

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

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NEW PARADIGMS FOR COMMERCIAL BENEFITS FROM INDIA'S EO ACTIVITIES

Abstract

India's public funded earth observation program over the decades had evolved into a multi dimensional programme aiming to fulfil widely diverse application objectives. Remote Sensing Data Policy was first adopted by the Government of India in the year 2000 and subsequently revised in 2011. These policies placed strong emphasis on government funding of space infrastructure and also several downstream development activities relating to applications. In recent decade, however commercial earth observation systems made rapid strides in providing access to high quality data as well as information to users all over the globe. Through active role of private sector, several 'New Space' initiatives have also been undertaken in different parts of the globe. In view of some unique opportunities arising in Indian market due to the transforming economic, demographic and social structure, the opportunities and challenges for commercial space had been studied. In the context of growing middle income markets, Indian private sector had also been showing increasing interest to invest into global initiatives and also explore new segments of value chain in Indian market. This has already begin to happen in the field of satellite communications and it would also extend into other areas such as earth observations and applications, which are now driven by national initiatives such as Digital India announced by the Indian Prime Minister recently and a national GIS system. The major drivers that would create burgeoning demands for space based products and services are the decision support needs arising from diverse requirements of large scale infrastructure developments and trends such as urban shift of the population, land use change, huge needs of ICT based services addressing the demands of education, health, mobility and environment sectors, robust demands for disaster warning and mitigation, national security, and natural resources management. An attempt has been made to analyse different policy paradigms. The paper will also discuss the perspectives of private industry in India on policy issues, their perceptions of market opportunities in such a rapidly transforming environment and presents a portfolio of models to derive greater economic benefits. Since government policies had invariably played a major role in triggering investment and participation by private sector in this field, an avant-garde policy and regulatory changes to attract greater private sector participation are presented in conclusion.