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Space economy – Stimulating measurable economic activities through space policies and budgets (3)

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STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF A SPACE INDUSTRY, A DEVELOPING COUNTRY
CONTEXT, THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Abstract

It can be argued that that, apart from technical competence, heritage, entrepreneurship, market access and capital, a successful and internationally competitive space industry is often a function of targeted Government policy and decision making, underpinned by national space programmes and an industrial development framework.

The rationale for national space programs to motivate the development of science and technology capacity in many countries is well understood, however a challenge that remains relates to the emergence of the space industry, considered to be a high value economy in a developing country context. A specific question considered is that of finding the right balance between doing too little from a policy and national incentive perspective, and/or intervening too much.

The paper explores various factors towards a sustainable space industry using South Africa as a case study. The research considers this from the context of a modern understanding of industrial policy with focus in particular on the role of the private-sector.