



UN-SPIDER June 2008 Updates

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

1. Disaster Response Imagery Ample, but Distribution Still Tough

The recent Myanmar cyclone and the Chinese earthquake disasters demonstrated that the world has increasing availability of access to satellite images to support disasters but we still have to improve direct availability of the value-added products to emergency-response teams. "There is an overwhelming amount of product available. What we need is to facilitate the tasking of the data. It needs to be more user-driven," said Delilah Al Khudhairy, Head of the Institute for Protection and Security of the Citizen at the European Union's Joint Research Center in Ispra, Italy.

Full story at:

<http://www.space.com/business/technology/080609-busmon-satellite-disaster.html>

2. NASA Data Helps Pinpoint Impacted Populations in Disaster Aftermath

When two catastrophic natural disasters struck within days of each other in Myanmar and China in May 2008, disaster relief, humanitarian aid, and health officials, as well as members of the news media tapped into a unique set of NASA data products describing the location of the exposed populations. "The gridded population product we produce helps officials understand the density of the population in and around a disaster area," said Robert Chen, manager of NASA's Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center (SEDAC) and director of the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), part of the Earth Institute at Columbia University in New York. "The data set shows where people actually live in relationship to hazardous events," he added.

Full story at:

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Newsroom/NasaNews/2008/2008061226924.html>

3. Global Telemedicine Program for Humanitarian Relief Launched

The Center for International Rehabilitation (CIR), together with the Chicago Medical Society (CMS), the National Arab American Medical Association (NAAMA), and the Iraqi Medical Sciences Association (IMSA) have announced the launch of International Consultants in Medicine (iCons in Medicine), a telemedicine program that uses the Internet to connect health care providers in remote and medically underserved areas with a network of volunteer specialty physicians who act as consultants on difficult cases. "We are looking forward to unveiling what we believe is a highly innovative approach to humanitarian relief that brings the best of care together with the latest technology," says Dr. William K. Smith, President of CIR.

Full story at:

<https://www.iconsinmed.org/content.cfm?id=5E5874>

4. Satellite Network to Predict Earthquakes

A future network of satellites orbiting the earth may be able to detect an impending earthquake by monitoring our planet's ionosphere. The project is based on a controversial theory that may have gained support in light of new findings relating to last month's Sichuan province earthquake. The researchers hope to create a global network of roughly 20 satellites that would scan for telltale activity that some scientists say precedes large earthquakes. The goal is to create an early warning system that would give up to two weeks notice before a major earthquake occurs. According to the article, current detection systems can give a maximum of one minute's notice and are prone to false alarms.

Full story at:

<http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2008/06/11/2271137.htm>

5. Disasters Raising New Tests for Telecoms

Disasters like the devastating earthquake in China have highlighted the need for countries to develop better emergency communications plans, experts say. Telecommunications were interrupted for more than 30 hours in the areas hardest hit by last month's quake in China, said Wu Guoxiang of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). "Satellite is the most reliable means to support disaster response, particularly major disasters," he added, emphasizing that "It should be properly integrated as a backup to other ground-based systems, and be able to be rapidly mobilised."

Full story at:

http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5hJCYuwlRSDdNcr_W5563Q6CL4A_A

6. Exercise for Rapid Disaster Relief with Space-based Technologies

UN-SPIDER and disaster management experts from the European Union tested a satellite-based system to monitor disaster areas. The Institute for Communication and Navigation of the German Aerospace Center (DLR) has developed this system, which enables disaster relief workers to access near-realtime satellite images in the field and exchange data among themselves. The exercise took place in the framework of the EU-project LIMES (Land and Sea Integrated Monitoring for European Security), which develops and applies satellite-based technologies in the security field. Participants trained for emergencies under realistic conditions of a simulated earthquake and a tsunami near the southern coast of Cyprus.

Full story at:

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Exercise_For_Rapid_Disaster_Relief_With_Space_Based_Technologies_999.html

More at: http://www.thw.bund.de/cln_036/nn_824638/EN/content/news/international/press_releases/2008/06/meldung_002_amc_zypern.html_nnn=true

7. The Planet Action Initiative: Call for Projects

Planet Action is a non profit collaborative initiative launched in June 2007 by Spot Image, a world leader in satellite imagery. Since then, ESRI has joined Planet Action as a co-founder and many other organisations have joined and support this initiative, in particular UNESCO, CNES (French Space Agency) and NSPO (National Space Organisation Taiwan). The Planet Action mission is to provide satellite imagery, geographic information and technology to support local projects acting on climate change related issues.

Planet Action supports projects involved at least in one of the following 5 domains:

- human dimensions & habitation;
- drought, desertification & water resources;
- vegetation, biodiversity & ecosystems;
- oceans;
- ice & snow cover.

For more information:

<http://www.planet-action.org/web/40-1st-call-for-projects-2008.php>

8. GSDI 11 (Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Association): Call for Papers

The theme for this conference is "Spatial Data Infrastructure Convergence: Building SDI Bridges to Address Global Challenges." The plenary and paper sessions of three major geospatial conferences are being integrated into a single program to be held in the same venue. These combined conferences include the Eleventh GSDI Conference, the Third Inspire Conference and the Dutch National Conference reporting on Dutch SDI Results and Challenges. The organizers invite presentations covering the full range of practice, development and research experiences that advance the practice and theory of spatial data infrastructure development.

For more information:

<http://gsdi.org/gsd11/>

9. Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Capacity Mapping & Gap Analysis

The global Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Education Cluster is in the process of carrying out a capacity mapping & gap analysis study at both the global and country level. To date, the study has focused on the capacity of agencies active in field-level education clusters, particularly those that have been serving on the IASC Education Cluster Advisory Group (UNICEF; SC Alliance; WFP; UNESCO; UNHCR; the IRC; the NRC; and CCF). However, many others worldwide are making an important contribution to education in emergencies. The IASC Education Cluster is hoping to establish an overview of which academic and/or training institutions address education in emergencies, as well as the potential human resource capacity for the sector.

For more information:

Please see concept note and lessons learned study at: <http://www.ineesite.org/cluster>

10. Internship Opportunities

UN-SPIDER has internship opportunities in Bonn and in Vienna. The internship programme offers a unique opportunity for learning, growth, and meaningful service at the international level. For more information on internship opportunities within the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, please visit: http://www.unvienna.org/unov/en/job/internship_general_info.html#oosa

Interested applicants should forward applications to:

Mr. Levent Canturk, UNOOSA. E-Mail levent.canturk@unoosa.org

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>

11. “Global Change and the Hydrological Cycle (GLOWA) – International Conference” in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 25-28 August 2008

Two of the research projects within the GLOWA program will present their research results achieved so far. The GLOWA projects to be presented in Ouagadougou include research carried out in three watersheds in four West African countries, comprising the catchment of the Wadi Drâa in Morocco, the watershed of the river Ouémé in Benin, and the cross-border basin of the Volta River in Burkina Faso and Ghana. The conference will also highlight products and decision support tools developed by the project teams during eight years of extensive and integrative research.

More information at:

http://www.glowa.org/eng/conference_eng/conference_eng.php

12. “International Disaster and Risk Conference IDRC Davos 2008” in Davos, Switzerland, 25-29 August 2008

The conference motto for 2008 is “Public-private partnership – key for integral risk management and climate change adaptation”. There will be a joint Group on Earth Observations (GEO) and UNOOSA/UN-SPIDER special session exploring how the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) being constructed can support disaster risk reduction and integrated risk management. The session will address the role of Earth observation for managing risks associated with geological hazards and hydro-meteorological hazards; operational aspects of successful regional applications for disaster management (SERVIR and Sentinel Asia); coordinated satellite observations based on user requirements and identified gaps in sustained Earth observation for all phases of disaster management; and a good-practice case on the integrated risk-management approach, including observational and operational aspects.

More information at:

<http://www.idrc.info/index.php?p=245&pagetype=1>

13. "First International Conference on Remote Sensing Techniques in Disaster Management and Emergency Response in the Mediterranean Region" in Zadar, Croatia, 22-24 September 2008

The Conference will cover several stages in risk management, such as knowledge, prevention, warning, management of emergency situations, post-analysis of crisis, and environmental rehabilitation. The Conference is jointly organised by EARSeL, the Scientific Council for Remote Sensing-Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, University of Zadar and GEOSAT Ltd., Zagreb.

More information at: <http://www.earsel.geosat.hr/>

14. "The 7th SAFNet Workshop" in Caprivi, Namibia, 22-26 September 2008

The theme for this workshop is "Regional Fire Management, Policies and Operational Status – SAFNet Five Years After." There will be two days of presentations on various fire themes including use of geospatial information in fire monitoring and management, ecological and environmental aspects of fire, fire fighting, and country reports relevant to the theme. This will be followed by one day on network maintenance and field validation of satellite fire products, and a two-day training session on MODIS-Landsat fire products for operational fire management.

For further inquiry please contact:

Dr. Opha Pauline Dube, University of Botswana. E-Mail dubeop@mopipi.ub.bw

15. "7th International Conference of the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment (AARSE)-2008" in Accra, Ghana, 27-31 October 2008

The purpose of this conference is to chart a new course in using earth observation and geo-information technologies to promote governance-driven natural resources management and environmental sustainability. UN-SPIDER will be supporting two researchers to attend the Conference and present papers.

More information at:

<http://www.aarse2008.org>

16. "GORS 16th International Symposium - Remote Sensing and Spatial Information" in Damascus, Syria, 10-12 November 2008

Topics include: satellite data and its application as a source of spatial information, integration between data producer and users of spatial information, and spatial information exchange standards.

More information at:

http://gors-sy.net/conference_3.htm

17. "Use of Remote Sensing Techniques for Monitoring Volcanoes and Seismogenic Areas - USEReST 2008" in Naples, Italy, 11-13 November 2008

The focus will be on the operational use of Earth Observation data in real monitoring scenarios rather than on new scientific results. The user community is called to indicate the technological gaps that may limit the full exploitation of EO data in everyday monitoring practice; the developer community is expected to indicate the new operational features likely attainable in the near future.

More information at:

<http://www.userest.org/>

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/osa/en/unspider/workshops.html>

"United Nations Regional UN-SPIDER Workshop: Building Upon Regional Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response for the Pacific region", Fiji, 16 – 19 September 2008

Second United Nations International UN-SPIDER Bonn Workshop: "Disaster Management and Space Technology - Bridging the Gap" in Bonn, Germany, 13-15 October 2008

UN-SPIDER Regional Workshops/Activities Supported by UNOOSA

"I Escuela de Primavera Sobre Soluciones Espaciales para el Manejo de Desastres Naturales y Respuestas de Emergencias- Inundaciones" – Campus Brasil-CRECTEALC / Geodesastres-Sul-INPE / UN-SPIDER / GEOSS / CEOS WGEdu. Santa Maria, Brazil, 8-12 September 2008.

Organised by the Centro Regional de Educação em Ciência e Tecnologia Espacial para America Latina e o Caribe – CRECTEALC – Campus Brasil.

More information at: <http://www.inpe.br/crs/geodesastres/>

"Iranian Space Agency/UN-SPIDER Regional Workshop: Building Upon Regional Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response" Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, 6-8 October 2008.

Organized by the Iranian Space Agency (ISA).

For more information please contact: Mr. Saman Jalayerian E-mail: Jalayerian@isa.ir

"L'Outi Spatial au Service de la Gestion des Catastrophes et des Situations d'Urgence en Afrique" – Rabat, Morocco, 10-12 November 2008.

Organized by the Centre Régional Africain des Sciences et Technologies de l'Espace en Langue Française (CRASTE-LF, Rabat, Maroc).

For more information please contact: Mr. Abdelhaq Trache E-mail: trache@emi.ac.ma

*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.*