

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The 17th Session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) on the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific (RESAP)

26-27 November 2013
Bangkok, Thailand

Summary Meeting Report

Prepared by the Secretariat

**This document has been issued without formal editing*

I. Conclusions and Recommendations

Institutional Development of RESAP

1. The Committee reaffirms that space technology applications play a key role in disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. The Committee further acknowledges that there are still huge gaps and needs for the effective use of space technology and geographic information systems (GIS) to address disaster risk reduction and enhance resilient, inclusive and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region.
2. The Committee emphasizes regional cooperation for applications of space technology and GIS, as a key mechanism to address the gaps and needs in the region, and calls upon all ESCAP member countries to work closely through the RESAP framework.
3. The Committee recognizes the importance of the regional inventory on capabilities, facilities and activities of space technology and GIS applications in the region, and that gaps can be filled through cooperation amongst RESAP member countries. In this regard, the Committee requests RESAP member countries, which have not yet sent their feedback to the secretariat on the inventory on capabilities questionnaire and needs survey, to provide their input for the purposes of regional mapping and activity planning.
4. The Committee further recognizes the importance of sharing amongst members, data, products, knowledge, experiences, good practices and lessons learnt on using space technology and GIS, for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.
5. The Committee requests the secretariat to enhance its efforts in encouraging more countries to join RESAP and to reinforce the collaboration with global and regional organizations and initiatives, such as the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters, UNITAR/UNOSAT, UNOOSA/UN-SPIDER, FAO, GEO, ADPC, APSCO, Sentinel Asia and APRSAF.
6. While appreciating the secretariat's efforts on the implementation of recommendations from the 16th session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) in December 2012, the Committee notes the key outcomes of the secretariat's works for the year 2012-2013 and endorses the work plan for 2014-2015.
7. The Committee appreciates and accepts the offer from Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) to host the 18th session of the ICC on RESAP in Islamabad, Pakistan in September 2014.

The Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Disaster Monitoring and Early Warning, Particularly Drought

8. The Committee agrees to reformulate the title 'Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Disaster Monitoring and Early Warning, Particularly Drought' to the 'Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning' (hereinafter the Drought Mechanism).
9. The Committee recognizes that the development and operationalization of the Drought Mechanism is critical for effective monitoring and preparedness of drought across the region, including the establishment of principals and rules for sharing data, knowledge and good practices amongst countries. The Committee requests the secretariat to play a catalytic role in facilitating the development and operationalization of the Drought Mechanism amongst countries.

10. The Committee appreciates the commitments from China and India to host the service nodes of space-based information and products as well as the provision of capacity development.

11. The Committee agrees on the operational arrangements for the Drought Mechanism and service nodes, including the work plan for drought/dzud monitoring in Mongolia.

12. The Committee identifies the deliverables of the subregional service nodes and institutional arrangements as key components of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These include:

(1) Satellite imagery/data, capacity development in the pilot countries and, upon request, products and services for drought monitoring and preparedness;

(2) National Remote Sensing Center of India and National Remote Sensing Center of China may function as subregional service nodes and provide expected deliverables;

(3) Centre for Space Science Technology and Education for Asia and the Pacific (CSSTEAP) and other RESAP training nodes should provide capacity development. The NRSCs in China and India may follow the Training of Trainers (ToT) approach in the pilot countries to transfer knowledge and technology;

(4) The Space Applications Section of the Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division of ESCAP, will act as the secretariat for the regional cooperative mechanism, and coordinate efforts with regional service nodes in China and India, and the pilot countries. The Committee requests the secretariat to continue work on the SOPs to oversee the entire process of drought monitoring and early warning.

13. The Committee decides to establish the Thematic Working Group (TWG), comprising eminent experts and key stakeholders, in order to review and monitor the development and operationalization of the Drought Mechanism, to share methodologies, products and services of the sub-regional service nodes and to report on progress to the ICC for guidance and future direction.

14. The Committee agrees on Sri Lanka as a pilot country for the Drought Mechanism, in addition to Mongolia, these pilot countries will pave the way in operationalizing drought monitoring and early warning for future countries.

15. The Committee agrees to organize a regional expert group meeting in Sri Lanka in January 2014 to enhance the capacity of countries in drought monitoring and early warning.

16. The Committee calls RESAP member countries to come together to make data available for longer phases and periods, and accepts that this requires longer involvement and commitment.

Regional support to disaster-affected countries

17. The Committee appreciates the efforts made by the secretariat in facilitating the timely provision of space-based information to support disaster-affected countries, including satellite remote sensing data, damage assessment maps and others, for disaster response and recovery.

18. The Committee requests national focal points (NFPs) of RESAP to work closely with related national disaster management authorities, in order to serve as an information hub during the whole disaster cycle, and to maintain uninterrupted links with the secretariat. In this regard, the Committee encourages RESAP NFPs to nominate two emergency liaison persons.

19. The Committee appreciates the offers made by ISRO, regarding the provision of an FTP server to share satellite data, products and services through Bhuvan portal, and further requests the secretariat to use the Gateway server as an integrated data node and/or the FTP server provided by UNOSAT in emergencies.

Capacity development

20. The Committee encourages the secretariat to enhance RESAP capacity development networks, in close collaboration with UN-SPIDER, UNOSAT, CSSTEAP and other regional initiatives, to provide continuous capacity development programmes on space technology applications, especially to high-risk and low capacity developing countries, including the 2014 thematic training plan on drought monitoring and early warning, flood risk mapping, interpretation of space-based information (high resolution or Radar), and geo-referenced information systems for disaster risk reduction.

21. The Committee requests the secretariat to develop a roadmap and work plan for long-term capacity development, as well as outline the criteria and selection process for providing support to developing countries, based on the feedback from the survey of needs on capacity development.

II. PROCEEDINGS

A. Organization of the Meeting

22. The seventeenth session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) on the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (RESAP) was held at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand from 26 to 27 November 2013. The meeting was organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

B. Attendance

23. The meeting was attended by the National Focal Points of RESAP or their representatives from the following ESCAP members States: Bhutan; China; Fiji; India; Islamic Republic of Iran; Japan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Lao PDR; Macao China; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea, Russian Federation; Samoa; Sri Lanka, Tajikistan; Thailand; Turkey; Vanuatu and Viet Nam. Representatives from the United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations also attended the meeting as observers: United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific (CSSTEAP). The meeting was attended by the following other entities: Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC). The list of the participants is attached as annex 3.

C. Opening of the session

24. The opening session of the 17th session of the ICC commenced with Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, Director, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP. In her opening speech, Ms. Shamika Sirimanne expressed her appreciation for the continued support of the member States to RESAP since its inception. She emphasized that regional and sub-regional cooperation has become increasingly critical in enhancing the capacity of member States, in particular for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. She requested ICC members to continue the timely provision of regional support, including space-based information and products, to countries affected by disasters, and to support the development and operationalization of the drought monitoring and early warning mechanism. She also encouraged RESAP members to actively support the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action both at regional and national levels.

25. The Committee elected the bureau of the session, which comprised of Mr. Parsi Gururao Diwakar, Deputy Director, Department of Space, National Remote Sensing Centre, India as the Chairperson; Mr. Khudulmur Sodov, Director, National Remote Sensing Center, Ministry of Nature, Environment and Green Development, Mongolia as the Vice-Chairperson; and Ms. Patricia G. Mawa, Manager ICT/Engineering Division, Vanuatu, Meteorology & Geo-hazards Department, Ministry of Climate Change, Meteorology, Geo-hazards, Energy, Environment, Disaster Management, Vanuatu as the Rapporteur.

26. In his opening remarks to the 17th session, the Chairperson assured all members that the elected bureau would do its best to ensure that the Committee would achieve its

objectives and that it would reach a successful conclusion, relying on the cooperation and involvement of all the distinguished delegates.

D. Adoption of the agenda

27. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

- 1) Agenda Item 1: Opening of the session
 - a Welcome speech by ESCAP
 - b Election of officers
 - c Adoption of the agenda
 - d Reconfirmation of the membership of the ICC
 - e Introduction of participants
- 2) Agenda Item 2: Report on work progress of RESAP for 2012-2013 and work plan for 2014-2015
- 3) Agenda Item 3: Regional cooperative mechanism for disaster monitoring and early warning, particularly drought (the Mechanism)
- 4) Agenda Item 4: Implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action for Applications of Space Technology and Geographic Information System for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development 2012-2017
- 5) Agenda Item 5: Other matters
- 6) Agenda 6: Key outcomes of the 17th ICC and adoption of the summary report
- 7) Closing of the session

E. Reconfirmation of the membership of the ICC

28. On a request to reconfirm the membership of the ICC by the secretariat, the members agreed that they would inform the secretariat if there were any changes in their ICC focal points as per the standard procedure.

29. The Committee requested the secretariat to encourage more countries in the region to apply for RESAP membership and support RESAP activities.

F. Agenda Item 2: Report on work progress of RESAP for 2012-2013 and work plan for 2014-2015

30. The Committee had before it the Information Note prepared by the secretariat on the work progress of RESAP in 2012-2013 and the issues to be considered by the ICC.

31. The representatives of the following countries made country presentations on key issues and achievements: China, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.

32. The Committee noted with appreciation the progress made by countries in the area of space technology and GIS applications for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. The Committee reaffirmed the critical role of space technology applications for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.

33. The Committee recognized the huge gaps that remain in the effective use of space technology to address disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. The Committee further recognized the importance of the regional inventory on capabilities, facilities and activities of space technology applications in the region that this will enhance the understanding of capacity gaps that need to be filled through regional cooperation.

34. The Committee expressed appreciation to the secretariat for its efforts on the concerted progress and achievements on the implementation of RESAP activities for the year 2012-2013, particularly in capacity building and the provision of regional support to countries affected by natural disasters. The Committee discussed the work plan for the year 2014-2015 prepared by the secretariat and agreed on it.

35. The Committee noted the requests from member countries to the secretariat, on the provision of regional support with identification of specific needs for each country, in particular for drought monitoring and early warning.

36. The Committee acknowledged that RESAP should use advanced delivery mechanisms and technologies such as social networking, cloud networking and mobile communications beyond remote sensing.

37. The Committee acknowledged the collaborative partnerships between ESCAP and other United Nations agencies such as the UNOSAT/UNITAR, UN-SPIDER/UNOOSA, UNCCD and CSSTEAP, and requested the secretariat to strengthen partnerships with other organizations including FAO, for promoting the regional cooperative mechanism on drought. The Committee appreciated ESCAP's harmonizing role in global and regional initiatives, including Sentinal Asia, and in the effective use of applications of space technology and GIS for disaster risk reduction in the region..

38. The Committee recognized the secretariat's importance in enhancing advertisement and advocacy to countries, in particular to donor countries regarding the secretariat's achievements, and gathering support from member countries on space and GIS applications for disaster risk reduction.

G. Agenda Item 3: Regional cooperative mechanism for disaster monitoring and early warning (the Mechanism)

39. The experts of the secretariat briefed the Committee through presentations on the modalities of the regional drought monitoring mechanism, the progress of service nodes in China and India, and the spatial information system for food security in the region.

40. The Committee acknowledged with appreciation the efforts made by the secretariat on the progress of the Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Disaster Monitoring and Early Warning, Particularly Drought (the Mechanism). The Committee agreed, with the suggestion by the secretariat, to change the title of the Mechanism to the 'Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning (the Drought Mechanism)'.

41. The Committee noted with appreciation the valuable suggestions from the member countries that guidelines would be necessary for the operationalization of the Drought Mechanism, including how it works, its role to promote data sharing principles on drought in particular for monitoring purposes, in order to better facilitate regional cooperation and promote the sharing of knowledge and good practices.

42. The Committee noted with appreciation the commitments reiterated by China and India on hosting the service nodes and capacity building for the operationalization of the Mechanism.

43. The Committee further noted with appreciation Sri Lanka's formal request to the secretariat to be a pilot country of the Drought Mechanism.

H. Agenda Item 4: Implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action

**for Applications of Space Technology and Geographic Information
System for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development,
2012-2017**

44. The Committee noted with appreciation the progress of the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action for Applications of Space Technology and the Geographic Information System for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development, 2012-2017, adopted at the 69th session of the ESCAP Commission in May 2013.

45. The Committee deliberated on the draft implementation plan prepared by the secretariat and expressed their strong support for the successful implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action.

46. The Committee noted that the secretariat requested the members of ICC, which had shown interest in being a pilot project, to submit a formal request to the secretariat to conduct pilot projects in their countries. The Committee further noted with appreciation that Mongolia and Sri Lanka sent their formal requests to the secretariat to be the pilot country on the implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action.

47. The Committee noted that it would be essential to establish the long-term institutional framework to secure the continuous provision of geospatial datasets on drought monitoring with long-term commitments from service providers.

48. The Committee acknowledged with appreciation the collaborative partnerships and collaboration between ESCAP and other United Nations agencies, as well as regional initiatives, on implementation of the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action. The Committee reconfirmed that the coordination and harmonization of regional initiatives and mechanisms are critical to maximizing the results of activities and in avoiding duplication and overlap among them.

I. Agenda Item 5: Other Matters

49. The Committee noted with appreciation that Pakistan proposed to host the 18th session of the ICC on RESAP. The Committee agreed to organize the 18th session of the ICC on RESAP in Islamabad, Pakistan in September 2014.

**J. Agenda Item 6: Key outcomes of the 17th ICC
and adoption of the summary report**

50. The Committee adopted the conclusions and recommendations on 27 November

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