

**General Assembly**

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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space****United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for
Disaster Management and Emergency Response: workplan
for the biennium 2010-2011****Note by the Secretariat**

1. At its fiftieth session, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space agreed that progress reports on the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) and its future workplans should be considered by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee under a regular agenda item on space-system-based disaster management support and that the agenda item should be included in the list of issues to be considered by its Working Group of the Whole.
2. At its forty-sixth session, the Subcommittee's Working Group of the Whole noted with satisfaction the progress made in terms of the activities carried out within the framework of UN-SPIDER in 2008 and approved the workplan for the biennium 2010-2011 contained in the annex to the present report.



Annex

United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response: workplan for the biennium 2010-2011

Mission Statement: ensure that all countries and international and regional organizations have access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle

I. Outreach and capacity-building

A. Activity 1: awareness-raising

1. Awareness-raising is a process by which the level of understanding among the persons targeted is raised, fostering change in attitudes and behaviour. In the framework of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), awareness-raising is designed as an ongoing process accompanying, facilitating and preparing activities, as new audiences are addressed, new partnerships are formed and new technological solutions are developed, offering new opportunities for existing and new target groups.

2. The awareness-raising activities to be carried out during the biennium 2010-2011 will follow the awareness-raising strategy developed in 2008, one of the objectives of which was to increase the level of understanding by institutions and experts targeted by UN-SPIDER of the fact that space-based technology and information for disaster management can be used and are relevant to their work. Targeted audiences are expected to develop a positive attitude towards using space-based technologies and to be encouraged to find out how they can use them in their daily work.

3. The strategy includes the proposal to carry out three awareness-raising campaigns: one at the national level (aimed at end-users), one for the Geneva-based community and one for news media. Each awareness-raising campaign will include a definition of the specific target group, guidelines for developing campaign material and an implementation strategy that will also identify potential partners (including the regional support offices) for jointly developing and implementing the campaign.

B. Activity 2: outreach

4. Outreach activities contribute to involving practitioners and experts from the disaster management and space communities in UN-SPIDER activities and in similar activities organized by partners that promote the use of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle.

5. Outreach activities include the following:
 - (a) The organization of UN-SPIDER workshops, seminars and expert meetings in all regions;
 - (b) The provision of support for the organization by partners of meetings related to UN-SPIDER objectives;
 - (c) The participation in relevant international policymaking and technical conferences, meetings and workshops through the provision of speakers and awareness-raising materials;
 - (d) The provision of support to disaster management practitioners and experts enabling them to participate in regional technical and international seminars and workshops organized in the framework of UN-SPIDER.
6. The following workshops will form the core effort in terms of outreach: UN-SPIDER international workshops that focus on bringing together experts and practitioners and that will lead to enhancing horizontal cooperation and knowledge transfer, and UN-SPIDER regional workshops that focus on specific thematic issues and on strengthening horizontal cooperation and vertical coordination.
7. During the biennium 2010-2011, the following UN-SPIDER activities, among others will be carried out:
 - (a) Organization of at least four workshops, expert meetings and/or seminars, two of which will be regional workshops bringing together national focal points and contribute to bridging the gap between the disaster management and the space communities and two of which will be international workshops promoting the coordination of initiatives and the strengthening of the regional support offices;
 - (b) Provision of support to at least four regional and international seminars and workshops in the form of travel assistance for participants from developing countries;
 - (c) Participation of expert speakers in at least six relevant conferences and meetings promoting UN-SPIDER activities;
 - (d) Organization of at least one workshop, expert meeting or symposium for the benefit of the user community in Geneva.
8. Outreach activities carried out in the framework of UN-SPIDER will be targeted at agencies devoted to disaster management and space applications, academic and research centres, non-governmental organizations, private technology companies and insurance companies.
9. Expected outcomes from outreach activities include an increasing demand for capacity-building activities and the establishment of more formal links among space agencies and between disaster management and emergency response agencies.

C. Activity 3: capacity-building

10. Capacity-building and the strengthening of institutional arrangements at all levels is key to increasing the ability of organizations and individuals to effectively use space-based services for disaster prevention, preparedness, response and

recovery. During the biennium 2010-2011, the activities defined in the capacity-building framework developed in 2008, which will be updated in 2009, will be implemented in the framework of UN-SPIDER. The capacity-building framework includes the following:

(a) Developing and maintaining a database of training opportunities that focus on space-based solutions in disaster management;

(b) Working with partners in the development and dissemination of training curricula that promote the use of space-based solutions for disaster management and emergency response;

(c) Developing and maintaining e-learning opportunities that take into consideration the kind of facilities that exist at the United Nations and elsewhere;

(d) Facilitating short and long-term training opportunities in centres of excellence, including training opportunities that will benefit the humanitarian and emergency response community, including the user community in Geneva;

(e) Providing funding to support, to the extent possible, end-users interested in attending such training courses.

11. The capacity-development framework emphasizes the need to work with the established regional centres for space science and technology education, affiliated to the United Nations, as well as other national and regional centres of excellence in the training of the end-users and in the strengthening of national institutions.

12. The target audience will include practitioners from the disaster management and space communities working in Government agencies, in the public and private sector and staff from academic and research centres devoted to exploring means to bridge the two communities through the development of methods and tools.

13. Expected outcomes for the biennium include the following: the updating of curricula on the topic of using space-based information for disaster management and emergency response; the establishment of cooperation agreements with regional centres of excellence and other training centres targeting their active role in training, thus fulfilling the role of UN-SPIDER as a facilitator of capacity-building; the launch of the e-learning component within the UN-SPIDER knowledge portal; and the facilitation of training programmes.

II. Horizontal cooperation

A. Activity 4: communities of practice

14. Communities of practice are part of a recent approach to support knowledge management and transfer that is based on the theory of social learning. Communities of practice are dynamic groups, linked through communication and learning processes, that are dedicated to the consideration of issues of interest to all community members. The sharing of knowledge is an essential process characterizing a community of practice. Some communities of practice deal with a broad range of issues relevant to UN-SPIDER.

15. Through UN-SPIDER, communities of practice that focus on issues related to both disaster management and space-based information, as well as on solutions, are fostered and supported. UN-SPIDER workshops and technical advisory missions provide an environment in which disaster management practitioners meet space experts, as well as each other, thus offering the organizational platform on which communities of practice can be formed and developed further through personal contacts.

16. To date, UN-SPIDER has provided support to existing communities of practice and contributed to the establishment of new ones, thereby bringing together the space-based technology and disaster management communities.

17. Regarding the information and communications technology support provided to communities of practice for ongoing activities aimed at knowledge transfer and social learning, the UN-SPIDER knowledge portal, a Web-based platform, will allow for spontaneous communication to take place and for the generation and transfer of quality-assured content. Thus, the knowledge portal will motivate its users to become engaged in communities of practice.

18. During the biennium 2010-2011, specific activities in support of the consolidation and/or establishment of communities of practice will be carried out in the framework of UN-SPIDER, including by ensuring the full use of the UN-SPIDER knowledge portal communication module. Specifically, such a communication module will include the initiation, monitoring and structuring of communication processes, as well as the extension of the portal's content and the assurance of quality through a controlled Wiki approach. Through UN-SPIDER, the inventory of existing communities of practice from related fields providing specific knowledge on how to bring together the space-based technology and disaster management communities will be updated.

B. Activity 5: cooperation

19. Harmonization of the various initiatives and cooperation among the various partners are central elements for ensuring that States and international and regional organizations are able to access and use space-based information to support disaster management activities.

20. UN-SPIDER contributes to such coordination efforts by ensuring the harmonization of initiatives aimed at helping developing countries access and use space-based technologies for disaster management and risk reduction (horizontal coordination).

21. UN-SPIDER staff will continue to work with and contribute to the full implementation of existing and planned international and regional initiatives of relevance to the programme of work of UN-SPIDER, contributing to enhancing coordination among all United Nations initiatives that are related to humanitarian and emergency response, as well as among those focusing on risk reduction and disaster management.

22. Building upon the work carried out in the biennium 2008-2009, UN-SPIDER staff will focus, in the biennium 2010-2011, on the following:

(a) Ensuring that the many available opportunities, including those provided through the Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters, Sentinel Asia, the Mesoamerican Regional Visualization and Monitoring System (SERVIR), SERVIR-Africa and the various European-funded multi-year projects in that area (Services and Applications for Emergency Response (SAFER), GMES and Africa: Regional Network for Information Exchange and Training in Emergencies (eGARNET) etc.), are more readily accessible and better used by interested end-users and that such opportunities are complementary in order to reduce the duplication of effort;

(b) Ensuring programme coordination and the building of synergies with relevant regional organizations, including the Group on Earth Observations, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, the Asian Disaster Reduction Center, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, the Management Centre of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Disaster and the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPRENAC);

(c) Maintaining an updated set of vertical coordination guidelines aimed at helping relevant end-users, including the UN-SPIDER national focal points, to take advantage of all existing initiatives and to ensure coordination and interaction among relevant national authorities, scientific institutions, organizations implementing and/or providing space-based solutions, humanitarian, environmental and civil protection actors and the space community;

(d) Making use of the SpaceAid mailing list initiated during the biennium 2008-2009 and ensuring that doing so will rapidly provide information and support to those involved in the entire disaster management cycle on a "24/7" basis (24 hours a day, 7 days a week);

(e) Working with all relevant United Nations entities to ensure coordination of actions with regard to access to and use of space-based information for risk and disaster management and emergency response. That includes organizing annual United Nations-wide meetings on the use of space technologies for emergency response and humanitarian assistance, which will contribute to increasing the understanding of the evolving operational environment and to strengthening coordination among entities of the United Nations system. The fact that the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat is co-chairing the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group during the biennium 2009-2010 will also contribute to that effort;

(f) Contributing to disseminating the results of the work carried out in the framework of UN-SPIDER within the disaster reduction and humanitarian response communities in Geneva. In order to do so, it will be necessary to hold regular meetings and consultations, facilitate access to space data, resources and products in general by the community, identify the capacity-building needs of the community, carry out a specific awareness-raising campaign targeting the community, especially the staff of different Geneva-based United Nations entities, and organize at least one

joint Group on Earth Observations/United Nations workshop or expert meeting in Geneva.

C. Activity 6: knowledge management and transfer

23. The acquisition, processing and transfer of knowledge should be seen as central to the success of UN-SPIDER. That means knowing how to manage the kind of knowledge held in an individual's brain in the form of know-how and experience and the kind of knowledge recorded in a variety of media. A knowledge base on how space-based information and solutions could support risk and disaster management and emergency response could then be made available through the knowledge portal (activity 7) to support capacity-building (activity 3), among other purposes.

24. During the biennium 2010-2011, UN-SPIDER staff will continue to identify and compile all relevant information on a continuous basis, including on ongoing and planned initiatives, case studies and best practices, archived data for disaster studies and capacity-building opportunities, working closely with the regional support offices.

25. The development of a knowledge base will lead to a better understanding of user requirements and the identification of best practices. Efforts should be made to manage and transfer knowledge in support of the needs of the humanitarian and emergency response community, including the user community in Geneva.

D. Activity 7: knowledge portal

26. The knowledge portal will remain central to all other activities carried out within the framework of UN-SPIDER, as it will provide the hosting environment and be the dissemination tool for all those activities and for the resulting outputs and products. In developing the knowledge portal, an effort will be made to integrate all useful information, knowledge and resources identified and available to support the mandate of UN-SPIDER, including those contributed by relevant user communities, and serve as a platform for sharing space-based information on the whole disaster management cycle, as a contribution to strengthening horizontal cooperation.

27. Efforts will be made to enable communities of practice to interact and capture related knowledge through the knowledge portal. By the end of 2009, a first version of the knowledge portal will be launched and work will be under way for its full implementation. During the biennium 2010-2011, efforts will be made to further develop the knowledge portal. At the same time, efforts will be made to select and publish content.

28. Through the knowledge portal, all relevant initiatives related to the activities of UN-SPIDER will continue to be identified and linked so that the results and effectiveness of the numerous international, regional and bilateral initiatives that already exist and do important work in the area of disaster management can be maximized.

29. During the biennium 2010-2011, work will be done, with the support of the regional support offices and other centres of excellence, to explore and test Web-based technologies that would enable most if not all of the projects and initiatives to be linked, as part of efforts to improve the knowledge portal. In working to offer consolidated access to space-based information and knowledge on the disaster management cycle, UN-SPIDER staff will also work closely with external partners such as private companies with expertise in Internet technologies.

30. In collaboration with relevant public and private sector partners, UN-SPIDER staff will ensure that the information included in the knowledge portal is geographically referenced and that information on experts and institutions of relevance for UN-SPIDER activities is made available in a controlled way through the knowledge portal for user input and consultation.

III. Technical advisory support

A. Activity 8: country profiles

31. The development of country profiles ensures the systematic compilation of information on the current and planned status of access to and use of space-based solutions and information to support risk and disaster management in each country. Each profile is developed with the support of national experts identified through outreach activities and in collaboration with the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The country profiles provide information for use within the framework of UN-SPIDER, including UN-SPIDER regional support offices, to develop thematic and regional strategies for technical advisory support.

32. The compilation of country profiles fulfils the following functions:

(a) It helps bring together those involved in the areas of disaster management and space technology;

(b) It can be a tool by which national authorities learn the extent to which space-based technology is already being used for disaster management;

(c) It can provide valuable information to UN-SPIDER on the specific features of a country, the needs of users and relevant stakeholders;

(d) It can contribute to the development of appropriate technical advisory support activities at the national level;

(e) It can provide input for the knowledge portal and further enhance the contact database of end-users and practitioners.

33. The template developed in 2008 will continue to be used for the compilation of country profiles. The template is currently available in English, French and Spanish.

34. The target for the biennium 2008-2009 is to complete 30 country profiles. The target for the biennium 2010-2011 is to maintain updated the country profiles already developed and to finalize an additional 10 country profiles, focusing on the most vulnerable countries.

B. Activity 9: support at the national level

35. Through UN-SPIDER, the objective is to promote greater understanding, acceptance and commitment by States and relevant international and regional organizations with regard to how they could develop the capacity to access and use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle.

36. The following two specific indicators will be used to ensure that the objective is reached:

(a) Indicator 1: increased number of States requesting assistance in the definition of disaster management plans and policies with regard to the use of space-based technologies;

(b) Indicator 2: increased number of States requesting technical advisory support for implementing risk reduction and emergency response activities using space-based information.

37. UN-SPIDER staff will continue to work with all Member States to ensure the designation of national focal points and, in cases in which they are not designated, the identification of other relevant Government authorities to ensure access to and the use of space-based solutions for disaster risk management and emergency response. Such work will include the following:

(a) Assessing national capacities and evaluating disaster and risk reduction activities, policies and plans with regard to the use of space-based technologies (indicator 1);

(b) Assisting in the definition of risk and disaster management plans and policies with regard to the use of space-based technologies (indicator 1);

(c) Developing and customizing guidelines and templates for including space-based technologies in disaster risk reduction and emergency response (indicator 1);

(d) Facilitating access of national institutions to space-based information to support disaster risk reduction and emergency response activities (indicator 2);

(e) Identifying training needs and facilitating the implementation of capacity-building activities (indicator 2);

(f) Supporting the implementation of risk reduction and emergency response activities using space-based technologies (indicator 2).

38. The target for the biennium 2008-2009 is to assist 15 States in the definition of disaster management plans and policies and to support 15 States requesting specific technical advisory support for implementing risk reduction and emergency response activities using space-based information.

39. The target for the biennium 2010-2011 is to continue assisting and supporting the States that started receiving support in the biennium 2008-2009 and to start providing assistance and support to an additional 10 States for each indicator.