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France-United Kingdom space cooperation Jean-Yves Le Gall meets Graham Turnock

Friday 9 June, CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall met Graham Turnock, the new Chief Executive of the United Kingdom Space Agency (UKSA), in London. The agency heads took this opportunity to review space cooperation between France and the UK, notably in supporting efforts to curb climate change and through European space programmes.

France and the United Kingdom are working together in space chiefly in the domain of Earth observation, in particular through their joint efforts to curb climate change. Three projects are currently being pursued: the IASI-NG instrument designed to acquire temperature and humidity data, as well as measuring more than 25 other atmospheric components vitally important for weather forecasting, pollution monitoring and climate research; the SWOT satellite set to measure the height of oceans and surface waters; and the MicroCarb satellite, which aims to map sources and sinks of carbon on a global scale.

CNES is a prime mover fuelling space innovation to serve efforts to curb climate change. The two agencies' experts plan to review progress on their three joint programmes in July. Jean-Yves Le Gall has also proposed that the second meeting of the MicroCarb Steering Committee be held at CNES's Toulouse Space Centre after this summer.

The two agency heads also discussed the implementation of the decisions reached at the ESA Ministerial Council meeting of 2016 and preparations for the next one in 2019. On 1 July, Jean-Yves Le Gall will be taking over as ESA Council Chair, with the UK's Alice Bunn and Poland's Otylia Trzaskalska-Stroinska as Vice-Chairs.

After the meeting, Jean-Yves Le Gall commented: "I would like once again to congratulate Graham Turnock on his appointment as Chief Executive of UKSA. This is excellent news for our continued cooperation and our two nations' joint efforts to curb climate change."

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