

Small Island Developing States, Climate Change and Risk Reduction

The SIDS, CC and RR working group comprising representatives from Maldives, Jamaica, Virgin Islands, Fiji, Sri Lanka, Philippines, ESRI, SOPAC and UNSPIDER recognise that natural disasters and climate change hamper SIDS achieving their sustainable development objectives. SIDS, by definition, are susceptible to a range of natural hazards such as cyclones, hurricanes, landslides, storm surges, droughts, flooding, tsunamis, earthquakes and volcanoes. Their limited land size and resources and geographical isolation can exacerbate their potential impacts. Climate change and variability will see climate/weather related events happening more frequently and intensely impacting water resources, land use and marine ecosystems thus in turn affecting the economies of SIDS due to their dependence on climate-sensitive industries, such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism.

The group recommends:

- UNSPIDER strengthen support to SIDS by establishing **links/partnerships** with regional organisations and UN agencies with mandates for climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and disaster management in the Caribbean, Pacific, ASEAN and South Asian region.
- UNSPIDER assist countries advocate the potential applications for space based technologies and data in implementing disaster management and disaster risk reduction initiatives to high level decision makers noting fora such as the Global Platform for DRR where high level nation delegations will be present as a possible start. This is in light of national experiences where GIS&RS are not considered necessary tools to support decision making particularly for disaster response and risk reduction planning initiatives.
- UNSPIDER whenever possible assist in obtaining support for **training and capacity development programmes** in the application of space based technologies/data in implementing disaster risk management initiatives to address the gaps and needs of countries in these areas. Monitoring and evaluation processes need to be put in place to ensure that capacity development gaps are being met as well as maintaining a cadre of in-country experts. Investments in “Train the trainer” to help build this cadre with monitoring and evaluation processes to determine the success of the programme.
- Countries establish/enhance **central repositories** based on agreed to **spatial data standards** to significantly improve access to hazard and risk related data and information to support disaster management, disaster risk reduction and climate

change adaptation initiatives noting that if countries cannot establish these, regional organisations could provide this support. Regional DRM portals and repositories that have been established to host national datasets include DISCNET (Philippines/ASEAN), CATALAC (Caribbean), PDN (Pacific).

- UNSPIDER explore opportunities with spatial data service providers particularly for space based data, to make available (*free of charge – restricted access*) space-borne imagery to support **rapid** post disaster damage and needs assessments in SIDS and LDS. Regional organisations such as SOPAC are able to provide this support to member countries provided there are resources to acquire imagery.

The group agreed that once the final recommendation is realised the preceding recommendations could be easily addressed.