



FROM THE DG'S DESK

The year 2015 marked the beginning of our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan. As we come to the end of the year, I am pleased to announce that we had a successful year. Among our many achievements were the successful implementation of twenty five projects, advisory services and research programmes and training of more than 2,800 nationals from member States and other African countries in different geo-information training programmes. Over two hundred (200) pieces of surveys instruments were also serviced for member States.

In this issue we highlight the 49th RCMRD Governing Council meeting, the launch of phase 2 of the SERVIR programme, workshop on agricultural productivity held in Uganda, Africa Leadership Conference on Space Technology, Workshop on Forest Degradation Monitoring and the signing of MoU between RCMRD and Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization.

Finally, I wish to thank our member States, development partners and our clients for their continued support this year that enabled us achieve our mission of promoting sustainable development through the provision of geo-information and ICT products and services.

Dr. Hussein O. Farah

*I Wish you happy
holidays*

The 49th Governing Council Meeting held at RCMRD



Delegates at the 49th meeting of the Governing Council

The 49th Governing Council (GC) meeting was held at RCMRD premises in Nairobi, Kenya from 16th to 20th November, 2015. Sixteen Member States attended the meeting. The Member States were: Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, South Sudan, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The GC is an organ of RCMRD that meets annually to review and approve RCMRD's Annual Work Plan, Budget and Human Resource Policies. It is composed of Permanent Secretaries from member States responsible for the activities of RCMRD. The meeting was chaired by the Director General of the Ethiopia Mapping Agency (EMA), of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia. The GC discussed the 2016 Annual Work Plan and Budget and approved implementation of the same. The Governing Council meeting was preceded by the RCMRD Technical Committee meeting.

The 49th GC meeting was opened by Hon. Dr. Fred Matting's the Minister of Land, Housing and Urban Development, Kenya. In his opening speech the Minister reiterated the ideals upon which RCMRD was established, mentioning that the need to establish secure and authentic land information and land administration systems is critical towards making strategic decision making and implementation of development programmes. He challenged delegates to identify solutions to turn domestic land challenges into opportunities to determine optimal use of land and create wealth, with cognizance that governance had gained global attention often considered a fourth dimension of sustainable development. Mobilization of the land sector is thus considered a principle focus for poverty reduction and a key development strategy. The Minister noted the urgent and emerging need to harmonize land laws, to enable the implementation of

regional projects, an item which would be well considered as a policy question in the upcoming RCMRD Ministerial meeting to be held in Kigali in 2016.

He urged members to focus on joint implementation of programs with RCMRD to help member States address the many challenges such as poverty,

food security, land degradation, disaster management, urban planning, land administration and management that require geospatial information.



Delegates at the 49th meeting of the Technical Committee



Delegates at the National Titling Centre in Nairobi, Kenya

First Global Geospatial Information Management- Africa meeting at RCMRD

The first meeting of the Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM)- Africa was held from 23-25th November, 2015 at RCMRD. The three-day meeting attracted over 30 participants including heads of national mapping institutions in Africa and experts in the geospatial industry, academia, research institutions, and the private sector, representatives of sub-regional and regional organizations, partners and other stakeholders, producers and users of geospatial information.

The United Nations Secretariat established the United Nations GGIM with an aim of setting up a formal mechanism under the United Nations (UN) auspices to discuss and coordinate GGIM activities and by involving member States as the main players. The African Cluster (UN-GGIM: Africa) was established during the first meeting held in December, 2014 in Tunis, Tunisia. Member States chose the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) as the secretariat of the interim bureau to guide the process toward its international recognition. At its 5th session, in August 2015, UN-GGIM adopted its decision, which formally established UN-GGIM: Africa and confirmed ECA as the regional committee's secretariat.



Delegates of the first meeting of the Global Geospatial Information Management held at RCMRD

This first meeting aimed at formally endorsing UN-GGIM: Africa by member States, discussing the important aspects and agree on a basic set of concepts, practices, standards and guidelines that are significant to operations, assess and validate the draft Action Plan being prepared, adopting rules of procedure and organizational structure with the election of its bureau, and formalizing the establishment of the working groups. The primary aim of the first meeting was to discuss, adopt and endorse a regional body charter to coordinate UN-GGIM activities in Africa.

RCMRD Signs MOU with Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization

RCMRD signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) on 28th October, 2015 in Jinja, Uganda. LVFO is a regional institution with a mandate to manage fisheries and aquaculture in the East African Community. The MOU was signed by Mr. Godfrey Monor, the Executive Director, LVFO, and Dr. Hussein Farah, the Director General, RCMRD.

The partnership between RCMRD and LVFO will include sharing of water quality data, land cover maps, satellite imagery and geospatial products, and collaboration in capacity development of LVFO in Geographic Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS). Under the partnership, LVFO's secretariat will provide historical Insitu water quality data to RCMRD for validating satellite derived water quality and improvement of RS methods.



Mr. Godfrey Monor and Dr. Hussein Farah sign an MOU between LVFO and RCMRD



DG RCMRD meets PS Ministry of Land and Urban Development, Uganda

Dr. Hussein Farah met Mr. Gabindadde-Musoke, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Land and Urban Development in Kampala, Uganda on 27th, October, 2015. Also present during the meeting was Mr. Wilson Ogaro, the Commissioner of Survey and Mapping, Uganda.

The Permanent Secretary thanked RCMRD for the support they have provided to the Ministry and four other institutions in Uganda.

He requested RCMRD to support his Ministry in training of staff in Geo-database creation and management and conversion of hardcopy maps into digital formats.



Dr. Hussein Farah meets Mr. Gabindadde-Musoke, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Land and Urban Development in Kampala, Uganda

Water Open Information System Workshop in Tunis

RCMRD) attended the water open information system workshop held in Tunis from 5-9th October, 2015. The workshop was organized by the European Space Agency's Tiger Capacity Building Facility / ITC in collaboration with Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS).

Water Open Information System (WOIS) is an open source software suite developed by ESA (European Space Agency) under the framework of the Technology Informatics Guiding Education Reform (TIGER) initiative.

WOIS contains workflows for processing satellite imagery and derived products to evaluate,

track and quantify some aspects related to water resources management.



The water open information system workshop in session

National Workshop on Agricultural Productivity held in Uganda

RCMRD held a national workshop on agricultural productivity and drought prediction in the week of 29th September in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop's goal was to introduce the Drought Prediction and Agricultural Productivity project and tools being developed at RCMRD to help various ministries use data from Earth observation satellites to assess drought and crop productivity in Uganda. The workshop also served as a user needs assessment to gather the needs of the various ministries and their capacities in using earth observation data and products for decision making.

The participants had technical expertise and some had some knowledge and skills in GIS. The workshop mainly involved introduction to the Regional Hydrologic Extremes Assessment System (RHEAS) which is the framework that combines a hydrologic model; the Variable Infiltration Capacity (VIC) for hydrological assessment and a crop model; the Decision Support System for Agrotechnology Transfer (DSSAT).

Further, climate and crop yield modelling tools GeoClim and GeoWRSI developed by FEWSNET were also demonstrated. The Ministry of Agriculture appreciated the usefulness of these tools and showed its willingness to embrace them to improve information to decision makers.



Stakeholders at the national workshop on agricultural productivity and drought prediction in Kampala, Uganda.

Forest Degradation Monitoring Workshop

RCMRD) hosted a five-day forest degradation monitoring workshop from 19- 23rd, October 2015. The workshop attracted experts from various countries including Kenya, Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda.

The workshop comprised presentations on methods, national capacities and dynamics, training and practical work, and synthesis of results and outlook. In terms of promoting forest monitoring in the East African region, the forest degradation monitoring workshop aimed at reinforcing the capacity to process, interpret and obtain information from satellite data, outline options and strategies for national forest agencies on how to monitor forest change, and assess worldwide forest change product by country.

This was among a set of workshops organized by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) to inform partner institutions

and train them in techniques for monitoring and assessing forest degradation using remote sensing and field survey.



Siro Abdallah (standing) guiding participants during the workshop

The forest degradation monitoring workshop was under the ReCaREDD project hosted by JRC. The goal of the project is to increase the capacity of institutions in partner countries to

report on forest degradation, in a dependable and cost-efficient way. RCMRD is implementing land degradation assessment and forest monitoring in the

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region through the Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (MESA) project.

SERVIR Project Work planning and Stakeholders Meeting

RCMRD in September 2015 signed an agreement with US-AID to undertake phase 2 of the SERVIR program for another 5 years from October 2015-September 2020. SERVIR is a partnership between RCMRD, USAID and NASA. The goal of SERVIR project is to improve environmental management and resilience to climate change. It seeks to build the capacity of institutions to integrate earth observation and geospatial technology into environmental decision making.

RCMRD's SERVIR programme held a work planning meeting in Entebbe, Uganda from 26- 30th, 2015.

The work planning meeting was held in preparation for SERVIR-Eastern and Southern Africa's new five-year phase from October 2015- September 2020. A stakeholders' meeting also took place during the work planning meeting. The meeting was attended by six regional and national partners.

Also present were SERVIR project's partners the United States Agency for International Development (US-AID) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).



Attendees of the SERVIR programme work planning meeting held in Entebbe, Uganda

6th African Leadership Conference in Egypt

Dr. Hussein Farah represented RCMRD at the 6th African Leadership Conference (ALC) on Space Technology in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. The conference was attended by professionals and experts as well as policy makers from around the African continent. The ALC was held from 1- 4th December, 2015.

This was a strong continental avenue for presenting and discussing important issues related to space sciences and latest technology for the Africa.

The conference enabled continental awareness of African space policy and strategy, leverage communication and co-ordination, and foster African space activities and initiatives.

The ALC also presented an opportunity for attendees to discuss the challenges and opportunities for space science and technology and its application in the continent to improve the quality of life for the citizens.

By the conclusion of the meeting, there was a major resolution for the formation of African Space Agency and adaption of African Policy and Strategies on Space Science and Technology by the Africa Union.



Professionals, experts and policy makers at the 6th African Leadership Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

Pictorial



Delegates at the 49th meeting of the Technical Committee session



Participants of the training of trainers workshop in transparency in land administration



Hon. Dr. Fred Matiang'i, Eng. Sultan Mohamed Alya, Mr. Andre Nonguirema and Dr. Hussein Farah during the 49th meeting of the Governing Council



The first forum of the Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa

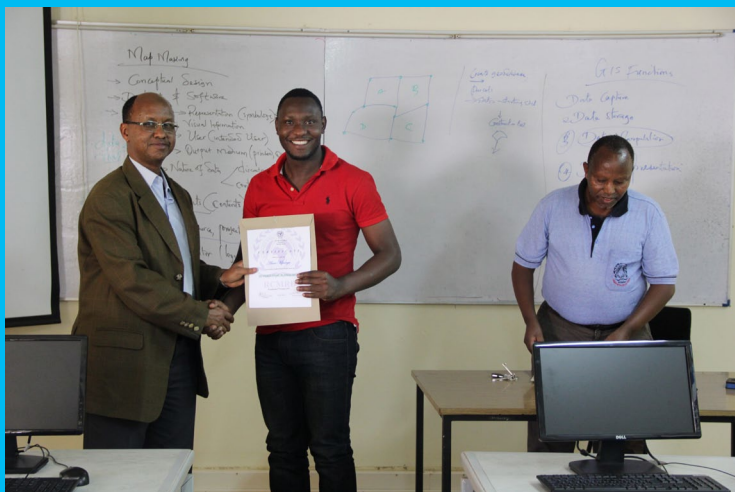


RCMRD staff during a team building exercise

Pictorial



James Mumina discusses GIS with visiting Egerton University Students



Dr. Farah presents a certificate to a participant from the Republic of Uganda after successfully completing a 3-week Application of GIS and R/S in Agriculture Census training



Customer relationship management (CRM) training in Bangkok, Thailand



RCMRD's Technical Committee delegates at the National Titling Centre in Kenya