

Regional cooperation on space technology applications for DRR and SD

As the regional arm of the United Nations, ESCAP provides a multilateral platform for sharing knowledge, engaging in policy dialogue, building consensus and effective use of innovative technology tools towards disaster risk reduction and sustainable development.

ESCAP operates as a regional hub for harnessing the latest advances in space technology and GIS applications to address challenges of disasters and support risk identification, early warning, response, and post-disaster damage and loss assessment. ESCAP plays as a secretariat of 20 year long-standing Regional Space Application Programme for Sustainable Development (RESAP). RESAP is a unique regional cooperative platform that calls all national space agencies in the Asia-Pacific region to work together to help disaster affected countries through the provision of regional support in satellite-derived data, products and services.

Disaster management requires a multi-disciplinary approach, collating and consolidating information from various sources. In particular, incorporating location-based data into existing disaster information can provide a major advantage in making informed decisions ultimately, saving more lives. In this regard, ESCAP has supported the Countries with Special Needs to promote geo-referenced information systems for disaster risk management (Geo-DRM), which combines socio-economic data with satellite imagery and other disaster related data, providing the right information to the right person at the right time.

Although the Asian and Pacific region has a growing number of space-faring countries and despite the number of existing and planned remote sensing satellites in the region, these technologies are not yet fully benefitting the vulnerable in our societies because of the lack of capacity in terms of human, scientific, technological, and institutional resources. Thus, ESCAP calls for partnerships to bring the full potential of space technology and GIS applications to the most vulnerable people of the region through enhanced regional collaboration and information sharing for a stronger and more resilient Asia-Pacific.