

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE
PACIFIC

The 19th Session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) on the Regional
Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific
(RESAP)

26-28 October 2015
Bangkok, Thailand

Summary Meeting Report

Prepared by the Secretariat

I. Conclusions and Recommendations

Institutional Development of RESAP:

1. The Committee emphasized that science, technology and innovation, in particular space technology applications, are important means for implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. The Committee recognized the critical role of the applications of space technology and geographic information systems (GIS) for effective disaster management and in addressing emerging development needs in the Asia-Pacific region.
3. The Committee acknowledged the relevance of the Asia Pacific Disaster Report 2015 and endorsed its findings. The Committee further stressed the key message of the report, that regional cooperation is critical in addressing transboundary risks and highlighted that space applications and GIS is one of the best examples in the region for achieving regional cooperation. The Committee requested the secretariat to continue its preparation of the Asia Pacific Disaster Report in 2017 and called on RESAP members to support the secretariat in this regard.
4. The Committee acknowledged that good progress has been made in RESAP member countries through advancing space technology and deepening and broadening its applications in supporting sustainable development, and strengthening regional cooperation in relevant fields.
5. The Committee commended the cooperative efforts made by RESAP members in supporting disaster-affected countries with timely response and damage assessment, including the implementation of the Regional Drought Mechanism and associated capacity building.
6. The Committee further acknowledged there are persisting gaps and needs in the effective use of space technology to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and SDGs in Asia and the Pacific, particularly in developing countries lacking the necessary human resources, knowledge and technology.
7. The Committee emphasized that regional cooperation holds the key to improve the applications of space technology for building resilience and achieving sustainable development in the region. In this regard, the Committee called on ESCAP member States to work closely with each other through the RESAP framework and requested the secretariat to expand the RESAP network in Asia and the Pacific.
8. The Committee commended the secretariat's partnerships with global and regional organizations and initiatives such as UNITAR/UNOSAT, UN-SPIDER, UN-GGIM, UNCCD, GEO, FAO, WMO, UNCDD and other international and regional organizations and initiatives such as Sentinel Asia, SAARC DMC, AHA Center, MRC and CSSTEAP, and requested that the secretariat continue to engage with these organizations to harmonize the various initiatives at the regional level.

9. The Committee further requested the secretariat to write a letter to the Seat of the Government of RESAP member countries, to reconfirm the validity of the RESAP NFPs by early 2016.

10. The Committee commended the efforts made by the secretariat on the implementation of recommendations of the 18th session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee (ICC) held in September 2014, and endorsed the work plan for 2016. The Committee further acknowledged the importance of the support from RESAP members in particular the experts to the secretariat in implementation of the work plan. In this regard, the Committee encouraged ICC members to second their experts as non-reimbursable loans (NRL) to support ESCAP's work on space applications in Bangkok, Thailand.

11. The Committee requested the secretariat to inform the RESAP members regularly on the progress of its work and to also collect information on space applications from the RESAP members and other international/regional organizations in order to harmonize the activities and share information.

12. The Committee requested the secretariat to further coordinate with ICC members to confirm the host for the 20th session of the ICC on RESAP in 2016.

13. The Committee requested the secretariat to organize a space agency leader's forum on space applications for disaster risk reduction during the upcoming AMCDRR which will take place in New Delhi, India in November 2016, to take forward ICC outcomes to the AMCDRR.

The Regional Drought Mechanism:

14. The Committee highly commended the work undertaken by the secretariat and pilot countries such as Mongolia and Sri Lanka in operationalizing the Regional Drought Mechanism. The Committee subsequently requested the secretariat to continually play a catalytic role in taking the Regional Drought Mechanism forward within other drought prone countries, upon request.

15. The Committee expressed appreciation to the Regional Service Nodes in China and India for their generous support in providing satellite-derived data, products, services and capacity building for pilot countries, and for their commitment towards providing requisite support to ESCAP in implementing the Regional Drought Mechanism. In this regard the Committee requested the secretariat to work with the Regional Service Nodes in developing TORs/SOPs related to implementation of the Regional Drought Mechanism, such as TORs for the Regional Service Nodes and SOPs for drought early warning through the use of space-based data and products, amongst others.

16. The Committee requested the secretariat to strengthen the technical support it provides to other pilot countries such as Cambodia, Myanmar and Nepal, and to further expand the Mechanism to Central Asia, starting with Kyrgyzstan. A series of national meetings should be conducted in Cambodia, Myanmar and Nepal in late 2015 to mid-2016 to develop a plan of work for each country. The secretariat should seek additional

resources or partnerships for implementation of the Mechanism in other pilot countries, particularly Kyrgyzstan and other Central Asia countries.

17. The Committee expressed appreciation to the national teams and focal points in the pilot countries of Mongolia and Sri Lanka for their efforts in making the pilot projects a success. The Committee requested the secretariat to share the good practices, experience with other countries, and prepare a plan of work for 2016-2017 for continued validation and refinement of the drought management system in both Mongolia and Sri Lanka.

18. The Committee urged the secretariat to arrange a regional meeting and specialized training course in the first half of 2016 to enhance knowledge, share experiences, identify further opportunities for collaboration, identify and discuss challenges encountered, and guide the secretariat on further actions required to support implementation of the Mechanism at the regional, subregional and national levels.

19. The Committee encouraged the secretariat to continue to undertake analytical and normative work on drought in countries of the region, in collaboration with national focal points, international institutions, partners and experts. The committee further requested that the secretariat expands its work from drought monitoring to drought impact assessment, crop health/yield monitoring.

Regional support to disaster-affected countries:

20. The Committee appreciated the efforts made by the RESAP member countries as well as the secretariat in facilitating the timely provision of space-based data and impact assessments to disaster affected countries in the region. The Committee encouraged the RESAP members to continue their regional support in the timely provision of satellite remote sensing imagery, damage maps and other products, to disaster-affected countries for relief and damage assessments.

21. The Committee requested the RESAP NFPs to actively work with related authorities, particularly NDMA/NDMO in respective countries, in order to serve as an information hub during the whole disaster cycle and to maintain links with the secretariat. In this regard, the Committee requested RESAP NFPs to nominate liaison person(s) in national disaster management authorities/organizations, by the first quarter of 2016, as alternate contact person for receiving related space-derived data/information for early warning, response, relief and damage assessment.

22. The Committee commended the secretariat on its close cooperation with other UN agencies and regional institutions such as UNITAR/UNOSAT, UN-SPIDER, UN-GGIM, OCHA, GEO, WMO, Sentinel Asia, SOPAC, SAARC, CSSTEAP on the timely provision of space-derived data, products and capacity building for forecasting, response, relief and impact assessment for member countries affected by disasters. The Committee encouraged the secretariat to continue to strengthen these partnerships.

23. The Committee requested the secretariat to share the SOPs, guidelines and manuals on satellite imagery for emergency response and the manual on Rapid Assessment for Resilient Recovery, with other sub-regions, to enable developing countries to gain benefit from advances in the applications of space technology and

GIS. The committee encouraged its members to share their own national SOPs, guidelines and manuals that can serve as examples of good practice for the secretariat to take forward in this regard.

24. The Committee encouraged the secretariat to collaborate with UNOSAT on its regional flood modeling initiative and to find a viable pilot country or test case scenario for flood prediction modelling.

Research and Institutional Capacity development:

25. The Committee requested the secretariat to strengthen its analytical research on space technology applications for disaster risk management and sustainable development in order to address emerging needs and solutions in the region. In particular, the secretariat should consider policies and strategies for incorporating and using newly available information and communication technology, as well as new emerging technologies on using space-based applications and information. The secretariat will undertake further analysis and research into potential regional, subregional and national impacts of occasional and long-term climate events, such as El Nino and climate change.

26. The Committee requested the secretariat to conduct thematic short-term training courses and master/PhD degree study based on the needs survey provided by RESAP members, such as effective drought monitoring and early warning, typhoon-flood risk modelling, rainfall estimation, interpretation of space-based information for urban planning, crop monitoring, forest fire, fishery, rapid assessment of disaster impact using space-derived data, enhanced institutional geo-referenced information for disaster risk management, in collaboration with RESAP training networks in China, Indian, Indonesia, Thailand and ESCAP's APCICT in Republic of Korea.

27. The Committee encouraged its members to support and contribute to efforts made by the secretariat on producing a survey of the capacity of developing countries in geospatial information management, which will provide guidance to a regional plan for capacity development for 2016-2020, with a focus on Countries with Special Needs.

28. The Committee requested the secretariat to conduct research to support the implementation of the SIDS regional strategy for sustainable development, which was adopted at the UN Conference on SIDS in Samoa on 4 September 2014, as well as the ESCAP resolution 71/13 "Regional cooperation for building resilience to disasters in Asia and the Pacific". In this regard, the secretariat will enhance its support to small island developing States in the Pacific on space applications, GIS and multi-hazard early warning.

29. The Committee requested the secretariat to provide member States with on-line capacity development programmes through ESCAP's e-learning platform. The platform includes technical knowledge, exercises, and emerging trends and technologies, and good practices in the areas of space technology and GIS applications.

30. The Committee encouraged the secretariat to further enhance the RESAP networks for knowledge and technology sharing, including through collaboration with

UN-SPIDER, UNOSAT, UNGGIM-AP, WMO, Sentinel Asia, CSSTEAP, AIT and other regional initiatives.

Support and contribution from member States on developing regional land cover maps:

31. The Committee requested the secretariat to continue its work on regional land cover maps and select several thematic areas and pilots. The secretariat should report to the ICC members periodically and seek guidance from the ICC members.

32. The Committee encouraged its members to support the proposal made by the secretariat on change analysis using regional land cover maps and contribute to free archived and near real-time space-based data for this purpose and to contribute expertise, software, tools and methodology, experiences and good practices from different sectors.

33. The Committee requested its members to offer training opportunities and facilities to pilot countries. The Committee further encouraged countries to apply to become pilots in this upcoming initiative.

Implementation of the Regional Plan of Action 2012-2017:

34. The Committee requested all RESAP member countries to make concrete efforts to implement the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action 2012-2017, review progress of implementation and report to the 72nd session of the ESCAP Commission in 2016.

35. The Committee further invited RESAP member countries to host the Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific to be convened in 2016 or 2017. The meeting will evaluate progress made in implementing the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action, provide further guidance for its successful implementation and build stronger political support and ownership among all stakeholders as stated in resolution 69/11.

36. The Committee called upon all RESAP member countries to provide guidance to the secretariat on preparation of the Regional Plan of Actions for Space and GIS Applications for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development from 2017 onward, which will be very important to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction for 2015-2030 and SDGs.

II. PROCEEDINGS

A. Organization of the Meeting

1. The Nineteenth 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 28 October 2015. The meeting was organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The Programme of the meeting is included in Annex 1 of this report.

2.

B. Attendance

3. The meeting was attended by the National Focal Points (NFPs) of RESAP or their representatives from the following ESCAP member States: Bangladesh, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and UNITAR's Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT), United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster Management (AHA Centre) and the Mekong River Commission (MRC) also attended the meeting as observers. The complete list of the participants is included in Annex 2 of this report.

C. Opening of the meeting

4. The opening session of the nineteenth session of the ICC commenced with an opening speech from Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, Director, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP. In her speech, Ms. Sirimanne thanked RESAP members for their continuous support in promoting the use of space technology both nationally and regionally. Ms. Sirimanne also highlighted the fact that 2015 marks the beginning of a new 15-year plan – the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030 - and pointed to where space applications are specifically identified as important for disaster management under priority 1, “Understanding disaster risk”. She also reminded those in attendance that the achievement of the newly adopted SDGs by 2030 will depend critically on building much greater resilience to disasters. In this regard she highlighted SDG goal 17, “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”, targets identify enabling technologies as a way to achieve many goals through international cooperation. Regional cooperation was the golden thread running through her opening remarks and the central theme focused on the four pillars of work under RESAP: 1) The timely provision of near real-time satellite imagery to support disaster-affected countries; 2) operationalization of the Regional Drought Mechanism for drought monitoring and early warning; 3) institutional capacity development to address persistent gaps and emerging challenges and 4) research and analytical work. To end her speech, Ms. Sirimanne called on all members to continue working together to build the effectiveness of RESAP through sharing their good practices and actively contributing to support each other in tackling the common goal of disaster management and sustainable development.

5. The Committee elected the bureau of the session comprising Mr. Raul C. Sabulase (Philippines) as Chairperson, Mr. Sanath Panawennage (Sri Lanka) as Vice-Chairperson and Mr. Jovesa Rokuta Vocea (Fiji) as Rapporteur. In his opening remarks to the meeting, the Chairperson assured the Committee that the elected bureau would do its best to ensure the meeting would achieve its objectives to reach a successful conclusion, relying on the cooperation and involvement of participating members.

D. Adoption of the agenda

6. The meeting adopted the agenda. Refer to Annex 3 of this report.

E. Reconfirmation of the membership of the ICC

7. On a request by the secretariat to reconfirm the membership of the ICC, subsequently, the NFPs for RESAP, member countries agreed that they would inform the secretariat in writing if there were any such changes in their ICC membership as per the standard procedure. The Secretariat notified ICC members that it would be writing to their Seat of Government to invite nominations and reconfirmations of their respective ICC membership and RESAP NFPs.

F. Agenda Item 6: Report by the secretariat on the progress of the RESAP and implementation of related resolutions

8. The secretariat briefed the meeting on its major works in: 1) timely provision of near real-time satellite imagery to countries affected by severe disasters; 2) operationalization of the Regional Drought Mechanism; 3) promoting geo-referenced information system for disaster risk management; and 4) enhancing regional capacity development in Asia and the Pacific.

G. Agenda Item 7: Status and future plans on space technology applications for sustainable development by the RESAP member countries

9. The representatives of the following countries made country presentations on the status and future plans regarding the optimal use of space technology applications for sustainable development: Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Eiii Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Russian Federation,

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