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EARTH OBSERVATION SYMPOSIUM (B1)  
Earth Observation Applications and Economic Benefits (5)

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EARTH OBSERVATION COMMODITIZATION AND GROWTH

**Abstract**

IAC Abstract (B1.5. Earth Observation Applications and Economic Benefits) Nearly 56 years ago on August 7, 1959, the Americans launched the Explorer 6 satellite, which took and transmitted the first space-based images of the Earth. The images showed the Earth's cloud cover, giving rise to an industry that remains a vital part of the global space economy: Earth observation (EO). Even now, the global EO market is growing steadily, with a total of 360 EO satellites expected to launch over the next decade and revenues predicted to reach *6 billion in 2022. While the largest revenues are currently generated by the defense and intelligence*

The customer base for commercially operated EO satellites is becoming more saturated, driving the industry toward imagery standards that facilitate commoditization. Decreasing data costs and freely available low-resolution imagery pressure satellite imagery providers to differentiate themselves. They do this by providing more nuanced imagery, increased temporal resolution capability, and more sophisticated image processing. As the EO market continues to mature, the bulk of the demand is expected to shift from data sales to information products that combine imaging collection with analytics.

The Space Foundation seeks to present the evolution of EO imagery products and services and provide evidence of EO product and service proliferation. The Space Foundation will focus on the economic perspective resulting from such changes and attempt to offer informed speculation about future outcomes.