



MARCH 2018 UPDATES

UN-SPIDER at a glance

UN-SPIDER conducts Technical Advisory Mission follow-up and national training programme in Sri Lanka

At the request of the Government of Sri Lanka through its Ministry of Disaster Management (MoDM), UN-SPIDER carried out a Technical Advisory Mission (TAM) follow-up

activity to the country to understand long-term capacity-building needs and to co-organize a national training course on disaster risk assessments together with two of its Regional Support Offices.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

News from the community

Satellites detect multiple forest fires in India

Satellites detected multiple forest fires in India in the midst of a deadly forest fire, which began on 11 March in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

European Commission signs Earth observation cooperation arrangements with Colombia, Chile and Brazil

The European Commission has signed Cooperation Arrangements with Colombia, Chile and Brazil. Under the arrangements, the three countries will gain access to the wide range of applications of the Copernicus Earth observation programme and data provided by the European Sentinel satellites using connections between data centres.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

International Charter activated for New Caledonia cyclone

The International Charter "Space and Major Disasters" was activated for a cyclone in New Caledonia on 8 March.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

Study highlights uses of LiDAR for earthquake damage assessments

A study conducted by engineers from Tohoku University in Japan sees promising opportunities for LiDAR applications in the context of informing responders after earthquakes. The team investigated the use of LiDAR for earthquake damage

assessments following two earthquakes that hit the island of Kyushu within 28 hours in April 2016.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

Disaster Management Center of Sri Lanka becomes Authorized User of International Charter

The Disaster Management Center (DMC) of Sri Lanka has become an Authorized User (AU) of the International Charter Space and Major Disasters. As an AU, DMC will be able to request activations of their Charter in instances of fast-onset disasters of natural or technological origin.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

Satellite technology improves tracking of hurricane wind speed

A new satellite remote sensing technique has been proven effective in measuring ocean wind speed in order to better track hurricanes and cyclones. The technique, which uses GPS technology to send signals to the Earth's surface and gather data via the Global Navigation Satellite Systems-Reflectometry (GNSS-R), is expected to lead to better forecasts in the future.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

New NOAA satellite aims to better predict severe weather, save lives

An advanced weather satellite to track storm systems, lightning, wildfires, coastal fog and other hazards was





launched by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) from the United States of America on 1 March. The new Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite-S (GOES-S) represents the second in a series of next generation weather satellites that will be operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

New Spanish Earth observation satellite launched

The Spanish Earth Observation satellite PAZ was launched on 22 February on-board a Falcon 9 rocket from the Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, United States of America. PAZ will be situated on the same orbit as the German TerraSAR-X and TanDEM-X radar satellites.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

New resources

New tool for global severity index allows climate community to assess meteorological drought by terrestrial water storage

A new technique has been developed to help mitigate the effects of drought. The satellite-based drought severity index (DSI) has been created using terrestrial water storage changes from the Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) to help identify the timing, extent and severity of droughts for adequate relief efforts.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

New geospatial dataset helps assess early signs of drought risks worldwide

The near real-time assessment of drought risks is crucial to enhance food security in vulnerable regions around the world. SERVIR, a joint venture of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), now provides a worldwide dataset for the Evaporative Stress Index (ESI) to

analyze and visualize vegetation stress on a weekly basis and at a spatial resolution of 5 km. The dataset is accessible on the Servir Global website.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)

New tool uses Copernicus data to assess coastal flood and erosion risk

Coastlines provide a wide range of ecosystem services. In the context of natural disasters, they can act as a natural buffer to flood risks. To integrate natural systems into flood protection, authorities and engineers are seeking quantitative information on key parameters that help foster cost-effective and sustainable mitigation strategies. For this purpose, the European Union funded project Foreshore Assessment using Space Technology (FAST) has introduced the MI-SAFE viewer.

[Read more on the UN-SPIDER Knowledge Portal.](#)



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