



Communiqué
6th Space Troika Meeting
20 April 2015, Brussels

Introduction

The 6th EU-Africa Space Troika meeting was held on 20 April 2015 in Brussels. The EU-Africa Space Troika meeting is a forum that was set up in 2011 by the "College-to-College" meeting bringing together representatives of the African Union Commission Departments and European Commission Directorates involved in space matters so as to advance cooperation in space and monitor the implementation of agreed projects. The Troika is also aimed at enabling Africa to exploit its space resources and to coordinate synergies amongst space initiatives in the continent so that space systematically contributes to Africa's sustainable development efforts. The 6th EU-Africa Space Troika was specifically dedicated to Earth Observation matters, and particularly to the implementation of the GMES & Africa programme.

Conclusions

The 6th EU-Africa Space Troika meeting:

1. **REAFFIRMS** that the Space Troika serves as an indispensable political interface which steers space cooperation between EU and Africa, and **AGREES** to continue engaging under the Space Troika with a possibility to broadening it as platform under the Africa-EU cooperation on Space matters;
2. **APPLAUDS** the two Commissions, Member States and other stakeholders on the progress made in GMES & Africa process, and **ENDORSES** the intermediate results of the identification study that identify services/applications to be developed under the first three agreed thematic areas namely (a) Long-Term Management of Natural Resources, (b) Marine and Coastal Areas, (c) Water Resources Management and propose an outlined implementation process that builds upon the previous programmes such as MESA;
3. **COMMENDS** the road map proposal for the GMES & Africa implementation, including the necessary stakeholders' consultation process which should allow a better engagement of the African institutions in the initiative;
4. **RECALLS** that GMES & Africa, as emphasised in the Maputo Declaration and as confirmed in the Lisbon process, will draw on the COPERNICUS concept for its implementation and **WELCOMES** the efforts made by EUMETSAT and ESA to facilitate the access to COPERNICUS data and products in support to GMES & Africa;
5. **TAKES NOTE** of the recommendations of the 9th GMES & Africa Coordination Team meeting held on 15 -16 December 2014 in Tunisia, that include the drafting of Terms of

Reference for the Coordination Team and call for further engagement to finalise the remaining thematic chapters of GMES & Africa Action Plan following the priorities defined;

6. **COMMENDS** the progress made in MESA and **RECOGNISES** its relevance towards the successful implementation of GMES & Africa. **RECOMMENDS** that there should be clarity about the services that should be continued, discontinued or extended in the GMES & Africa;
7. **TAKES NOTE** of the progress made by the AUC towards the establishment of the Pan-African Institute for Space Sciences in South Africa; and development of the African Space Policy and Strategy with a view to establishing an African civilian outer-space programme under AU Agenda 2063 that supports policies and development of local capacities, institutional, human and technical competencies in Earth Observation, Satellite Communication, Navigation and Positioning, Space Science and Astronomy;
8. **INVITES** the AUC to continue efforts on space institutional and governance arrangements in the African Union Commission as stable and sustainable structures and **FURTHER WELCOMES** its efforts to mobilise all relevant Directorates in the African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities to ensure harmonisation and coordination of space initiatives;

AND HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. To adopt the GMES and Africa Road Map¹ and to convene a stakeholders' workshop to launch the implementation process for the (a) Long-Term Management of Natural Resources, (b) Marine and Coastal Areas, (c) Water Resources Management thematic areas under the Pan African Programme;
2. To put in place an appropriate GMES & Africa governance structure confirming the need to support the leading role of AUC and reinforcing its capacities while recognising the importance of the involvement of the Regional Economic Communities;
3. To call upon the application of approaches developed in COPERNICUS for the implementation of GMES & Africa, notably by adopting a free and open data policy, by focusing on operational services and by involving the private sector in the services development;
4. To consider that a selection of Regional Implementation Centres should be carried out on the basis of pre-defined objective criteria but also building on existing capacities;
5. To prioritise the applications/services at regional level as recommended in the intermediate results of the identification study, by considering the available budget, the regional priorities and by focusing on operational applications. The prioritisation should be accompanied by a mechanism ensuring a thematic coherence at continental level while supporting specific regional services answering national and regional needs;
6. To continue the exercise regarding the definition of the most appropriate technical solution for COPERNICUS data and product access to and in Africa, to improve the identification of

¹ See Annex

the COPERNICUS data and products required by GMES & Africa and to prepare the necessary collaboration agreement and acts for access to and sharing of satellite data and products while paying attention on building African capacity;

7. To reiterate our commitment to deploy all our efforts to finalize the remaining six chapters of GMES and Africa so as to realize the full evolution of the programme in order for Africa to develop local capacities (institutional, human and technical) for the access and exploitation of Earth Observation-based services for its sustainable development.

Annex: GMES & Africa ROAD MAP

- April 20th, 2015: Agreement at the Space Troika on the Guidelines as a basis for the formulation of the GMES & Africa programme
- Week of the 20th April 2015: Exchange of comments between AUC and EC on the draft formulation report
- Week of the 27th April 2015: Presentation of the relevant elements of the draft formulation report to the MESA stakeholders in a session on GMES & Africa during the MESA Project Steering Committee in Mauritius
- Week of the 7th May 2015 to 26th May 2015: Consolidation of the formulation report by the expert team to be presented for approval by the Commission
- Week of the 26th May 2015: Agreement by the EC and AU COMs on the governance and modalities of the GMES & Africa implementation
- Week of the 26th May 2015: Quality Support Group meeting on EC side
- Week of the 31st August 2015: Presentation of GMES & Africa program to the stakeholders (GMES & Africa Coordination Team members, RICs and AU Member States) for endorsement in a workshop in the margin of the MESA Forum
- September 2015: Endorsement by EU Member States
- October 2015: Adoption of the Financing decision and presentation to African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Education, Sciences and Technology
- First semester of 2016: Negotiation of the contract and in parallel, identification of the Grant beneficiaries and launch of service contract for technical assistance
- Second semester of 2016: Launch of the activities and transition phase with MESA project