



Digital Earth
AFRICA

Digital Earth Africa

Communication Strategy
2019-2022



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Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to provide the overarching direction of Digital Earth Africa's (DE Africa) stakeholder engagement activities and drive effective communication. This strategy:

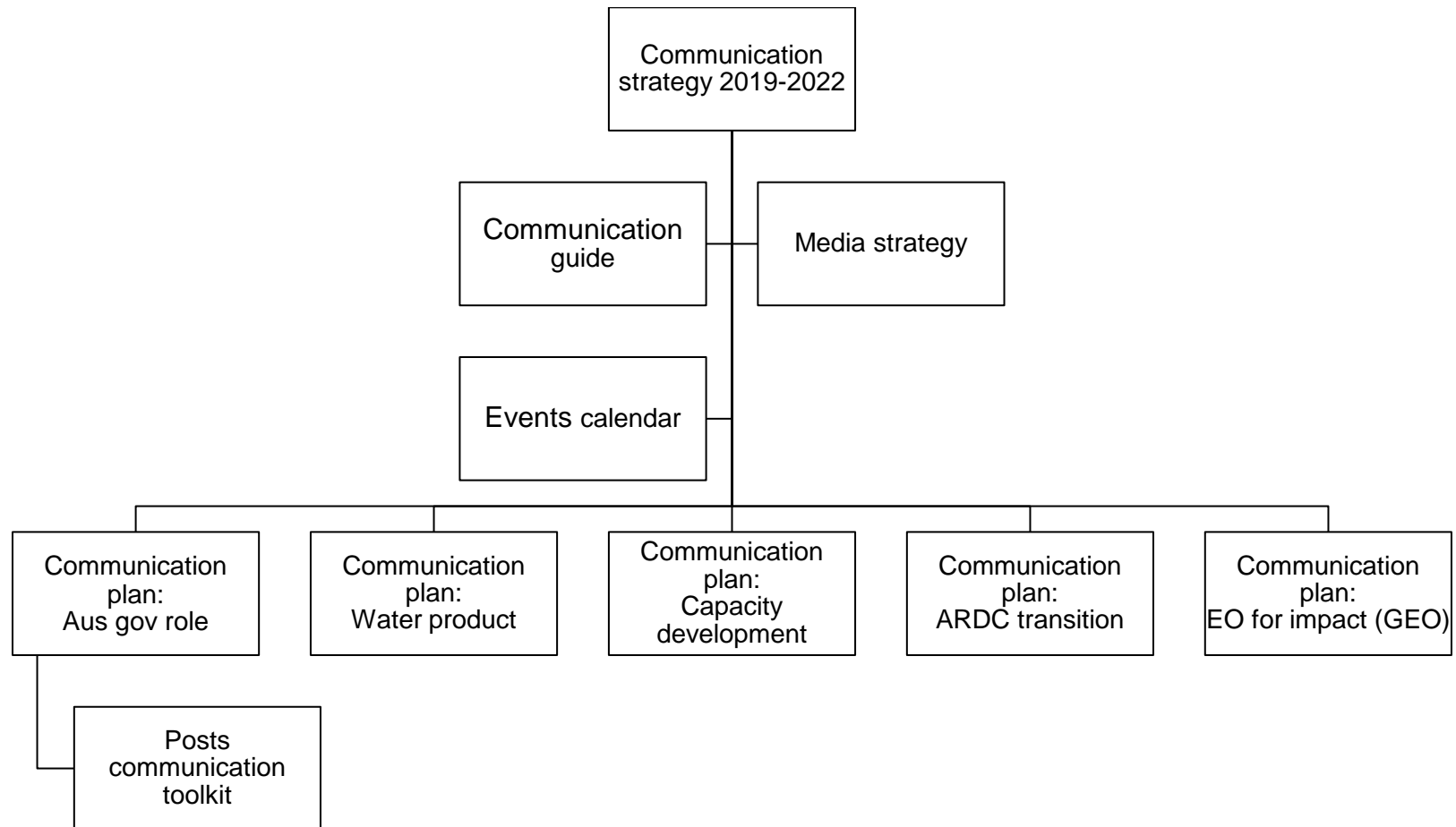
- identifies desired outcomes and the activities required to achieve them
- identifies and prioritises the program's stakeholders and level of engagement
- outlines how prioritisation of communication efforts in reaching defined target audiences can:
 - help to achieve the program's three-year plan
 - facilitate effective engagement with stakeholders and key audiences
 - improve the awareness, value and uptake of DE Africa data, products and services.

Document version history

Version	Description	Date of issue	Author
0.1	Draft for review	05/09/2019	Plume consultants
0.2	Final for endorsement	16/01/2020	Tessa Robinson

Strategy framework

The below structure highlights how this strategy provides a framework for the implementation of communication activities. A suite of guides, plans and toolkits as sampled below will support its implementation.



Program overview

The DE Africa program is developing a free, open and reliable continental service for all Africans to track changes across their countries using Earth observation satellite imagery. This information will provide insights into a range of issues including flooding, droughts, soils, coastal erosion, agriculture, forests and land use, water availability and changes to human settlement.

The program will scale up the first operational data cube developed in Australia for the African continent in response to the needs and priorities of African stakeholders, overseen by an independent Governing Board and Technical Advisory Committee. A network of partnerships align DE Africa with other organizations and initiatives with similar mandates, to leverage capacity and expertise and to accelerate the uptake and use of products for decision-making and daily action.

DE Africa will become an operational and analytic capability of Africa, with in-country expertise in data analysis, use and management. This work is supported by funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and The Leona. M and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, and is being completed through a [three-year plan](#):

- **Year 1:** Setting the foundation
- **Year 2:** Building capacity and uptake
- **Year 3:** A developing ecosystem

Vision

Provide a routine, reliable and operational service, using Earth observations to deliver decision-ready products enabling policy makers, scientists, the private sector and civil society to address social, environmental and economic changes on the continent and develop an ecosystem for innovation across sectors.

Mission

Process openly accessible and freely available data to produce decision-ready products. Working closely with the AfriGEO community, DE Africa will be responsive to the information needs, challenges and priorities of the African continent. DE Africa will leverage and build on existing capacity to enable the use of Earth observations to address key challenges across the continent.

Program objectives

The program is delivering the three-year plan through a multi-stakeholder approach. The Governance Framework sets out a broad and representative Governing Board to provide advice and oversight, and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to set priorities. A program logic sets out to achieve the above through the following:

Objective	Outcomes
Develop a data infrastructure that is operationally, technically and financially sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governance Framework is operational, effective and African owned and its outcomes are achieved • The program is operational within recognised African institutions and has a range of enabling partnerships • The infrastructure is fully established and delivers credible and free EO data and products • DE Africa is widely recognised, has an increasing demand for a growing range of data products and has attracted additional investment
Demonstrate environmental and development impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediaries and users are identified, and their needs are understood • There is an increasing capability to engage with and apply DE Africa data products • DE Africa is used for government decision making processes and to support development of innovative applications • DE Africa has a growing user base across public, private and civil society sectors
Promote the benefits of open and free Earth observation data internationally as a flagship initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key audiences in Africa and internationally understand the program • Development partners and bilateral engagement and exchange are supported • DE Africa is leveraged to support positive benefits for international development • DE Africa supports increased consistency in applications and analysis of EO data and is increasingly recognised as a preeminent EO data platform by the international community

These outcomes support the program's alignment strategy and institutional partners who play a key role in the success of the program.

Group on Earth Observations (GEO)	The vision for GEO is a future where coordinated, comprehensive and sustained Earth Observations inform decisions and actions for the benefit of humankind. This vision is being realized for the African continent through the AfriGEO initiative.
UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	UNECA has a mandate to support geospatial information activities in Africa. Through its geospatial work programme, UNECA seeks to ensure spatial data is available to those who need it, when they need it, and in a form they can use it to make decisions.
Australian Government	The Australian Government commits to support development in Africa through its Australian Aid program and strives to be a key player in the GEO community by capitalising Australian science developed by Geoscience Australia.

Objectives

The following three communication objectives aim to ensure engagement and communication activities help achieve the program's overall desired outcomes:

1. To build and maintain stakeholder support for the program's objectives in line with the three-year plan.

- Governing Board and TAC members understand and support the deliverables set out in the three-year plan and the program's desired outcomes.
- African institutions understand how the program aligns to their missions to enable a range of partnerships.
- Stakeholders are aware that implementation of the program is being done in a way that generates user uptake.

2. To promote the use of DE Africa products and the potential applications for addressing key challenges.

- Stakeholders know how to engage with the program to share their needs of DE Africa's products.
- Governments, private sector and civil society understand and support the use and application development of DE Africa products.
- Audiences have the capacity and information they need to access and use DE Africa data and products in ways that address their country or organization's challenges.

3. To increase awareness and understanding of the value of Earth observations for the African continent.

- Audiences are aware of the applications of spatial data for insights into land use and change, water availability, human settlement, coastal erosion, soils, forests and agriculture.
- Audiences understand the benefits of using coordinated, comprehensive and sustained Earth observations for making informed decisions.
- Stakeholders understand the alignment of DE Africa with UNECA, GEO, the Australian Government and other key partners vital to the success of the program.

Approach

Stakeholder engagement

1. Prioritize engagement efforts

To prioritize engagement efforts, this strategy has identified stakeholder levels of knowledge of DE Africa and levels of influence on the success of the program (see appendix A). Stakeholders with a high level of influence will require more engagement, while stakeholders with little knowledge will require more information. Stakeholders with both high levels of influence and high levels of knowledge require constant engagement and two-way communication.

Communication principles

2. Maximise message reach

Thought leadership and media relations will be key to educate and drive buy-in and uptake, and should be the pillar for all communication activities. Engaging in conversation and activities with key opinion shapers, including influencers and the media, can amplify messaging and build stakeholder awareness.

3. Adopt a collaborative model

Leveraging on partner communication channels will be key to reach a wider audience. This will be achieved by aligning this strategy with institutions that are heavily involved in the establishment of the program, as identified in the program's partner strategy, and using the communication channels of influencers.

4. Target investment in event opportunities

Events should be prioritised based on this strategy's objectives but also overall value. Questions to consider: is this the only opportunity to engage with this audience? Is attendance critical to success of the program? Does it attract the right audience? Is there is a reputational risk if we do not participate? The below criteria will act as a guide:

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Staff resources	3+ (Establishment team, communications and technical team)	1-2	1 or engagement through partners
Engagement level	Attendance is critical to the success of the program based on audience, alignment and content. The event may be tied to a major announcement or deliverable opportunity.	The event has a core audience involved highly relevant to the outreach and engagement goals of DE Africa.	There is a reputational risk if DE Africa does not have a presence or a partner organization has requested attendance.
Costs (including sponsorship and travel)	Above \$20,000	\$5,000-\$20,000	Up to \$5000

Key stakeholders

A stakeholder analysis (see Appendix A) has identified broad categories of stakeholders that require engagement with the program:

Government

- Executive – Heads of state
- National government and Ministries
- Federal/county government/local governments
- Government agencies

• **Intergovernmental Organisations (IGO)**

- Africa based IGOs (e.g. Africa Union Commission, UNECA, RCMRD, Regional Economic Communities)
- International IGOs (e.g. GEO, UNEP, FAO, WMO)

• **Partners**

- Governance – Governing Board and Technical Advisory Committee
- Strategic Partners – Partners where specific agreements have been established to support strategic, capacity building, technical, data and alignment activities
- Funding Partners – Australian Government, Helmsley Charitable Trust

• **Private sector**

- Large companies
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)

• **Academia and Research Institutions**

• **Civil Society Organisations**

• **Public**

• **Media**

Implementation plan

Year	2019-2020 Setting the foundation			2020-2021 Building capacity and uptake			2021-2022 A developing ecosystem		
Message	Digital Earth Africa is building a free and reliable service for anyone in Africa to track changes across the continent based on environmental and development needs.			Digital Earth Africa will become an operational and analytic capability of Africa, with in-country expertise in data analysis, use and management.			Digital Earth Africa demonstrates the environmental and development impacts of Earth observation data on decision making in Africa.		
Objective	Build and sustain stakeholder support	Promote the use of DE Africa products	Increase awareness and understanding	Build and sustain stakeholder support	Promote the use of DE Africa products	Increase awareness and understanding	Build and sustain stakeholder support	Promote the use of DE Africa products	Increase awareness and understanding
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver DE Africa Day event in Africa • Identify and implement 2019 calendar of events • Establish stakeholder community group • Promote new partnerships • Engage with governance partners • Establish a quarterly digital newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build DE Africa Map interface • Launch and promote the first continental-wide product • Host technical sessions on the sidelines of major events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and educate the media • Build website and online content • Establish communication channels • Develop program communication products • Develop communication guidelines and key messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and implement 2020 calendar of events • Engage at the country level through partnerships • Promote new partnerships • Engage with governance partners • Distribute a quarterly newsletter • Use message multipliers (influencers and champions) to build support • Conduct stakeholder mapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch and promote new continental-wide products • Promote the DE Africa Map • Host the first annual user meeting • Develop online resources for capacity development • Develop case studies • Conduct DE Africa Map user testing • Use message multipliers (influencers and champions) to promote products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and educate the media • Collaborate with partners on campaigns and messaging • Develop communication products to support capacity development • Engage and educate the media • Develop country-specific messages and content • Use message multipliers (influencers and champions) to increase understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and implement 2021 calendar of events • Engage at the country level through partnerships • Promote new partnerships • Engage with governance partners • Distribute a quarterly newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch and promote new continental-wide products • Sponsor at least 3 major events • Host a hackathon, data dive and more developer focused event • Develop case studies – written, audio, video • Continually improve DE Africa Map and online channels • Use message multipliers (influencers and champions) to promote products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the media • Collaborate with partners on campaigns and messaging • Engage and educate the media • Develop communication products for the private sector, developers and entrepreneurs • Use message multipliers (influencers and champions) to increase understanding

Evaluation

To ensure this strategy continues to meet the needs of stakeholders, a quarterly report in line with the program’s monitoring and evaluation will track communication metrics and identify recommendations.

Each communication activity will be measured by relevant metrics to the activity’s specific objectives. The following metrics form a benchmark:

Objective	Metrics	Methods of measure
Build and maintain stakeholder support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of audiences engaged • Number of partnership agreements formed • Consumption of content • Brand image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event attendance (audience numbers) • Newsletter analytics (subscribers, open rates, click throughs) • Website analytics (page views, time spent on page, resource downloads) • Increasing membership in the stakeholder community group • Active contributions and participation from the Governing Board and TAC members
Promote the use of DE Africa products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of audiences engaged • Consumption of content • User satisfaction • New products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DE Africa Map analytics • Data usage analytics (e.g. registered on OGC Web Services, Explorer, Public Data, Jupyter Hub, GitHub, Slack) • Africa GeoPortal analytics • Content and training feedback (feedback forms, online surveys) • New applications and use cases developed
Increase awareness and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of audiences reached • Consumption of content • Increased brand awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media reach and engagement (likes, retweets) • Website analytics (page views, time spent on page, resource downloads) • Event attendance (audience numbers) • Newsletter analytics (subscribers, open rates, click throughs) • Media coverage (number of articles, conversations, impressions) • Invitations to participate, speak or sponsor

Appendices

Appendix A: Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholder	Purpose of engagement	Scope of engagement (their interests)	Desired outcomes	Level of engagement	Channels of engagement
GOVERNMENT (PRIMARY AUDIENCES)					
Executive (Heads of State) and National (Ministers)	To identify needs and challenges, develop capacity and gain buy-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception of electorates Promote interests of business circles relevant to them Drive policies that meet country needs and national priorities Deliver SDGs as a signatory Deliver economic growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness and understanding Support of the program Use DE Africa products to drive policy Sustainability of the program 	High influence /Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One on one meetings – briefings and presentations Engagements through networks and events
Federal/Country/local (Countries with a devolved system)	To identify needs and challenges, develop capacity and gain buy-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception of electorates Promote interests of business circles relevant to them Drive policies that meet local needs and priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness and understanding Support of the program Use DE Africa products to drive policy 	High influence /Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training Presentations Engagements through networks and events One on one meetings One-way communication
Ministries and agencies that use EO (National statistic, Space agencies)	To influence Executive and National Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies that meet country needs Deliver economic growth aligned to country vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate and buy-in Use DE Africa products to drive national policy Drive funding of the local program 	High influence /Medium-high knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training Presentations Engagements through networks and events One on one meetings

Stakeholder	Purpose of engagement	Scope of engagement (their interests)	Desired outcomes	Level of engagement	Channels of engagement
INTERGOVERNMENT AGENCIES (PRIMARY AUDIENCES)					
Africa based IGO's: Africa Union	To build support as a key influencer for the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting democracy and peace in Africa Driving economic development Agenda 2036 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support DE Africa To embed as part of AU 2036 Agenda Create linkages to regional development initiatives & policies 	High influence /Low-medium knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training Presentations Engagements through networks and events One on one meetings Two-way communication
Africa based IGO's: Regional Economic Communities (REC): CEN-SAD, COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC.	To build support as a key influencer for the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To serve member States Enable regional integration agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness and understanding Buy-in Identify and drive influence on member states 	High influence /Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training Presentations Engagements through networks and events One on one meetings One-way communication
International IGOs (e.g. GEO, UNEP, FAO, WMO)	To build support as a key influencer for the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable international integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative linkages to international development initiatives and work programmes 	High influence/Medium knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training Presentations Engagements through networks and events One on one meetings Two-way communication

Stakeholder	Purpose of engagement	Scope of engagement (their interests)	Desired outcomes	Level of engagement	Channels of engagement
PARTNERS (PRIMARY AUDIENCES)					
Governance: Governing Board and Technical Advisory Committee	Ensure the deliverables set out in the three-year plan are achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The success of DE Africa Alignment with ongoing programmes Use of the technology for decision making & to tackle continental wide challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support DE Africa To embed in-country programmes Success of the programme Working with partners to educate and get buy-in on the continent Adaptation of the technology 	High influence /High knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training Presentations Engagements through networks and events One on one meetings Two-way communication One-way communication
Formal agreements: Hosting, strategic, capacity development, technical, data, alignment	Ensure the program aligns to partners' missions and agreements are met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage economic cooperation among member states Success of their programmes in Africa Develop capacity in member states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To host DE Africa To embed in-country programmes Create linkages to regional development initiatives & policies Leverage expertise 	High influence /High knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training Presentations Engagements through networks and events One on one meetings Two-way communication One-way communication
Current funding partners	Ensure funding partners support program implementation and are aware it is being done in a way that generates user uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Positive influence on the public Reputational risk – involvement in projects that positively impact them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued funding Support capacity development 	Medium influence/ High knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One on one meetings and briefings
Prospective funding partners	Secure ongoing funding for a sustainable program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Positive influence on the public Reputational risk – involvement in projects that positively impact them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued funding Support capacity development 	Medium influence/ Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One on one meetings and briefings

Stakeholder	Purpose of engagement	Scope of engagement (their interests)	Desired outcomes	Level of engagement	Channels of engagement
PRIVATE SECTOR (SECONDARY AUDIENCES)					
Large companies	To increase awareness of DE Africa products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profit and new business development for the business Economic development for customers Business efficiency Alignment to national governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy-in/support Shared knowledge Innovation Deliver impact and shared value 	Low influence, but medium support/ Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagements through networks and events One on one meetings One-way communication
MSMEs and startups	To increase awareness of DE Africa products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To tap into the opportunity to develop solutions that are money making (for profit) Create solutions that address the publics needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To educate, get buy-in and eventually use To develop solutions that address the continents challenges 	Low influence, high potential for support/ Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training One-way communication through social media, media and publications Two-way communication Engagements through hackathons, webinars
Academic/ Education Institutions	To increase awareness of DE Africa products and build support as an influencer for the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be thought leaders in various fields Educate and build capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To educate, get buy-in and build technology for teaching and learning Empower with the data and release informed research to influence policy 	Low influence/ Low-medium knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops and training One-way communication through social media, media and publications Two-way communication Engagements through hackathons, webinars
Civil society organizations – International, Regional and in-country	To influence government and stakeholders and drive use of DE Africa products for advocating public interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocating rights Influencing government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness and understanding Buy-in Influence on stakeholders – government & public 	Low influence /Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagements through networks and events One-way communication

Stakeholder	Purpose of engagement	Scope of engagement (their interests)	Desired outcomes	Level of engagement	Channels of engagement
Public	To increase awareness and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A better livelihood • Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy-in and support government initiatives • Feel empowered 	Low influence /Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-way communication through government, media and thought leaders
Media	To disseminate information that shapes public opinion, educate, drive buy-in and encourage use of DE Africa products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing the public • Holding various stakeholders accountable – especially governments • Shaping public opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To drive awareness and understanding • Influence public opinion • Buy-in to use the technology to improve reporting 	High influence /Low knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and training • Presentations • Meetings • Inviting them for EO engagements/conferences