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NARROWING THE GAP OF LEGAL NORMS FOR COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE FROM SPACE APPLICATIONS

Abstract

Space technology can benefit humanity in various areas, including analyzing and mitigating climate change. At present, the legal norms for space-climate cross-cutting issues remain rudimentary and mainly focus on promoting the application of space technology to tackle climate change, particularly through earth observation satellites. However, in response to potential legal risks and specific issues, proper policies and regulations need to be put into place. This paper thereby outlines the benefits and impacts of space for climate, reviews the status quo of space-climate nexus norms and agendas by looking at the current legal regime including the space treaties and soft laws, various national space policies and strategies, and draws a landscape of formulating space-climate legal norms, ranging from nature, form, structure to data management by states and non-state actors. Most importantly, this paper demonstrates that to effectively address legal issues, states must work ahead and toward the development of legal norms in response to the challenges posed by space applications for climate change.