

## **GMES/COPERNICUS Budget: there is a threshold...**

*...under which Europe will deprive itself of an indispensable tool to tackle global challenges and to stimulate “green growth”*

The European programme GMES/Copernicus will provide tools to monitor the Earth while at the same time contributing to sustainable growth and the creation of jobs. Synergies between ecological and economic objectives constitute the basis of the programme.

The first objective of the *Copernicus* programme is to provide public authorities with an innovative instrument for decision making and for measuring effects of policies. Not only decision makers at European level, but also local, regional and national authorities will find in Copernicus a unique system for evidence based policymaking.

According to the services of the European Commission itself, *Copernicus* is poised to generate benefits of up to €70bn over the period 2014-2030. A wide range of applications are already ready to become operational, including healthier cities through improved urban planning and the prediction of air pollution, saving lives by better management responding to natural catastrophes and the monitoring of climate change impacts and more secure energy through new methods for renewable energy siting.

Many economic benefits and a large potential for growth and job creation are forecast in the service industry sector. Within an appropriate exploitation and regulatory framework, *Copernicus* will unleash its full economic and social potential through the release of an unprecedented amount of data to a variety of communities, including private companies, which can create value added products and sell them, generating new markets or enlarging existing ones.

In a survey undertaken by the Commission, the benefits of the *Copernicus* programme are estimated to be four to ten times bigger than the amounts invested. Regarding the potential for job creation, it has been calculated (taking into account the direct and indirect impacts of the programme on all affected sectors from space manufacturing over data production to value-added businesses) that *Copernicus* is likely to create 20,000 direct and up to 63,000 indirect jobs during the period 2015-2030.

To reap these economic benefits, Europe does not only need the right infrastructure but also private entrepreneurs in the downstream sector, with the necessary training and know-how. But who will invest in professional training or in innovative services if data availability and quality is not guaranteed?

**This is why we welcome and support the European Council and the European Parliament which consider that *Copernicus* is to be financed by the EU’s central budget, the MFF.**

In times of economic crisis, reductions of the initially foreseen budget (€5.8bn) are probably inevitable, but **it is critical that the reductions shall not jeopardize *Copernicus* successful deployment and the implementation of its six main thematic services.** Authoritative sources in agencies and industry estimate that the level of funding necessary to avoid gaps in the services is around €4,5Bn, over the period 2014-2020 – and that the cut and any further delay to allocating this budget will already have a tangible impact on *Copernicus*, such as a rescheduling of its initial deployment.

Industry is ready to play its role and to contribute to the success of *Copernicus* once the uncertainty over its future is removed.

More information can be obtained by contacting:

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- EARSC, the trade association representing the European EO Geo-information Services industry - [secretariat@earsc.org](mailto:secretariat@earsc.org)
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