4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON Small Island Developing States 27-30 MAY, 2024 ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

SIDS4 Conference Side Event

Leveraging geospatial information for climate resilience

29 May 2024, 08:00 – 09:30am (UTC – 4), Virtual

Organized by: Barbados, Tonga, and United Kingdom

Geospatial information provides key insights, and policymakers leverage it to make evidence-based decisions. Geospatial information reflects the digital version of our physical world, in which all human, economic and environmental activity and events take place. Geospatial data is a vital component of the overall information and management systems related to the Earth and human activities, enabling us to not only map the current situation on Earth, but also the modelling of nature's processes. By understanding natural and built environments, stakeholders tackle complex challenges and bolster resilience, sustainability, and societal equity. Our changing climate is increasing the fragility of the most vulnerable countries, making adaptation and mitigation even more challenging, leaving those that are already the furthest behind in terms of development further behind still. Although strengthening climate resilience is essential for all countries, it is especially crucial for SIDS, hampered by their unique vulnerability to exogenous shocks because of their small size, geographical remoteness, and the limited scale and undiversified nature of their economies.

Thus, this side event helped build awareness of the many innovative applications of geospatial information for climate resilience. Anchored by three high-level contributions by HE Ambassador Francois Jackman (Permanent Representative of Barbados to the UN), HE Ambassador Elizabeth Thomson (Barbados Ambassador-At-Large for Climate Change, Small Island Developing States and Law of the Sea), and Ms Rebecca Fabrizi, SIDS Envoy, United Kingdom, the side event helped showcase the forthcoming United Nations Committee of Experts on Global

Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) discussion paper "Applying Geospatial Information to Climate Challenges", and shared examples of the use of geospatial information for climate resilience in SIDS from Singapore and the Caribbean.

Key Issues

- High-level statements and perspectives on the importance of geospatial information for climate resilience were provided by global leaders from Member States.
- Highlighting how Member States are leveraging geospatial information for climate resilience
- Showcasing how SIDS are pioneering good practices in the area of integrated geospatial information management, leading to an increase in resilience and enhancing the overall understanding the impacts of the changing climate in SIDS

Key recommendations for action

- Government institutions in SIDS are encouraged to liaise with their National Geospatial Information Agencies to identify how they can assist with national data needs
- Government institutions in SIDS are encouraged to implement the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) to build and strengthen national geospatial information capacity as a means of improving the availability, quality, timeliness and disaggregation of geospatial data and information to improve decision-making
- Practitioners focused on applying geospatial information to bolster climate resilience are encouraged to share their use cases with the UN-GGIM's Task Team on Geospatial Information for Climate Resilience to ensure SIDS benefit from comparable or scalable examples
- Promotion of established regional organisations as a resource for SIDS to access technical support and financing for geospatial information for climate resilience