

EARTH OBSERVATION SYMPOSIUM (B1)
International Cooperation in Earth Observation Missions (1)

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COOPERATION IN EARTH OBSERVATION MISSIONS IN AFRICA: A ROLE FOR AFRIGE OSS

Abstract

At the beginning of space age, images of planet Earth were only seen either as mere beautiful and fascinating icons or things that could support military operations. Today, the story has changed; these images are now powerful scientific tools that enable man to better understand, manage and protect the Earth, its environment and resources. Earth observation information provides substantial benefit supporting economic development and support informed policy and decision making of all countries of the world - developing or developed. It is used for agriculture, forestry, risk management, disaster monitoring, maritime, defence and security and natural resources management. The numerous benefits from these space assets have driven countries within the continent of Africa to either acquire or develop capability in space systems devoted to improving the quality of life in these countries. While space systems are expensive, there is need for continuity and sustainability. This paper focuses on the role AfriGEOSS is meant to play in Earth Observation (EO) mission cooperation on the continent of Africa. It discusses the importance of earth observation programs for developing countries, and the benefits of international cooperative efforts. It discusses briefly some collaborative projects on Earth Observation in Africa and their associated problems. It then situates AfriGEOSS in the context of African Space Agenda (ASA) and ends with recommendations especially to the Africa Union Commission for the realization of ASA set goals.