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National and international space policies and programmes for socio-economic development (1)

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SPACE FOR DEVELOPMENT: A POLICY PERSPECTIVE

Abstract

Developed countries are increasingly relying on their technology advancement and financial means in order to pursue their socio-economic development and ensure their security using space applications (e.g. in defence, human and environment security).

In developing countries, space-based services could provide the same benefits and support global development policies such as the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. They could have a tangible impact for improving the living conditions of the poorest, giving for instance access to better health care, education and ensuring food security. The availability of space-based data and/or technology could also enable economic growth through the development of efficient communication and transport networks, of a service industry and a better use of natural resources. Moreover, space has proved to be a crucial tool for disaster and crisis management and for delivering humanitarian aid.

The full potential of space for the benefit of developing countries, however, is still hindered by different factors. These include the fragmentation and an insufficient level of cooperation efforts at international and regional levels, difficult access to funding, lack of infrastructure, expertise and education.

The paper will analyse these issues from a policy perspective at various levels (international, regional and national). The role, efficiency and gaps of existing international and national initiatives will be analysed. The paper will eventually try to formulate policy recommendations and propose concrete elements for a way forward at policy level for national, regional and international authorities and organizations.

NOTE: The views expressed are purely those of the writers and cannot in any circumstances be regarded as stating an official position of the European Commission.