

Press Release

Francophone African academia join forces to support the implementation of GMES and Africa



Abidjan, 31 May 2019: Francophone African academic institutions, officials from the African Union Commission (AUC) and three GMES and Africa lead consortia, have been discussing ways to support the implementation of the training strategy of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security and Africa (GMES and Africa). The discussions were held at a workshop organized by the AUC in collaboration with the Universitaire de Recherche et d'Application en Télédétection (CURAT) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

GMES and Africa programme is an African Union flagship programme co-financed by the European Union. The Programme is addressing the growing needs of African countries to access and use Earth Observation data for the implementation of sustainable development policies, management of the environment and natural resources, as well as monitoring of humanitarian operations in Africa.

Participants in the workshop discussed the GMES and Africa's training strategy; training catalogue and engagement strategy. The involvement of academia to support the implementation of training activities of GMES and Africa was also a subject of the deliberations.

Workshop participants recommended, among other things, the establishment of a network of Francophone African academic institutions to support the implementation of the training strategy of the GMES and Africa programme and Space-related matters in Africa. One of the possible roles of this network will be to develop Earth Observation and Geo Spatial courses and curricula for academic institutions to contribute to supporting the growing

demand of Earth Observation applications and Space-related initiatives in Africa in a sustainable manner.

Workshop participants also pledged an undertaking to pilot the development of Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on the application of Remote Sensing and Geographic Information System. This will facilitate the production of value-added products and services for the sustainable management of land-based natural and environmental resources in Africa.

The workshop brought together thirty participants representing various institutions including the African Union Commission and Francophone African Universities and training centres. Officials from three GMES and Africa lead consortia implementing projects in West and Central Africa – the Agence Gabonaise d'Études et d'Observations Spatiales (AGEOS) based in Gabon; the International Congo-Ubangu-Sangha Commission (CICOS) based in Democratic Republic of Congo; and the Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE) based in Senegal; also took part in the discussions.

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