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Press Release

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CNES and ONF sign framework agreement Space science serving forestry

Wednesday 5 December, Christian Dubreuil, CEO of ONF, the French forestry commission, and CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall signed a five-year (2018-2022) framework agreement at CNES's Head Office in Paris Les Halles. The agreement aims to develop collaboration, encourage and improve uptake of Earth remote-sensing data by ONF and step up feedback to CNES about how such data are being used to manage and preserve the natural environment.

ONF is engaged in modernizing its methods of collecting data required to manage and preserve the environments for which it has responsibility. It has been working for several years now on the use of Earth remote-sensing data from aerial and space platforms for both its research-development-innovation activities and its operations.

CNES is pursuing an ambitious partnership strategy and promoting uptake of space technologies for applications that benefit society, notably in the fields of environmental management, climate change, risk prevention and crisis management.

The two agencies firmly believe in the positive spin-offs of space applications as well as the utility and value of remote sensing in fields such as forestry and biodiversity monitoring. Besides exchanging information about space-based observation systems and their uses for forestry, the two agencies will work together to integrate Earth remote-sensing data across a number of important areas:

- **Sustainable forest management:** to establish forest management plans, track management of forest and natural environments, and assess damage to forest stands such as that caused by storms and phytosanitary diseases.
- **Prevention and management of fire risks:** to characterize fire risks and assess fire damage its impacts.
- **Sustainable management of coastal environments:** to characterize and monitor coastal habitats, manage and gauge impacts of storms and floods, and monitor shorelines and dune movements.
- **Prevention of natural risks in mountain areas:** to enhance knowledge of risks (rock falls, landslides, flash floods, avalanches) and monitor protective structures and snowpack.

The two agencies plan to work together in various ways, from exchanging information on data and their applications to joint studies and experiments, as well as demonstration and communication actions. CNES will also be providing its contacts in the network of stakeholders using satellite data to assist ONF with its projects.

A flagship domain: natural hazard management

ONF's forest fire defence department (DFCI) has been using satellite imagery for several years to assess fire contours and their burn severity. The partnership with CNES aims to step up these actions, for example by providing additional expertise in radar satellite imagery. ONF has also already worked with CNES to trial use of fine-resolution imagery from the Pleiades satellites to assess storm damage in large forests. Other applications of satellite data are envisioned for monitoring risks in mountain areas.

About CNES

CNES (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales) is the government agency responsible for shaping France's space policy and implementing it in Europe. Its task is to conceive and orbit satellites, invent the space systems of the future and nurture new services to aid us in our daily lives. Founded in 1961, it is the initiator of major space projects, launch vehicles and satellites, and the partner of choice for industry fuelling innovation. CNES comprises some 2,500 men and women with a passion for space working to open up new and infinite fields of applications in five core areas of focus: Ariane, science, Earth observation, telecommunications and defence. It is a key player driving technology innovation, economic development and industrial policy for the nation. It also fosters scientific collaborations and has forged numerous international partnerships. France, represented by CNES, is the leading contributor to the European Space Agency (ESA).

About ONF

ONF is a public firm in the forest-timber sector with 9,500 professionals in mainland France and its overseas territories. Its day-to-day work focuses on three closely related objectives: timber production, environmental preservation and reception of visitors. ONF also performs public service missions in the domain of natural hazard management and provides services to local authorities and businesses.

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