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DOMESTIC SPACE GOVERNANCE: SPOTLIGHT ON EMERGING SPACE ECOSYSTEMS IN
SOUTH AMERICA

Abstract

Limited connectedness among government entities, industry, academia, and civil society is a recurring feature in emerging space ecosystems. It can be a symptom of both extremes –narrowly defined or loosely structured institutional frameworks, where key stakeholders are not represented or have limited ability to impact decision making. The consequences of this often-unintended fragmentation can range from lack of efficient use of resources, and duplication of effort, to persisting challenges in sustaining political support for space investments and initiatives.

This paper will examine the implications of this dynamic on space governance – defined broadly as the complex set of policies, laws, regulations and institutional approaches to manage the use of space – with a focus on its potential impacts on effective implementation of state goals and policy priorities. While the linkage between international governance and space sustainability has been well established, less attention has been paid to the national piece of the puzzle. By focusing on the experiences of two countries in South America, Chile and Brazil, this paper seeks to illustrate how efforts to advance policy objectives, such as promoting space sustainability, must also emphasize the importance of robust national governance frameworks and ecosystem development to enable alignment of commitments made at the international level. The analysis will illustrate how addressing gaps in the national governance framework may help improve the ability of national governments to execute stated goals and will argue that this topic should feature more prominently in multilateral coordination efforts so countries can share lessons learned from their experiences in addressing similar challenges, both across the region of South America and beyond.