



**GMES  
AND AFRICA**

## 1<sup>st</sup> forum of the GMES & Africa

Theme:  
*Unlocking the potential for Earth Observation as a  
key driver of Africa's sustainable development*



## Draft Concept Note

Version 0.03

19<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018,  
Libreville, Gabon



## I. Introduction

The Global Monitoring for Environment and Security and Africa (GMES & Africa) Support Programme is the crystallization of the longstanding cooperation between Africa and Europe in space science & technology, which is one of the key priorities of the long-term EU-Africa Joint Strategy. In October 2006, the Maputo Declaration provided the necessity for the EU-Africa partnership to confirm the commitment to avail European infrastructure and facilities, under the Copernicus programme to Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries. This commitment led to the launch of GMES and Africa process, during the 2nd EU-Africa Summit in December 2007, in Lisbon, Portugal that initiated a long-term structured dialogue between Africa and Europe in the context of developing EO systems to manage the environment, understand and mitigate the effects of climate change and ensure civil security. Such EO systems would provide, on a real-time and near real time basis, information to policymakers, scientists, businesses and the public. The GMES and Africa process is aimed at promoting the development of local capacities, institutional, human and technical resources for access to and exploitation of EO-based services on an operational basis. This process ultimately resulted in the identification of the thematic chapters with an agreement on the drafting of the Action Plan.

A Cooperative agreement was signed by the European and African Union Commissions for the implementation of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security and Africa (GMES & Africa) Support Programme, in April 2014 during the 4th EU-Africa Summit. The GMES and Africa Support Programme is a 30 million Euro joint programme co-financed by the European Commission and the African Union Commission.

The Programme is designed to: specifically respond to African needs with respect to services related to water, natural resources, marine and coastal areas; to address the global needs to manage the environment, ensure civil security; and to enable the implementation of the African Space Policy and Strategy.

The GMES and Africa Support Programme aims to improve the capacities of African policy-makers, planners, scientists, businesses, the private sector and general public to design, implement and monitor national, regional and continental policies, and to promote sustainable management of natural resources through the use of Earth Observation data and derived information. The programme is built on the achievements of predecessor Earth Observation Programmes in Africa. These include the Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (MESA), African Management of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) and Preparation for the use of Meteosat Second Generation in Africa (PUMA). Unlike prior EO programmes in Africa, the GMES and Africa Support Programme introduced four key innovations:

- Northern Africa is one of the beneficiary regions in Africa and that makes the Programme a Pan African programme;
- The Programme uses the EU Copernicus Programme data and services and adapt them to the African context;
- The Programme's overall management is handled by the African Union Commission, through the Department of Human Resource, Science and Technology;
- The Programme is designed to engage the African private sector and national institutions and to improve regional and national academia's capacities to conduct relevant training.







## II. Overview of the 1<sup>st</sup> GMES & Africa Forum

The first forum of the GMES & Africa Support Programme is one of the communication platforms that encourages and promotes the exchange of views among Earth Observation service providers and end-users at the grass-roots level in Africa. The first forum will be co-organised by the African Union Commission and the Government of Gabon through the Agence Gabonaise d'Études et d'Observation Spatiale (AGEOS). It is scheduled to be held from 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018 in Libreville, Gabon.

The theme of the first GMES and Africa Forum is “Unlocking the potential of Earth Observation as a key driver of Africa’s sustainable development”. Satellites from space are collecting huge amounts of high resolution images in real and/or near real time basis with great potential to be utilized for different applications meeting day to day operations of people in various sectors.

Hence, the forum addresses how to unlock the potential of Earth Observation data and support the socio-economic transformation for the achievement of the Africa We Want, as articulated in the Agenda 2063. It also discusses what the GMES and Africa support Programme delivers to the user communities in Africa.

About 250 representatives of Earth Observation service and data providers, grassroots level users, decision makers, academia, the private sector, research institutions from Africa and all over the world are expected to attend the five-day event.



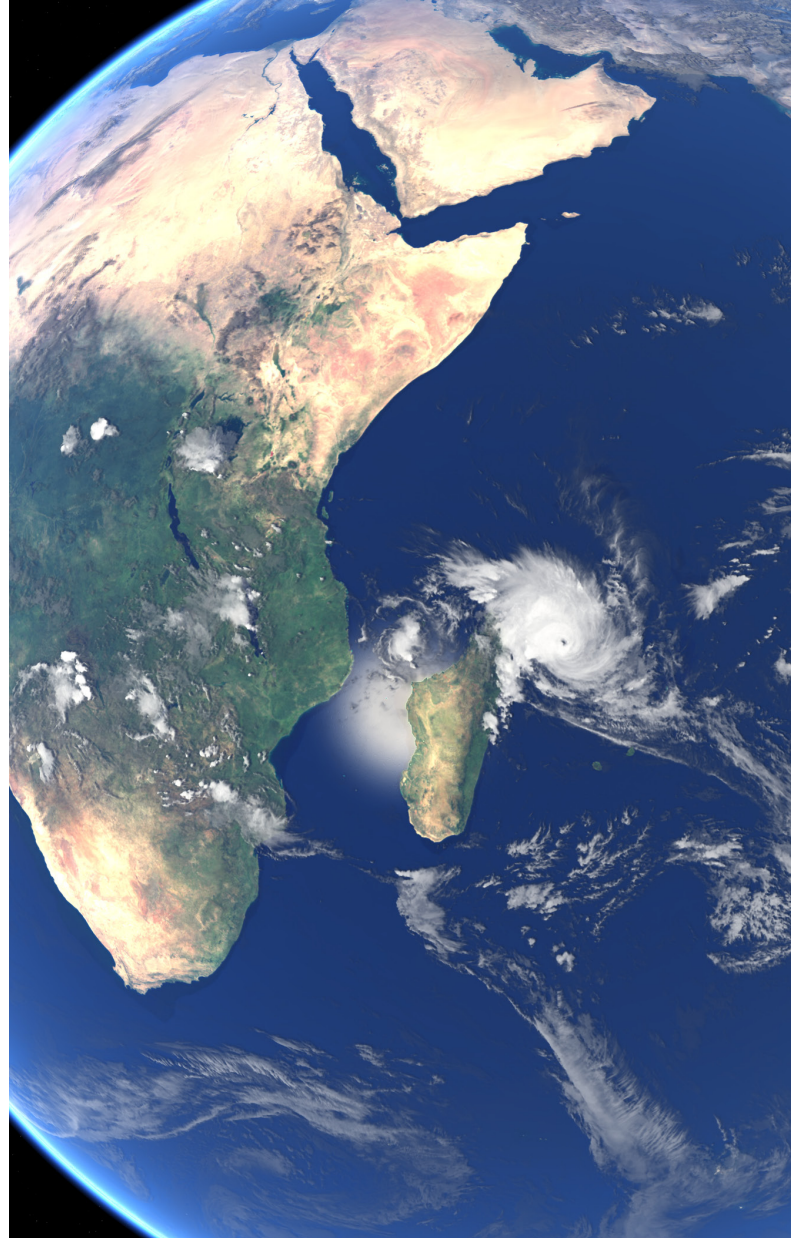


### III. Objectives of the 1<sup>st</sup> forum of the GMES & Africa

The primary objective of the forum is to :

- Strengthen communication and exchange between EO technical experts and various end-users in an attempt to increase technology user uptake;
- Present the status of the GMES and Africa and its implementation at continental, regional and national levels;
- Deliberate on the role of academia in mainstreaming Earth Observation applications in the university curriculum;
- Demonstrate new and innovative EO technologies to different end users for visibility enhancement;
- Provide an avenue for different partners, especially from academia and the private sector involved in the GMES and Africa Support programme to contribute towards the utilization of Earth observation for Africa's socio-economic development; and
- Build on success stories in EO, map out the potential partnerships, engage stakeholders for assuring strong and sustainable ownership, and linking with existing relevant initiatives.

Conclusions of the forum, action items and key recommendations will be endorsed at the end of the forum by the participants. The full report and proceedings of the forum will be produced and disseminated online to participants.



Tropical Cyclone Enawo

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### IV. Expected Results

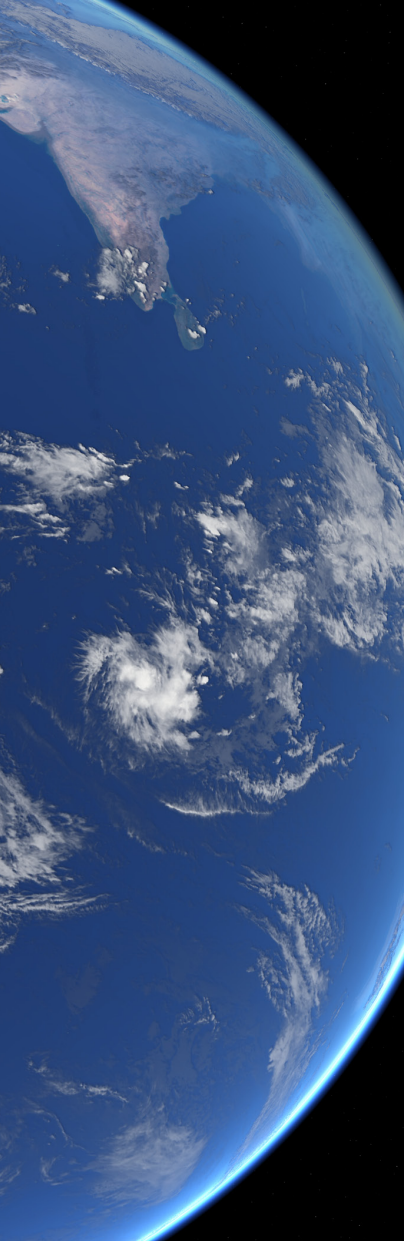
- Enhanced awareness and visibility regarding the GMES and Africa support Programme;
- Feedback on the implementation of GMES & Africa's capacity development strategy including the roles of academia and research centres in mainstreaming the use of Earth Observation in university curriculum and service development;
- Greater awareness on the benefits of Earth Observation through the GMES and Africa Programme among large community of users (i.e. data and services providers, policymakers, representatives of various socio-economic sectors, academia, private companies, humanitarian organizations, general public, and communities);
- The strengthening of communication channels between the GMES and Africa Support Programme and various actors;
- Refined user needs in terms of access to EO data and services on land, marine, and natural resource management applications.



Fishermen in Madagascar

© David Goughy/IRIN





## V. Forum Approach

The approach will constitute two phases. The first phase, the pre-forum, will be specifically designed for technical experts and will last for two consecutive days. The second phase will be open to all participants and user communities and will be held back-to-back with the technical session for three days.

The sessions of the forum will be crafted as per the four pillars of the GMES and Africa support programme; Infrastructure and Data; Service Delivery; Training and Capacity Building and Outreach and Communication. The forum uses parallel working sessions and plenary sessions.

A dedicated media room will be arranged for journalists and communication experts to cover the forum. Besides, two press conferences will be organized for the forum - one at the opening and one during the closing session.

There will be an exhibition area where GMES & Africa and its stakeholders, partners and users can demonstrate and exhibit their products and services. It will be a venue for free interaction among users and service providers. Additionally, a technical or cultural site visit will be organized to demonstrate practical applications of Earth Observation on the ground.



People washing ore at Kolwesi, Katanga, Southern Province of DRC



## VI. Overview of sessions

### A. Opening Session and round table discussions

During the opening session, keynote addresses will be delivered by high level delegates and EO experts, to be followed by statements from the European Commission, AUC and the Gabonese government. Immediately after the opening session, a digital exhibition will be staged, to be followed by a group photo taken and press conference. A high-level panel discussion will ensue.

### B. Overview of GMES & Africa Services

GMES & Africa's marine and land services will be presented. This will be followed by presentations of the proposals from the 13 consortia focusing on the products and services as well as on the involvement of end-users.

### C. Communication and awareness raising

The Communication and Engagement Strategy of the GMES and Africa will be presented to experts and communication networks on science and environment.

For visibility and outreach, GMES & Africa branded materials will be produced and disseminated to participants. Interviews with various media outlets, press conferences, and social media campaigns will be organized before and during the forum. An exhibition of results-based products and audio-visual features on GMES & Africa will be staged on the side-lines of the forum.

### D. Capacity development in GMES and Africa

An overview of the GMES and Africa training strategy will be presented. The roles of academia and research institutions in mainstreaming Earth Observation applications in the university curriculum and service development will also be highlighted.

### E: Access to data:

To access the full potential of EO data, Copernicus data and their marine and land services will be presented and discussed. The possible contributions of ESA, JRC, and EUMETSAT to the GMES and Africa Support Programme will also be discussed.

### F- Technical Visit

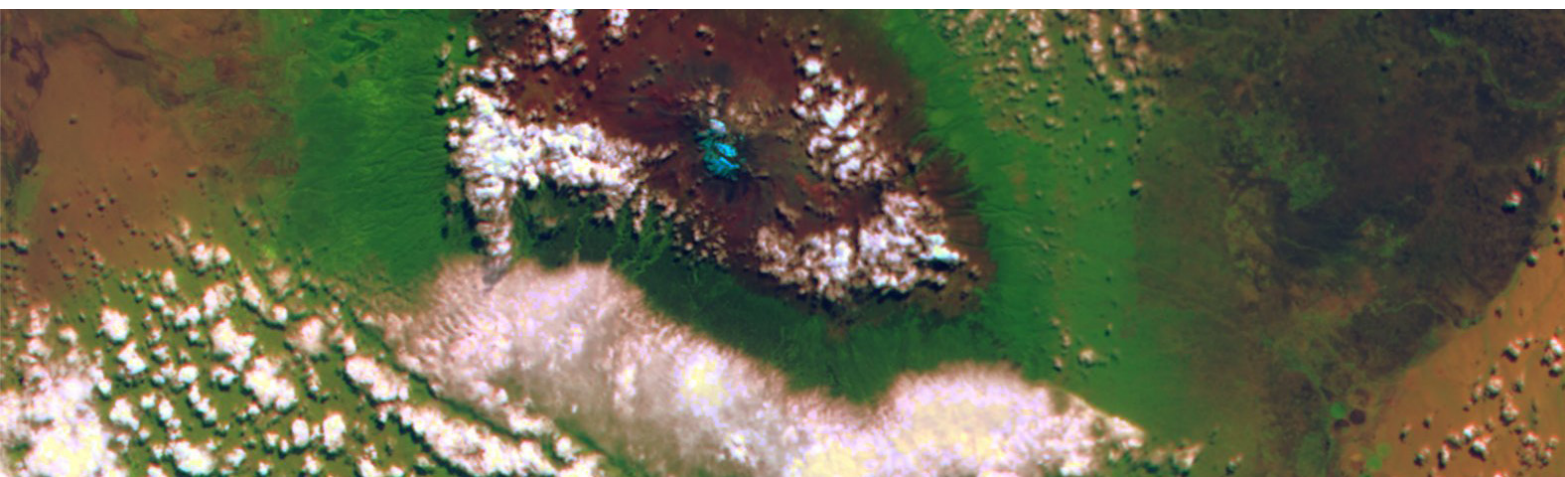
A technical visit will be made to selected areas in the host country where Earth Observation data is applied. The technical visit will be an opportunity to see the practical application of Earth Observation data for managing land or marine applications in Gabon.

### G. Adoption of Action items and Recommendations

During this session, recommendations from the 1st GMES and Africa Forum will be presented in the plenary and reviewed. Action items and recommendations will be part of the report on the Forum. Proceedings based on scientific presentations related to service delivery will be produced.

### H. Closing Session

Closing remarks will be delivered by the AUC, EU delegation and the host country. Press conference and media briefing will be held after the closing ceremony.



Mount Kilimanjaro from space



## VII. Forum Participants

Participants will come from the 55 Member States of the AU, Regional Economic Communities, the African Union Commission; the European Commission, regional and international institutions, Non-governmental organisations and the United Nations system. Participants will also come from among GMES & Africa European partners such as Copernicus services, EUMETSAT, the European Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Space Agency (ESA). Academia, private sector and GMES & Africa final beneficiaries such as policy and decision makers, farmers, fishermen, etc. will also take part in the Forum. All other interested entities or organisations will be welcome to participate.

## VIII. High-Level Participants

High level participants include, representatives of

- The African Union Commission
- The European Commission
- The Government of Gabon
- Regional Economic Communities
- International and intergovernmental organisations
- Space agencies and institutions

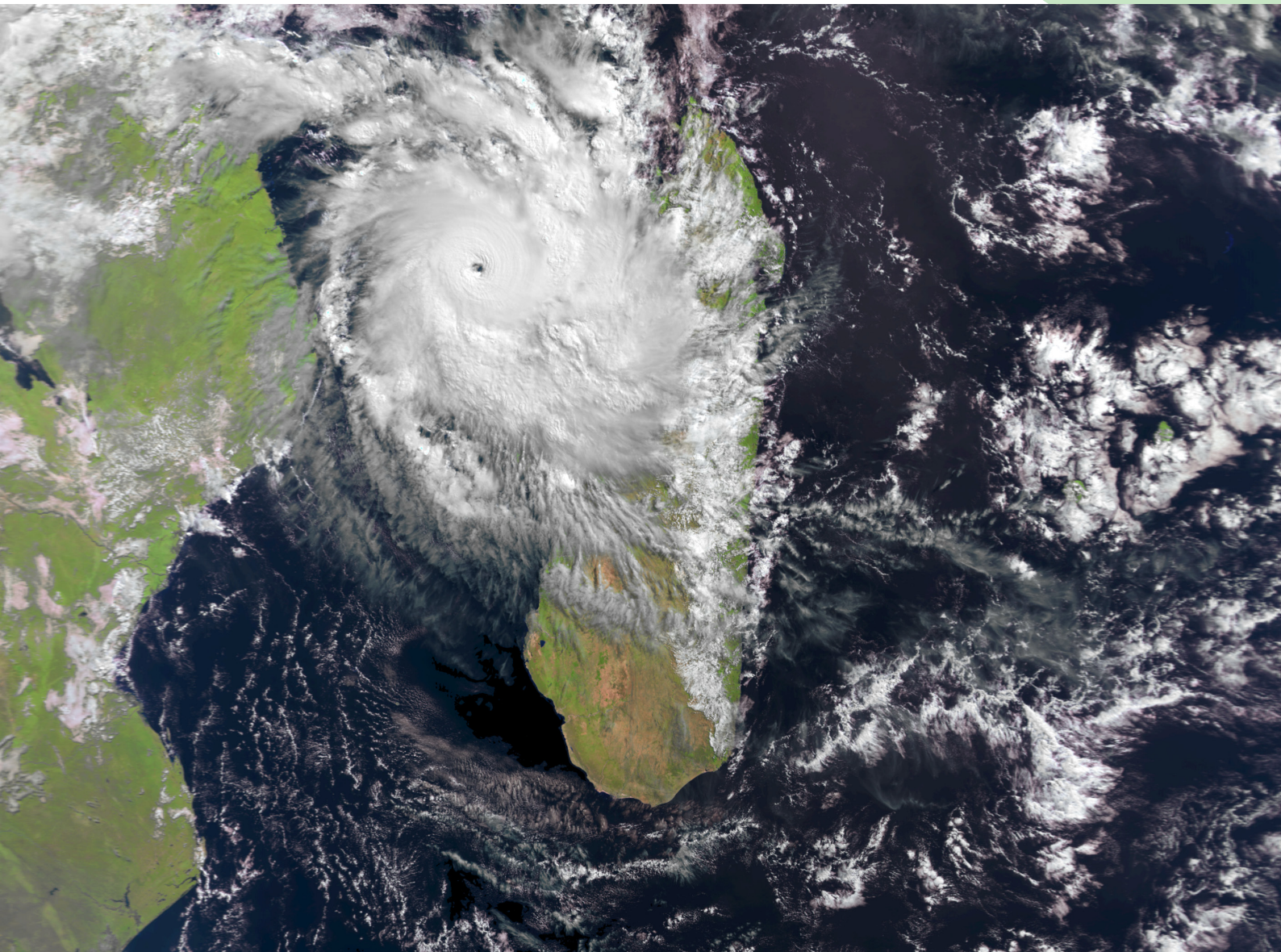


Ethiopia using satellite data

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## IX. Venue and dates of Forum, organisational structure

The Forum will be held in Libreville, Gabon, from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2018. The specific venue and the draft programme dates will be communicated in due course. The organisation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Forum of GMES & Africa will be led by an international organisation committee led by the African Union Commission and a local organisation committee led by the Agence Gabonaise d'Études et d'Observation Spatiale (AGEOS).



Tropical cyclone hellen

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