

59th IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
8th Nandasiri Jasentuliyana Keynote Lecture on Space Law and Young Scholars Session (1)

Author: Ms. Dimitra Stefoudi
Leiden University, The Netherlands, dstefoudi@gmail.com

BIG DATA FROM SPACE - LEGAL ISSUES RELATED TO ACCESS AND DISSEMINATION OF
LARGE VOLUMES OF SPACE-GENERATED DATA

Abstract

The term “big data” refers to large amounts of data, generated in great velocity and variety and processed to match the needs of different types of users. In the space field, big data is translated to large sources of information acquired using Earth and Space observation technologies.

Data collected from remote sensing activities are used for several purposes, varying from military and civil services, to commercial uses. The EU Copernicus Earth monitoring system, as well as other similar private projects are aiming at connecting the world through accurate, near real-time data. Scientists, policy makers, governmental entities, industry and the general public are increasingly gaining access to the multiple applications of space data. New technologies have accordingly created commercial potentials for users who view big data as a competitive advantage and a value-generating asset.

This growing demand was not foreseen thirty years ago, when the UN Remote Sensing Principles of 1986 were drafted. The legal regime related to Earth observation should be reconsidered, in the light of the needs of this emerging domain.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the legal challenges related to access and dissemination of big data from space, taking into account international space law, as well as data protection and privacy regulations.