

# 2026 Drones, AI & GIS for Disaster Risk Management

## Conference and Workshop

### Caribbean & Central America Edition



**Theme: Turning Data into Action: Beyond the Storm - Mapping Hope & Building Resilience**

📍 Montego Bay, Jamaica | 5–7 May 2026 | [flyinglabs.org/drmconference2026](http://flyinglabs.org/drmconference2026)



#### Day 1 – Tuesday, May 5, 2026

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Turning Data into Action: What the Storm Taught Us	
08:30 – 09:00	Arrival, Registration & Badge Collection
Setting the Stage: Vision, Policy & Partnerships	
09:00 – 09:30	<p><b>Opening Ceremony</b></p> <p>Opening remarks from Government Officials &amp; Partners</p> <p>Presenter/Speakers: Dr. Valrie Grant   Sonja Betschart   Simone M. Lloyd, GISP, Senior GIS Manager &amp; Trainer, NSDMB   CDEMA   Councillor Dwight Crawford, Deputy Mayor, Montego Bay</p>
09:30 – 10:30	<p><b>Launch of UAS Standards</b></p> <p>Jamaica Bureau of Standards (BSJ)</p> <p>Presenter/Speakers: Dr. Velton Gooden, Executive Director BSJ   Senator The Hon. Aubyn Hill, Minister Industry, of Investment, &amp; Commerce</p>
10:30 – 11:00	☕ <b>Coffee &amp; Tea Break</b>
11:00 – 11:45	<p><b>Panel Discussion: Drone Standards — What They Mean for the Region</b></p> <p>A discussion on the implications, adoption, and regional alignment of UAV standards</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Valrie Grant, Chair UAS Standards Technical Committee</p> <p>Panelists: Capt. Peter West, Manager, Flight Operations Oversight, JCAA            Philip Hippolyte, Senior Program Manager - HOT Caribbean            Stephen Weddeburn, Project Manager, GeoTechVision            Courtney King, Senior Programme Officer, Telecommunications, CDEMA            Mitzi Castillo Panama FL</p>
11:45 – 12:45	<p><b>Plenary Session: Hurricane Melissa — From Activation to Action</b></p> <p>A multi-actor reflection</p>



	Presenter/Speaker: ODPEM Representative   Walter Williams, JDF   Simone Lloyd, GISP, NERGIST Coordinator   CDEMA
12:45 – 13:45	 <b>Lunch</b>
<b>Current Capabilities &amp; Inclusivity</b>	
13:45 – 14:15	<b>Showcase: Turning Data into Decisions</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Okieno Samuels, GIS Projects Manager, NSDMB   Carlos Safto (Costa Rica FL)   WFP
14:15 – 15:05	<b>Keynote: Building on Existing Capabilities and Resources</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Sonja Betschart, WeRobotics
15:05 – 15:45	<b>Showcase Session</b> The Hurricane Melissa National Drone Response Community Mapping & Participatory Data Collection AI for Early Warning and Risk Modeling – UN-GGIM Americas GEOAI COP
	Presenter/Speaker: Dean-Ray Grant, JFL   Dania Montenegro, WeR   Okieno Samuels, NSDMB   Dave Williams, JPS Co.
15:45 – 16:15	<b>Keynote: Geospatial Infrastructures for DRM</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri, Olivier Cottray
16:15 – 16:30	<b>Break to Visit Exhibits</b>
16:30 – 16:45	<b>Keynote: From Seabed to Shoreline — Data-Driven Coastal Resilience in SIDS</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Greg Murphy, Fugro
16:45 – 17:30	<b>Fireside Chat: The Power of Local — Women and Youth Leading Resilience Through Tech</b> Moderated by Dr. Valrie Grant Panelists: Dania Montenegro-Chong   Lavern Ryan   Maria Timbawala   Mitzi Castillo   Dr. Kim Baldwin
17:30 – 17:45	Day 1 Recap – Sonja Betschart
<b>Evening Activity (Optional)</b>	
18:00 onwards	 <b>Drone Soccer (Optional Evening Activity)</b> Location: TBD   Participation is optional — open to all conference attendees

## Day 2 – Wednesday, May 6, 2026

<b>Day 2 – Wednesday, May 6, 2026</b> Building the Systems for Resilience	
08:30 – 09:00	Arrival, Registration & Badge Collection
Resources & Financing	
09:00 – 09:15	<b>Keynote: Financing Resilience Before Disaster Strikes</b> Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
	Presenter/Speaker: M. Stephen Lawrence, Country Advisor Haiti, CDB
09:15 – 10:00	<b>Panel Discussion: We're Underestimating the Loss: The Gaps in Disaster Data and What They Cost Us</b>
	Moderator: Dr. Valrie Grant Panelist: Quincy Ifill, Global Senior Manager-Planning & Design, Construction, GIS, Liberty Latin America   Trevion Manning, Director of Planning, St. James Parish Council   Mark Codling, Deputy Director, Hazard Management, Cayman Islands   M. Stephen Lawrence, Country Advisor Haiti, CDB   Greg Murphy, Coastal Resilience Lead, Americas, Fugro
10:00 – 10:45	<b>Co-Creation: The Economic Value of Geospatial Data in DRM</b>
	Facilitator: WeRobotics (Sonja Betschart), Deloitte D2i (Ashley Smith, Daniella Oriach)
10:45 – 11:00	<b>Keynote: Leading with Geospatial mindset.</b> Spatial Innovision Ltd.
	Presenter: Roshawn Clarke, Deputy CEO, Spatial Innovision
11: – 11:30	☕ <b>Coffee &amp; Tea Break</b>
Looking Across the Region	
11:30 – 11:45	<b>Keynote: Beyond the Storm — Media, Trust &amp; the Architecture of Resilience</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Dr. Claire Grant
11:45 – 12:30	<b>Panel Discussion: Institutionalizing Drones, AI and GIS within National Disaster Systems</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Moderator: Dr. Valrie Grant   Panelists: Dr. Kim Baldwin, Founder & Director, Marine Spatial Information Solutions   Mark Codling, Deputy Director, Hazard Management, Cayman Islands   Ms. Simone Lloyd, GISP, NERGIST Coordinator   Christopher Williams, Senior GIS Consultant, World Bank
12:30 – 12:45	<b>Introducing Copernicus LAC Chile Servicios y Aplicaciones.</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Macarena Perez, Copernicus LAC Chile
12:45 – 13:15	<b>GeoAI Use Cases for Resilience</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Mike Cox and Madeline Wrable, Esri   Leah Hogarth, Associate Geologist, Fugro   Dominica/Ja. Use case

13:15 – 14:15	 <b>NSDMB Lunch &amp; Learn: Jamaica’s Emergency Management in support of Hurricane Melissa</b> Okieno Samuels, GIS Projects Manager, NSDMB   Maurice Thompson, Spatial Data Analyst, NSDMB   Akeem Kennedy, GISSEP Manager & Assistant Trainer	
<b>Parallel Sessions   14:15 – 15:45</b>		
	<b>Track A   Collective Action: Recovery &amp; Resilience</b>	<b>Track B   Solutions Showcase</b>
14:30 – 15:15	<b>Co-Creation Session: Scalable Solutions for Recovery</b> How do we take the lessons from Hurricane Melissa and build systems that scale? Presentations from the region on replicable frameworks for post-disaster response Focus: data pipelines, community-led recovery, government integration	<b>Solutions Showcase: Tools in the Field</b> Live demonstrations of platforms and technologies used in real world resilience applications Format: 10-minute rapid showcases followed by Q&A Featured: Esri / Spatial Innovation   Fugro   HOT
	Presenter/Speaker: Facilitator: Sonja Betschart	Presenter/Speaker: Esri / Spatial Innovation   Fugro   HOT
15:15 – 16:00	<b>Panel Discussion: The Role of Media in Disaster Management</b> Exploring how media shapes public response, trust, and policy for effective disaster management	<b>Panel Discussion: The Value of Partnerships &amp; Collaboration</b> Complex challenges cannot be solved by any one institution alone. This panel explores how partnerships can strengthen disaster preparedness, improve response, and accelerate innovation.
	Moderator: Dr. Valrie Grant Panelists: Dr. Claire Grant   Dr. Paul Hector   Kiran Maharaj	Moderator: Olivier Cottray Panelists: Dania Montenegro WeR   Ms. Simone Lloyd, NERGIST   Phillip Hippolyte, HOT   Macarena Pérez Copernicus   Andrea Williamson, NWC
16:00 – 16:20	<b>Break to Visit Exhibits</b>	
16:20 – 16:50	<b>Charting the Way Forward / Collective Commitments: Beyond the Storm Action Framework</b>	
	Presenter/Speaker: Valrie Grant & Sonja Betschart	
16:50 – 17:00	Summaries & What to Expect Tomorrow	
18:30 – 22:00	 <b>Gala Dinner &amp; Networking</b>	

## Day 3 – Thursday, May 7, 2026

Day 3 – Thursday, May 7, 2026 Hands-On Training		
Pre-Event (Preparation) Phase		
07:45 – 08:00	<b>Kickoff: Flying Labs, followed by a word from Mike Cox</b>	
	Presenter/Speaker: Jamaica Flying Labs Lead   Esri Disaster Relief Lead	
08:00 – 09:30 (90 min)	<b>Drone Demonstration</b> via Wingtra - outdoors, weather permitting	
	Presenter/Speaker: Jamaica Flying Labs	
09:30 – 10:00 (30 min)	<b>Data Creation Introduction</b> pgs. 1–5 of Tutorial	
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovision - in-classroom	
	<b>Track 1   Drone</b>	<b>Track 2   Survey</b>
10:00 – 10:45 (45 min)	<b>Drone Data Processing (Hands-On)</b> via Reality Mapping	<b>Digital Survey Creation (Hands-On)</b> via Survey123
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovision - in-classroom	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovision - in-classroom
10:45 – 11:00	 <b>Coffee &amp; Tea Break</b>	
11:00 – 11:30	<b>Data Creation Review (Presentation) &amp; Data Collaboration Introduction (Demonstration)</b>	
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovision - in-classroom	
11:30 – 12:30 (60 min)	<b>Data Collaboration, Web Mapping, &amp; pre-event Analyses (Hands-On)</b> via ArcGIS Online	
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovision - in-classroom	
12:30 – 13:30	 <b>Lunch</b>	
Post-Event (Response) Phase		
13:30 – 13:45	<b>Mental Readiness in Crisis Operations (Discussion)</b>	
	Presenter/Speaker: Jamaica Flying Labs	
13:45 – 14:00	<b>Imagery Pipeline (Demonstration)</b>	
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovision - in-classroom	
14:00 – 14:15	<b>Imagery Exploration (Hands-On)</b>	

	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovation - in-classroom
14:15 – 14:30	<b>Break</b>
14:30 – 14:45	<b>Data Analysis: Review of Different Types of Possible Analyses (Presentation)</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovation - in-classroom
14:45 – 15:45 (60 min)	<b>GeoAI – Feature Extractions (Hands-On)</b> via pre-trained deep learning model   Esri / Spatial Innovation – in-classroom training
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovation - in-classroom
15:45 – 16:00	<b>Data Visualization: StoryMaps, Dashboards, Web Apps, Hub, etc. (Presentation)</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Esri/Spatial Innovation - in-classroom
16:00 – 16:45	<b>Official Conference &amp; Workshop Closing</b>
	Presenter/Speaker: Jamaica Flying Labs   Spatial Innovation   WeRobotics   GOJ

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Co-Organizers

