

**United Nations/Austria/European Space Agency Symposium on
Space Applications to Support the Plan of Implementation
of the World Summit on Sustainable Development**

**“Space systems: protecting and restoring water resources”
(Graz, Austria, 13-16 September 2005)**

REPORT BY THE CHAIRPERSONS

“Building capacity for the application of space technologies for water-related challenges”

Chairpersons: W. Riedler (Austria)

The purpose of this session was to identify capacity-building needs for increasing the use of space technology in water resource management in developing countries.

The following presentations were made during this session:

- Building capacity in the application of remote sensing to water resources management in Africa, by A. Lipponen, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);
- United Nations training opportunities in space applications, by S. Sulaymanov, United Nations; and
- Space science application initiatives in India in the area of water resources, by V. M. Rao, National Institute of Rural Development, India.

Recommendations/conclusions

Based on the above presentations and the discussions that followed the presentations, the chairperson and interested panel members and participants of the session made the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. Include project financing and development in the curricula of Regional Centres for Space Science and Technology Education.
2. A voluntary group supporting the development and refinement of project proposals is a good way to disseminate expertise of specialists in various countries.
3. The demand for education at regional centres is high and that should be met by contributions of participating governments (those on the board).
3. The Office for Outer Space Affairs should establish a user portal in the form of a web board where users could express the challenges they encounter in the use of space-based data products and software. At this point, it could be a password protected web board accessible to participants of this Symposium.

4. Indian experience can be used in the development of GIS and Remote Sensing tutorials adapted to local needs. The Indian Institute of Technology in Mumbai, the Centre on Studies and Resource Engineering, developed such tutorials and the experience can be shared with other interested institutions. ADMC, AIT, Bangkok has also developed such tutorials.

5. To make the most of the scattered organization of training sessions on remote sensing applications to water resources studies by different agencies and projects, information about opportunities should be communicated for synergies, using existing communication channels and fora.

6. The resources of software vendors (GIS and image processing, like ESRI, NASA) can be accessed through their websites, including sample data, for better capacity building for developing various application areas.