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57TH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (STSC)

SOUTH AFRICA

COMMENTS AGENDA ITEM 7

REMOTE SENSING

Madam Chair,

South Africa remains committed to investing resources and contributing to this agenda item, and as such is honoured to put to record progress made through the activities led and coordinated by the South African National Space Agency (SANSA), in partnership with our national government and local industry. These activities include the development of space systems in support of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2, 9, 11, 14 and 15.

Madam Chair,

South Africa, through SANSA, is part the AfriCultuReS project consortium comprising 8 (eight) African partners and 7 (seven) European partners working on the development of a geospatial decision support system for monitoring agriculture and food security in Africa. Furthermore, SANSA is part of the Wetlands Monitoring and Assessment (WeMAST) project under the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) and Africa Support Programme that is developing a geospatial decision support system for wetland assessment and monitoring in Southern Africa. SANSA also responds to the GEO Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets as a contribution for the obtainment of sustainable cities and communities.

Madam Chair,

In South Africa, SANSA and the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO) have collaborated to develop a data access platform, Digital Earth South Africa; for use by to various users for applications such as agriculture, water resource management, forest management, human settlements and infrastructure monitoring.

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The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and SANSA support an important national government programme Operation Phakisa geared at responding promptly to critical government projects, such as coastal management services. The entities are developing an oceans and coastal management information system and will provide SAR data to support the programme. South Africa has developed national base layer datasets i.e. water, human settlements, and vegetation. These datasets support the South African national departments of water affairs, human settlements, and agriculture and forestry in achieving their goals.

In closing, South Africa is excited to inform delegates that SANSA won the 2019 GEO SDG award for the contribution made in the thematic category: Use of EO data for Land Consumption. In collaboration with the National Statistics Office, the Ministry of Human Settlements, and UN-Habitat the team produced earth observation data on land consumption for South African cities while also identifying directly linked local needs. The project proved that multi-stakeholder engagement, which also highlights how country experiences can help better integrate local needs into the global SDG processes and shape production of more relevant methodologies and datasets.

Thank you.