

Agenda item 5

Space Technology for Sustainable Socioeconomic Development

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished delegates,

Indian delegation is happy to deliberate on the agenda item ‘Space Technology for Sustainable Socioeconomic Development’.

With highly diversified terrain and natural resources, India has adopted comprehensive and holistic development pathway for future - towards generating economic growth, strengthening environment protection, achieving social justice and good governance

With natural and anthropogenic factors continuously creating enormous stress on natural resources, it is imperative to sustain the ability of natural systems to provide environmental and ecosystem services on which the economy and society depend. In this context, the role of space technology has already been established in assessing the natural resources, environmental protection and thereby achieving economic and social development.

Mr. Chairman,

India has developed comprehensive space infrastructure to cover observations in the domains of land, water, weather and ocean. Large amount of information derived from earth observation satellites used in addressing food and water security, biodiversity conservation, disasters mitigation and responding to climate change impacts. With improved data from current sensors and analysis methodology, a number of projects have been taken up which clearly demonstrated the usefulness of sustainable planning at local scales, bringing participation of stakeholders and evaluating the impacts of various projects.

Mr. Chairman,

Using satellite data, India has carried out desertification and land degradation status mapping and change analysis using satellite data following the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD) guidelines. Three mapping cycles have been completed in last two decades. The information has been used in generating the action plans for combating the desertification and checking the process of land degradations.

India is regularly carrying out biennial forest mapping using satellite data. India's total forest cover has increased by more than three per cent during 2011 to 2021. This is mainly attributed to increase in very dense forest, which grew by 20 per cent during the period.

Mr. Chairman,

Wetlands are considered as an important ecosystem interconnecting the processes between land, hydrology, flora and fauna. On account of faster economic development and growing population, some of the wetland areas are being changed continuously. In this regard, National Wetland Inventory project have been carried out with the objective to update wetland inventory and perform decadal change analysis using satellite data. It has helped better management and protection of wetland resources.

Coral reefs provide critical coastal and marine habitats and have enormous ecological and economic resource value. Worldwide decline in coral species abundance, mass coral bleaching events and overall loss and degradation of coral reef habitats are serious environmental issues today. Space based remote sensing has proved its potential in mapping, monitoring, modeling and management of this remote keystone ecosystem.

Mr. Chairman,

Empowering communities at grass root level in sustainable planning process is an important step in addressing development and management of resources at local levels. In this regard, geospatial technologies are being used in community driven decentralized planning processes towards economic development, disaster management and human welfare.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, while underlining the usefulness of space technology in sustainable development, India is ready to share technological experience in this important area.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates.