applied to cases of study in different fields. Participants are expected to discuss improvements and/or alternative applications, in the frame of constructive discussions between software developers and practitioners of image processing and image data analysis applied to any field involving Earth Observation.

For more information: http://paginas.fe.up.pt/~vipimage/conference/thematic_sessions.html

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

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

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

UN-SPIDER Regional Workshop "Promoting the Use of Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response in Latin America" in Ecuador (second half of 2009)

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

Upcoming Events Supported by UN-SPIDER

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)

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