



8th April 2016

Re: SDCG Global Data Flows Study – Draft Version In Progress

The goal of the SDCG's Global Data Flow Study is to evaluate alternate solutions for reducing barriers to the effective use of satellite data in implementing Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) within National Forest Monitoring Systems (NFMS) in support of REDD+.

Access to (and processing of) EO data has always been a barrier to application. Extremely large volumes of data are now freely available to users, and the Global Data Flows Study seeks to identify the options for supplying data to resources agencies.

Analysis Ready Data (ARD) is the future of space-based EO, and will greatly lower the barrier to entry for users. The specific definition of ARD is not important, however the concept is. Through the implementation of ARD products costs can be greatly reduced and efficiencies can be introduced at partner and country agencies. ARD products also provide an opportunity to control uncertainties and quality.

Data supply is no longer the limiting factor. Improving data access and distribution will greatly increase data rich applications.

A fundamental premise of this study is the shared objective to reduce barriers and increase efficiencies to support the production of national forest map products. This may involve new data intensive methodologies or more efficient selection, discovery and access tools.

An underlying premise is the vested interest in the donor community to ensure that forest map products meet strict quality and content guidelines as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

The CEOS Space Data Coordination Group (SDCG) needs to consider a coordinated, phased approach together with GFOI capacity building partners that meets the immediate needs of countries whilst also working toward long-term solutions. The following approaches are evaluated in this document:

- Provide tools for use in maintaining local databases through incremental updates as new data, that meet specific agency criteria, become available;
- Provide improved discovery and selection tools needed to assist countries in more effectively identifying required data before attempting downloads;
- Work with space agencies and partners to reduce the burden of data preprocessing on forest management organizations;
- Work with space agencies and partners to implement new preprocessing, change detection and classification methodologies; and,
- Acknowledge that simple and more appropriate solutions may exist that do not require an investment in expensive infrastructure.

This document is provided to CEOS SIT-31 as an in-progress draft for information and will be updated in due course following further analysis of feedback received from the user and donor communities.

Sincerely,

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