

Funding for European Earth Observation until 2020



The European Council has secured Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programme funding through 2020. The multi-annual financial framework "MFF" is a seven-year plan for the EU's budget. On 8 February, European heads of state and government agreed to include GMES in the 2014-2020 MFF for GMES Services, In-Situ Component (a network of sensors on the ground, at sea and in the air) and the Space Component, thus securing funding for the programme's long-term operational phase.

Within the new framework, EUR3,786 million was allocated for GMES. The funds will allow GMES operations to continue to provide ever-improving global environmental data to services stimulating economic growth and job creation in Europe.

The plan first has to be approved by the European Parliament before it can enter into force.

Overall, the new framework increases funding for research, innovation and education with the aim of improving growth and jobs.

The main contributions of GMES are in energy and sustainable development, agriculture and ecosystems, health, emergency management, supporting the green economy and monitoring climate change.

These newly allocated funds add to the approximately EUR3.4 billion invested in the programme by ESA and the EU since its inception more than a decade ago.

Of these, about EUR2.4 billion funds the GMES Space Component activities, which include developing the Sentinel satellites and instruments.

If accepted by the European Parliament, the MFF funding will allow for the long-term operations of the Sentinel satellites and instruments, the first of which is due for launch at the end of this year.

'Copernicus' is the new name for the GMES programme.

Image courtesy: ESA.