

Statement by Jan Wörner, Director General of the European Space Agency

ESA is pleased to present an initiative based on long-time experience and results already achieved in many of our programmes. In fact, since years, ESA programmes and activities are pushing the frontiers of knowledge and developing or supporting the development of services, applications or technologies for the benefit of all, European and non-European, in space and on Earth.

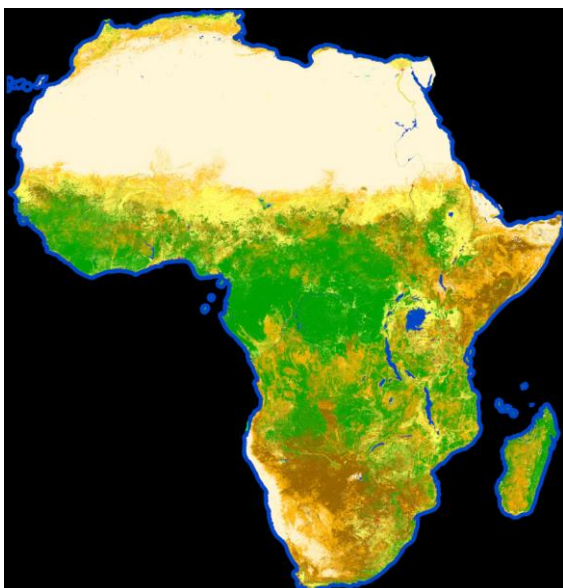
This year, 2018, will see the anniversary of the first UN Space Conference that took place in 1968, UNISPACE+50 that will endorse a political resolution entitled « Space as a driver of sustainable development ». ESA is a strong supporter of UNISPACE+50 and will continue to provide support to the UN space community and to the Office of outer space affairs, UNOOSA, in particular on the main challenges regarding implementations of the recommendations of UNISPACE+50.

Among the 4 resolutions adopted during the ESA Council at Ministerial level on 1st December 2016, the first resolution entitled "Towards Space 4.0 for a United Space in Europe" has several sections related to UNISPACE+50. Member states recognized that space serves *"societal needs, responds to European and global challenges and offers opportunities, notably those related to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals, ... mitigation of risks, ... climate change..."*, etc.

Space, and thus space agencies such as ESA, have a strong role to play in the implementation of the three global agenda's:

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- Paris Agreement on Climate Change
- Sendai Framework on the reduction of risks related to disasters

All three are strongly related to sustainability and development, as well as environmental sustainability in particular.



Over the last years, ESA has identified many specific activities that support the UN Sustainable Development Goals for various geographical areas including Africa and is developing a coordinated approach across Directorates towards the main actors of development. Space projects, applications, technologies and services are of benefit to all countries, organisations or citizens in the world. A recent initiative highlighting these benefits has been the development by ESA of the catalogue of ESA activities supporting the UN SDGs (on-line version available mid-March 2018). Global by nature, this catalogue shows that Africa, is already benefiting from ESA missions, data and services and that these benefits could be further enhanced.

Changes in land – Sentinel 2-A



ESA is committed to continue supporting Africa and in particular Kenya in the setting up of their National Space Agency, KSA, as well as the recent initiatives of Italy, one of our Member States, with the creation of an Earth observation Centre and of an International Centre for Space Education in Africa at the Broglio Space Centre in Malindi.

ESA is also committed to continue carrying out a multitude of activities through its programmes in support of Sustainable Development in Africa ranging from Research and Development projects and capacity building and education actions to EO data dissemination and exploitation.

With the adoption of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015, goals to be reached by all countries by 2030, the nations of the world have decided on ambitious goals for their people, prosperity, the planet, peace and partnerships. And "space" as a tool can support the measurement of and the improvement of each of these goals, already today with actual programmes, and much more tomorrow with all the programmes that are being prepared by ESA.

Worth to be noted that all domains contribute one way or another to one or more of these goals, from Earth observation, telecommunications, positioning, technology or Human spaceflight to operations. We do not pretend space can solve all challenges on Earth and be "the" answer to development, but we are convinced and know that space can be a very valuable contributor.

In parallel we will identify the existing partnerships supporting Africa and the potential partners that



could be approached by ESA or its Member States and that could benefit from space technologies, applications or services. Analysis will be also performed of the quantitative and qualitative benefits deriving from using space assets or technologies in order to help decision-making. This is rather complex given the very large variety of activities concerned and the difficulty to separate the effect of using space from potential other effects. But we believe it would be useful.

Water treatment unit in Morocco

Communication on this initiative and in particular the development of the catalogue will improve knowledge and understanding of how space supports measurement of and reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, making best use of the investments made by our Member States, and for the benefits of all countries and their citizens. Proposing a specific action towards Africa will help us all support a sustainable development of the continent, our closest neighbour.

We are ready to work with our Member States and all actors that pursue the same goals, to coordinate our actions for better efficiency and make sure investments made in space will benefit a maximum of people on Earth.

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