

27th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE AND SOCIETY (E5)  
Space Assets and Disaster Management (4)

Author: Mr. Nathan Clark  
University of Copenhagen, Denmark, nathan.clark@jur.ku.dk

LICENSING THE EXTRAORDINARY: TOWARDS A STANDARD LICENSING SCHEME FOR THE  
OPEN ACCESS AND USE OF SATELLITE EARTH OBSERVATION DATA FOR DISASTER  
RECOVERY**Abstract**

The use of satellite earth observation (EO) data for international disaster recovery activities has increased rapidly over the past few decades. However, the access, distribution, and use of these data often involve voluntary contributions from numerous data providers with complex licensing schemes that constrain end users from realizing the full benefits of the data they receive. Permitted uses, intellectual property rights, and various other conditions make it difficult for users to openly exploit and share data in the aftermath of a major event. Moreover, the interoperability among datasets is stifled by a general lack of coherency and standardization among the individual licenses. The continued open access and sharing of EO data is of immense value to states affected by disasters, particularly those with limited technical capabilities. This paper, explores the complexities of creating a common licensing scheme for the access and use of EO data in disaster recovery efforts. First, the paper provides an overview of relevant national and regional data policy trends and licensing schemes, and introduces ongoing initiatives working to promote the benefits of open data sharing within the disaster management sector. Secondly, the paper builds from an ongoing comparative analysis of the scientific and commercial use licenses from a number of public and private data providers contributing to the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) Recovery Observatory (RO) pilot project. The preliminary results from the RO licensing analysis include conflicting conditions and similarities among licenses that must be addressed in order to facilitate easier long-term access and use of EO data within the project. Finally, these results are applied to support a discussion which offers recommendations for the alignment of data policies, licenses, and interests among data providers contributing to international disaster recovery efforts.