

Chapter 17 - Climate management and policy development: An earth observation perspective

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Abstract

Remote sensing has become an important science in policy and decision making in all aspects of management across the globe. Its capacity to provide a synoptic view of the global panorama made it an option when decision making is being done especially for management and monitoring of the impacts of climate change on physical aspects of the earth over large geographical areas. Remote sensing has revolutionized the understanding of our dynamic environment. When aerial photography, which had been available since the early 20th century, was supplemented by digital satellite-borne imagery in the 1970s, the range of remotely sensed earth observation (EO) techniques grew. Since many environmental remote sensing systems are publicly sponsored and the number of nations investing in EO infrastructure is rising, the number of EO systems designed to observe and monitor environmental processes is increasing, and governments are strongly promoting this science. Support for EO among the general population is largely fueled by environmental concerns. The reverse is true as well, since EO stimulates environmental awareness and concern.