

Side event organized by the African Centre for Statistics and Digital Earth Africa

Digital Earth Africa: Earth observations for sustainability in Africa

Background

The concept of “Digital Earth” was put forward in 1998 by the then Vice-President of the United States of America, Al Gore. Since then, Digital Earth has evolved to embrace the development and adoption of technologies such as Earth observation, geoinformation systems, global positioning systems, geospatial science and technology and space sciences.

The goal of Digital Earth Africa is to deliver an exceptional fit-for-purpose platform that can translate over 50 years of Earth observation satellite imagery into information and insights on the changing African landscape and coastline, which will open new data frontiers for tracking progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Digital Earth Africa catalogues changes across Africa in unprecedented detail and provides spatially enabled data on a vast number of issues, including soil and coastal erosion, agriculture, forest and desert development, water quality and changes to human settlements.

Objective

The main objectives of the side event are to showcase the development of Digital Earth Africa as a unique information resource for sustainable development across Africa and to explain how Digital Earth Africa is being applied in areas such as national statistics, agriculture and water resources.

Expected outcomes

The side event will:

- Provide an opportunity for member States to learn new ways of building robust data infrastructure that can deliver a better understanding of the changing landscape and provide insights that will enable African Governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses and individuals to make better-informed decisions
- Demonstrate how more downstream applications can be developed, in particular at the national level, and how data and information products and services can be beneficial

Target audience

- Officials from the line ministries of development planning, science and technology
- National and regional planners
- Civil society and the private sector
- ECA substantive programme staff

For further information, please contact:

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