



NOVEMBER 2007

SPACE BASED SOLUTIONS FOR EARLY WARNING, CRISIS RESPONSE, SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY, VULNERABILITY REDUCTION AND LOCAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR UN AGENCIES AND MEMBER STATES

GIS training for local development and disaster risk reduction, Managua, Nicaragua

This month UNOSAT gave a practical training course on the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in support to disaster risk reduction. The 26 participants were local disaster management professionals from Haiti, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Venezuela and Colombia further specializing in disaster risk reduction in a framework of sustainable local development.



This specialization course has been launched by the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Delnet Programme, located at ILO's International Training Centre in Turin, in collaboration with its Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction and with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) as an

active partner through its regional office for the Americas based in Panama.

UNOSAT's three person training team presented the participants with state-of-art in Geographic Information System (GIS) tools and satellite solutions and how these can contribute to local development and disaster risk reduction. Following the training, an inter-agency ILO-ISDR-UNOSAT programme has been launched under grant funding from the World Bank, opening 3 new local development projects using satellite technologies for disaster risk reduction in Cuba, Nicaragua and Colombia.

Photo source: UNOSAT

Training of architects, Paris and Lyon, France

UNOSAT trainers joined a post graduate course on humanitarian assistance held by Ecole Supérieure d'Architecture in Paris. Geographic information and the use of satellite derived mapping in both emergency response and recovery are important tools in the planning and implementation of housing programmes following disasters. UNOSAT contributed its recent experiences in developing satellite solutions for early recovery in post disaster situations, with special focus on the benefits that detailed satellite imagery brings to such activities.



Another training delivered last month, at the Ordre des Architectes de Rhone-Alpes in Lyon focused on preparing emergency architects volunteers. A strong emphasis was made on sharing UNOSAT's first hand experience

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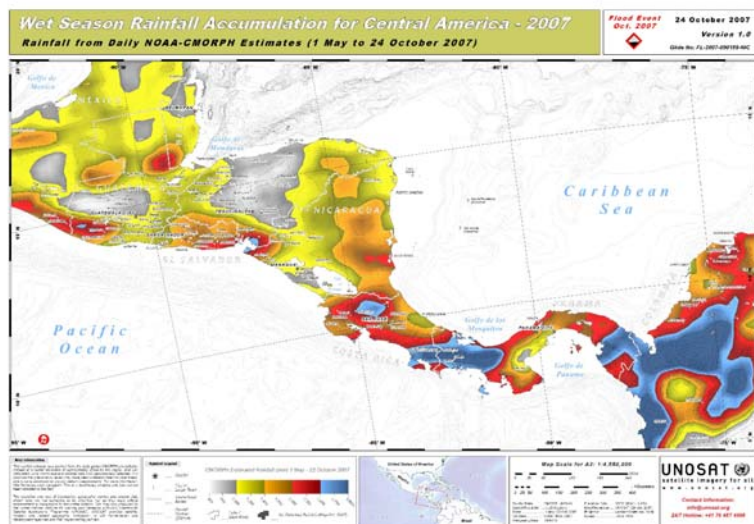


in disaster risk reduction through sustainable urban planning, in line with new developments in this field.

Photo source: Ecole Supérieure d'Architecture

Humanitarian rapid mapping support, October 2007

Rapid mapping activities were focused on regional support following floods covering multiple countries in Central America. UNOSAT also continued its support to the flood relief activities in West Africa last month. The below map illustrates the usefulness of rainfall data as derived from satellite observations for operations planning and response during such regional disasters. The colours in the below map indicate lower level of precipitation in grey and yellow tones and higher level of precipitation in red and blue tones. From the map one can clearly see the relatively high accumulated rainfall during the wet season in Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia. Such maps are used in combination with more detailed country reports to complement the overall understanding of a flood situation.



Map source: UNOSAT

GMES Respond annual meeting, Geneva, Switzerland

A large group of UN and NGO users gathered in Geneva at the UNOSAT premises on the occasion of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) Respond Annual Review meeting (19-20 November). The partners of the Respond project invited users to give their views on several products delivered during Phase 1 of Respond (2006/2007) as well as on the programme for Phase 2 that will begin in December 2007. The views expressed during the meeting confirmed the findings of previous user meetings organized in Geneva in 2007 which have highlighted both the increase in the demand of satellite derived information and the progressive increase of GIS capability within user organizations.



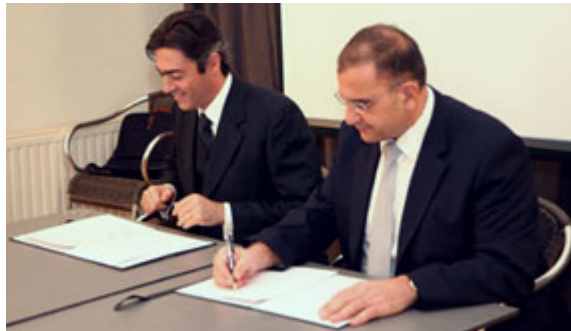
Second World Conference on Agriculture and Rural Financing, Bangkok, Thailand

UNOSAT joined more than 400 CEOs of specialized banks from all around the world, together with IFAD, UNDP, FAO and the World Bank to the Second World Conference on Agricultural and Rural Financing, 30 October – 3 November, presenting the use of satellite applications for disaster risk reduction and enabling development in geographically isolated rural communities.

Cooperation framework agreement signed between ESOA and UNOSAT

After beginning to collaborate one year ago, UNOSAT and the European Satellite Operators Association (ESOA) have now formalized our cooperation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. This MoU constitutes a framework within which the two organizations plan to work together to identify the appropriate satellite resources to optimize the deployment and use of satellite solutions for international development and emergency response. In addition, ESOA and UNOSAT will further raise awareness within the user communities of the unique ability of satellite technology in the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery phases of the crisis management cycle.

With this agreement, ESOA members hope to offer the international community a coordinated approach to respond not only to emergencies with the best and often only telecoms solution that works when all others are either overloaded or destroyed, but also to help the UN humanitarian missions all over the world with reliable and inexpensive satellite communications.



Mr. Pisano, UNOSAT (left) and Mr. Protopapas, ESOA (right) signing MoU in Brussels.

Photo source: ESOA