



Supporting farmers in Africa with European Earth Observation technology

Report from the AfriCultuReS Kick-off meeting, 22-24 Nov 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Better prediction and management of production and supply of food in Africa is the aim of the Horizon 2020 project AfriCultuReS that was launched last week in Addis Ababa in the presence of the Ethiopian Minister for Water Irrigation and Electricity, HE Dr Seleshi Bekele. The minister emphasised the importance of cooperating with the EU for achieving sustainable development goals, highlighting that with projects such as AfriCultuReS, this cooperation is entering a new phase.

According to Dr. Tidiane Ouattara, Head of GMES & AFRICA Programme Unit at the African Union, who also delivered a speech at the project kick-off meeting, this project can make a difference because it involves stakeholders and end-users of Earth Observation products right from the start.

These high level guests to the AfriCultuReS kick-off meeting demonstrate the commitment of African institutional stakeholders to a successful implementation of the AfriCultuReS project, that addresses pressing problems of the continent.

AfriCultuReS is the H2020 project that won a call (2017- SFS-43) on using Earth Observation assets for improving food security in Africa. The project has 17 partner, 7 of which are located in African countries (Tunisia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Rwanda, Mozambique, South Africa) and receives about 8.5 Mio € of funding from the EU. It is one of the cornerstones of the strategy of the European Commission to intensify the cooperation with African partners, contributing to the European Union –African Union partnership while promoting and supporting the activities of the Group on Earth Observation (GEO) and its flagships (e.g. GEOGLAM), regional initiatives, EuroGEOSS and AfriGEOSS.

The project brings together a large variety of data from different sources such as satellites, e.g. from the EU's Copernicus programme, ground based observations and models. It develops crop yield predictions and other services and decision support tools for policy makers. The project's strength is the strong African participation and the significant involvement of users in the development of services and tools that the project is delivering.

The project adheres to open data policies and will make also the tools developed in the project open source. This openness is crucial for tools dealing with food security as it ensures transparent decision-making on this important issue.

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