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The space economy in emerging space countries (3)

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THE NIGERIAN SPACE PROGRAMME AND ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Abstract

The Nigerian space programme is managed by the National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA). The space policy was approved in May, 2000. The mandate of the Agency as encapsulated in the policy is to vigorously pursue the attainment of space capabilities as an essential tool for the socio-economic development of the nation and the enhancement of the quality of life of Nigerians. For a space programme to be sustainable in emerging space-faring countries, there is need to develop and implement a space economic development model. This study examines the Nigerian space programme and its economic development model. Findings from this study indicate that the space economic model adopted in Nigeria is the public-private-partnership model that involves the short, medium and long term plans. Within the short term plan, the Government is responsible for all investments in space technology development. In the medium term, the Government partners with the private sector to fund the commercial aspects of the space programme. In the long term, the commercial arm of the space programme is completely privatized. Consequently, within the short period of the implementation of the space policy, two companies were established, namely: the Nigeria Communication Satellite (NigComSat) Limited and the GeoApps Plus Limited (previously called Nigeriasat Imageries and Consultancy Services Limited). NigComSat Limited was set up in April, 2006 to market products from the Nigerian communication satellites. Similarly, GeoApps Plus Limited was established in September, 2007 to market products from the Nigerian Earth observation satellites.