Commonwealth Enters New Partnership To Enhance Climate Action In Small States

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The Commonwealth has entered into an innovative partnership with a UN agency to enhance climate action and disaster preparedness via satellite earth observation.

The partnership will support some small island developing states in the Commonwealth, namely Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, with access to vital satellite-based tools and information on disaster and climate risks to inform planning, manage food security and unlock climate finance.

Satellite-based information, collected through a remote sensing technique, can track clouds to help predict the weather or watch forming natural disasters.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Scotland said: 'This partnership will help use space expertise to deliver innovative solutions to the biggest threat facing the globe.

'This will help some of the most capacity-constrained small states to tackle the effects of climate change by developing mitigation and adaptation strategies based on the recorded data, moving them a step closer to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 13.'

The partnership with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is part of the CommonSensing project which is funded by the UK Space Agency's International Partnership Programme and is being delivered through an international consortium. It was signed on 8 November by Commonwealth Assistant Secretary-General Nabeel Goheer on behalf of Secretary-General Patricia Scotland.

UNITAR's Executive Director Nikhil Seth said: 'We are very pleased to be teaming with the Commonwealth in developing the capacities of small island nations to adapt to climate change.

'This [partnership] allows small island developing states to benefit from the latest technologies, including satellite imagery, thus contributing to the core mantra of the sustainable development agenda of leaving no one behind.'

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