

Geospatial Practices for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific 2020: A Compendium





*The shaded areas of the map indicate ESCAP members and associate members.**

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Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana

Executive Secretary

Kaveh Zahedi

Deputy Executive Secretary

Tiziana Bonapace

Director, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

United Nations publication

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Sales no.: E.20.II.F.21

ISBN: 978-92-1-120818-4

eISBN: 978-92-1-005482-9

ST/ESCAP/2923

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FOREWORD

The world has grappled with the impact of COVID-19 on people's health and the strain on our economies and societies. In less than a year, the pandemic has threatened to reverse decades of hard-won progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The effective integration of geospatial data, with existing statistics and ground-based information, will be key to delivering the timely data needed for governments, businesses, communities and citizens to make evidenced-based decisions. Spurred by the accelerated adoption of digital innovations, many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are leveraging geospatial information to provide timely evidence and insights for their responses to COVID-19. From basic topographic features on maps, to complex 3D models, geospatial information and remotely sensed data provide far-reaching solutions to the pressing issues facing humanity.

In 2018, ESCAP member States endorsed the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030), an inclusive and country-needs driven blueprint to harness space and geospatial applications and support countries to achieve the 2030 Agenda. *Geospatial Practices for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific 2020: A Compendium*, provides an overview of the regional status and progress in all six thematic areas of the Plan of Action, based on the contribution of over 100 examples from countries and partners in the region.

I commend these countries for leveraging space applications for sustainable development. In particular, those countries that have been able to move faster than others and continue to generously share their expertise through regional cooperation opportunities.

This compendium demonstrates the diverse use for geospatial information and applications and the vital role they will continue to play in the future. It also highlights the importance of making geospatial data, tools and innovations accessible, available and affordable to maximize benefits for all. Two of the seven key success factors particularly worth highlighting are investing in cultivating national experts and incorporating geospatial information into a range of national institutions and platforms.

I hope that this cross-cutting analysis of country-based examples will promote peer learning and innovative thinking. As underlined in the Data Strategy of the UN Secretary-General, data has become a strategic asset. ESCAP is fully committed working closely with member States and all stakeholders, to implement the Plan of Action, and COVID-19 data-driven responses to build back better and to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific.



Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana

Under-Secretary-General of
the United Nations and
Executive Secretary of ESCAP

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Geospatial Practices for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific 2020: A Compendium was prepared under the guidance of Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary and Tiziana Bonapace, Director, ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD) provided direction and advice.

The preparation and writing team was led by Juliet Nicole Braslow under the guidance of Keran Wang, Space Application Section, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division (IDD). Members of the core drafting team also consisted of Ayeisha Sheldon, Hanqian Zhang, Rhys Persoon, Kelly Hayden, Ingrid Dispert, Verena Kausche, Linda Li, Ivan Chumarev, Wenyu Li, and Taeook Kang.

Staff who provided inputs and comments include Sanjay Srivastava, Kareff Rafisura, and Tae Hyung Kim of the ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, David Ferrari, of the Energy Division, Chrispin Kapinga of the Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia, Ayodele Marshall and Irina Bernal of the Statistics Division, Anshuman Varma of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization.

The manuscript was edited by Anoushka Ali. Layout and graphic design were completed by Xiao Dong. Amporn Jaturasatienchai and Kelly Hayden were in charge of collecting inputs. Amporn Jaturasatienchai, Patricia Budiyanto, Chonlathon Piemwongjit provided administrative assistance.

Throughout its preparation, this publication has received valuable inputs from both member States and partnering institutions. This publication has been made possible and enriched by the collective efforts of all the contributors.

Contributors from member States and associate members listed in alphabetical order:

Armenia, Ministry of Emergency Situations
Armenia, Ministry of Environment
Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (ESCAP-APDIM)
Australia, Geoscience Australia
Bangladesh, Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization (SPARSSO)
Bhutan, Department of Geology and Mines
Bhutan, Department of IT and Telecom, Ministry of Information and Communications
Cambodia, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre)
Cambodia, Mekong River Commission (MRC)
Cambodia, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)
Cambodia, Ministry of Environment (MoE)
Cambodia, Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction (MLMUPC)
Cambodia, Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM)
Cambodia, National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM)

Cambodia, National Committee for ESCAP (NC-ESCAP)
Cambodia, National Mekong Committee (CNMC)
Cambodia, The Joint Action Group (JAG) for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR): 18 members NGOs
China, Aerospace Information Research Institute (AIR)-Chinese Academy of Sciences
China, Beijing Normal University
China, Institute of Atmospheric Physics-Chinese Academy of Sciences
China, Institute of Forest Resource Information Techniques (IFRIT), Chinese Academy of Forestry (CAF)
China, National Geomatics Center of China-Ministry of Nature Resources
China, National Remote Sensing Center of China (NRSCC)-Ministry of Science and Technology
China, Sun Yat-sen University
China, Wuhan University
Drought Monitoring System-Sri Lanka (DMS-SL)
Hong Kong, China, Hong Kong Observatory
India Meteorological Department (IMD)
India, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)

- Indonesia, National Institute of Aeronautics and Space (LAPAN)
- Islamic Republic of Iran, Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organisation
- Islamic Republic of Iran, Iranian Red Crescent Society
- Islamic Republic of Iran, Iranian Space Agency (ISA)
- Islamic Republic of Iran, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
- Islamic Republic of Iran, National Disaster Management Organisation of Iran
- Japan, Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF) Space Application Working Group
- Japan, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
- Japan, National Space Policy Secretariat, Cabinet Office
- Kazakhstan, Gharysh Sapary (KGS)
- Lao People's Democratic Republic, Ministry of Science and Technology
- Mongolia, Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment, Mongolia (IRIMHE)
- Myanmar, Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, Ministry of Transport and Communications
- Nepal, Forest Research and Training Centre
- Pakistan, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
- Pakistan, National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF)
- Pakistan, Pakistan Space Upper and Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO)
- Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University
- Philippines, Department of Science And Technology (DOST)
- Philippines, Manila Observatory
- Philippines, Mariano Marcos State University
- Philippines, Philippine Council for Industry, Energy And Emerging Technology, Research And Development
- Philippines, The Department of Science and Technology-Philippine Council for Industry, Energy and Emerging Technology Research and Development (DOST-PCIEERD)
- Republic of Korea, Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI)
- Russian Federation (the), State Space Corporation ROSCOSMOS
- Russian Federation (the), The Ministry of Emergency Situations (EMERCOM)
- Russian Federation (the), The Russian Space Systems
- Russian Federation (the), The Scientific Center for Operational Monitoring of the Earth
- Sri Lanka, Department of Agrarian development
- Sri Lanka, Department of Agriculture
- Sri Lanka, Department of Irrigation
- Sri Lanka, Department of Sri Lanka Railways
- Sri Lanka, National Building Research Organization
- Sri Lanka, National Physical Planning Department
- Sri Lanka, National Water Supply and Drainage Board
- Sri Lanka, Rubber Research Institute
- Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Ports Authority
- Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority
- Sri Lanka, Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka
- Sri Lanka, Water Resources Board
- Tajikistan, Institute of Water Problems, Hydropower and Ecology-Academy of Science
- Thailand, Centre of Agricultural Information-Office of Agricultural Economics
- Thailand, Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency (DEDE)-Ministry of Energy
- Thailand, Department of Fisheries
- Thailand, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources
- Thailand, Department of Mineral Resources
- Thailand, Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation
- Thailand, Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning
- Thailand, Geographic Information Section-Information and Communication Technology Center
- Thailand, Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA)
- Thailand, Hydro-Informatics Innovation Division
- Thailand, Land Development Department
- Thailand, Marine Department
- Thailand, National Research Council of Thailand
- Thailand, Office of Engineering Topological and Geotechnical Survey
- Thailand, Office of the National Water Resources
- Thailand, Royal Irrigation Department
- Thailand, Thai Meteorological Development – Ministry of Digital Economy and Society
- Thailand, Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organisation
- Thailand, Traffic Police Division
- Viet Nam, Vietnam Academy of Water Resources

Partnering Institutions Contributors listed in alphabetical order:

Asia-Oceania GEO (AOGEO)
-Group on Earth Observations



Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)



Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)



Centre for Space Science and Technology
Education in Asia and the Pacific (CSSTEAP)



United Nations Committee of Experts on Global
Geospatial Information Management



United Nations Institute for Training and
Research's Operations Satellite Application
Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT)



United Nations Office for
Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)



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