Paper ID: 96617
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IAF SPACE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS SYMPOSIUM (D2)
Interactive Presentations - IAF SPACE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS SYMPOSIUM (IP)

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ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE SPACE TRANSPORTATION: GREEN PROPULSION, REUSABLE INFRASTRUCTURE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Abstract

As space travel and commercialization expand, the demand for sustainable space transportation solutions is growing. Traditional launch methods contribute to environmental pollution, atmospheric contamination, and resource depletion, necessitating the development of cleaner and more efficient alternatives. To ensure long-term access to space while minimizing harm to Earth's environment and orbital ecosystems, innovative solutions must be implemented. This paper explores strategies to optimize operational efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of space transportation while maintaining security and cost-effectiveness.

The research aims to assess both current and future space transportation infrastructure from a sustainability perspective. It focuses on identifying green propulsion technologies, reusable launch systems, and in-space logistics that enhance environmental responsibility while ensuring mission success. Additionally, this study evaluates the broader impact of launch activities on the Earth's atmosphere, orbital debris conditions, and overall space environment. It highlights the importance of international regulatory frameworks and cooperative policies to ensure sustainable development in the space sector.

A combination of case studies, literature review, and technological analysis is employed in this research. The study examines existing space missions, reusable launch vehicle designs, and eco-friendly propellants to determine their efficiency, viability, and long-term sustainability. Comparisons between conventional and emerging transportation methods help identify the most effective solutions for achieving cleaner and more responsible space travel. Insights from both industry and academic research provide a comprehensive evaluation of fuel efficiency and space debris mitigation strategies.

The research delves into key technological advancements, including methane-based propulsion, hybrid rocket engines, and green propellants, to assess their environmental implications. Developments in reusable launch vehicles, in-orbit refueling, and sustainable space infrastructure are analyzed for their economic feasibility and resource efficiency. Additionally, debris mitigation techniques, such as controlled deorbiting, active removal systems, and end-of-life spacecraft disposal strategies, are explored to promote a cleaner and safer orbital environment.

Interagency collaboration among space organizations, private industries, and policymakers is essential for establishing regulations that ensure the responsible use of space. Sustainable space travel is not just a technological challenge but a global responsibility. By integrating innovative solutions, the environmental footprint of space missions can be minimized while maintaining efficiency, reliability, and security.

This study provides an in-depth exploration of the latest cutting-edge technologies and strategies shaping the future of sustainable space transportation. Through continued research, international cooperation, and policy development, the space industry can achieve a balance between technological progress and environmental stewardship, ensuring responsible space exploration for future generations.