

24th SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE POLICY, REGULATIONS AND ECONOMICS (E3)
Assuring the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (4)

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SPACE SAFETY AND SUSTAINABILITY – THE YOUTH DEBATE

Abstract

Space Safety and Sustainability is crucial to future global space endeavors. The utilization of space-based science and technology has considerably improved everyday life and has to be preserved for the future. The space environment is a global commons and requires collaborative efforts from all space-faring nations to ensure the safety and sustainability of this environment. It is therefore essential that there is a wider awareness for an international culture of space safety and sustainability. Young space enthusiasts of today are the next generation of key policymakers; hence the need for youth involvement in fostering the 'long-term' sustainability of space activities is apparent. The importance of youth participation in ensuring the long-term sustainability of space was highlighted as a key recommendation of the "10 Steps to Achieve Fair and Responsible Use of Outer Space" developed at the IAA/ESPI/SWF conference in Vienna in 2008. The authors specifically recommended that the perceptions and ideas of the next space generation should be taken in to account when developing space sustainability policies. Comprising of a team of students and young professionals from both advanced and emerging space nations, the Space Safety and Sustainability (SSS) Working Group of the Space Generation Advisory Council allows for an international forum to showcase the youth's perspective on issues relating to the safety of space operations and the sustainability of space for continued use by future generations. This will be achieved through reports, presentations, competitions, publications and outreach projects. The SSS Working Group's objectives are threefold; to identify key issues and areas of space safety and sustainability relating to current and proposed space applications, to examine the safety and long-term sustainability of outer space activities in all aspects, and to propose measures to ensure the safe and sustainable use of outer space for the benefit of all countries. Its current focus areas include; dissemination of space debris mitigation guidelines and removal techniques, potential international cooperation and data sharing models for space situational awareness, space systems safety design, and spacecraft risk assessment. The SSS Working Group hopes to foster the highest possible degree of uniformity in regulations, standards, and procedures regarding space safety and sustainability. The Group will present some of its activities and share its outputs to date with space agencies, international space organizations, and the growing space community.