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**UN-SPIDER and DLR's ZKI offer help after cyclone Nargis**

*15 May 2008*



Flooding in the Irrawaddy delta

**Satellite data for international crisis management**

On 2 May 2008, tropical cyclone 'Nargis' swept over Myanmar (Burma) and left behind a path of destruction. Official reports noted a death toll of more than 30 000 people alongside 40 000 missing. With official information being restricted, the full extent of the disaster was unclear for a long time.

Using data from the newly-launched German radar satellite TerraSAR-X (DLR/Infoterra) and ALOS/PALSAR (JAXA), the DLR Centre for Satellite Based Crisis Information (ZKI) based near Munich, Germany has been producing maps of the affected areas. These maps are used for the preparation and coordination of international relief efforts.



TerraSAR-X data show flood extent

## **DLR chief Wörner: "DLR intensively engaged in humanitarian assistance"**

Satellites can allow rapid, objective and balanced geographic mapping and remote crisis areas. The case of Myanmar was similar to the flooding in Namibia in March 2008 - with TerraSAR-X as the latest generation of radar satellites to give, even at night or under dense cloud cover, an accurate picture of the situation on the ground. The processing of radar data was done at ZKI, a service of the German Remote Sensing Data Centre (DFD) of DLR. The derived inundation maps are used to assess damage current and predict future threats - such as crop failures. Map production is carried out in the framework of the GMES Service Element 'RESPOND' and is accomplished in collaboration with ITHACA (Information Technology for Humanitarian Assistance, Cooperation and Action; Politecnico di Torino, Italy).

The Chair of the DLR Executive Board, Dr Johann-Dietrich Wörner praised the cooperation of ZKI and UN-SPIDER: "DLR has been involved for years in the field of humanitarian assistance following natural disasters through its Centre for Satellite Based Crisis Information (ZKI). In addition, DLR scientists are seconded to the UN SPIDER office in Bonn. With the recognised know-how of DLR in remote sensing and other space applications, help can be quickly and effectively organised across national borders. UN SPIDER also demonstrates the involvement of DLR in outstanding programmes and projects at the highest international political level."



The Rangoon region

ZKI has been providing such information for several years now to national, European and international institutions. At the national level, it has been providing data especially to the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Bundesanstalt Technisches Hilfswerk (THW). At the European level, to the Joint Research Centre in Ispra to Italy and the EU. And at the international level, it has been providing data to the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees of the United Nations (UNHCR), UNESCO and the Red Cross.

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