



Digital Earth
AFRICA

Digital Earth Africa

Alignment Strategy



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Document version history

Version	Description	Date of issue	Author
0.1	Version 1	January 2020	Dr Adam Lewis
1.0	Internal review	July 2020	

Introduction

Digital Earth Africa (DE Africa) will be a complementary infrastructure deployed at the continental scale for Africa to address key national development priorities and align with regional and global frameworks such as Africa 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It will also be accessible across sectors, and will enable and drive digital innovation using satellite data.

To achieve the broader vision of DE Africa, the DE Africa program will complement and align with other programs across Africa. Mutually beneficial partnerships with a broad range of organisations and programs whose objectives and interests intersect with DE Africa are envisaged. These partnerships will enable DE Africa to deliver as a program; but they will also expand the scale and scope of DE Africa with increased benefits to Africa. Furthermore, partnerships will ensure that DE Africa delivers a platform that will be sustained in Africa for decades to come.

The DE Africa Alignment Strategy lays out the high level approach that DE Africa will use as it interacts with a range of programs that exist in Africa.

The DE Africa Alignment Strategy is closely linked to the DE Africa Partnership Strategy but it is useful to separate the two. Alignment is an approach to programs of investment that have similar objectives to ours, such as B&MGF, GMES and Africa, or SERVIR. In contrast Partnerships are our approach to forming relationships with institutions and organisations. Partnerships are more likely to be closer, more specific relationships and to involve specific commitments.

What do we mean by Alignment?

Alignment is our approach to working with or alongside other programs in Africa that also seek to provide information to inform decisions in order to improve the lives of Africans.

Aligning with another program would include establishing awareness, avoiding overlap and seeking opportunities to re-use or apply the work of those programs. As an example, DE Africa has already been able to leverage technology developed by the SERVIR program as part of our validation work.

Alignment may lead to a Partnership, but not necessarily so.

Why is Alignment helpful?

Working with other programs will help to ensure that DE Africa succeeds. It will draw additional effort toward the goals and outcomes of DE Africa, allow us to build upon other's work, and increase the scale, visibility and impact of DE Africa.

Alignment will also help to simplify messaging. A considered approach to working together will allow confident communication of the commonalities with and differences from DE Africa, with an underlying message of 'we are working together'. This will help to build DE Africa's profile as a preeminent EO program, our reputation as collaborative, open and strategic, and give confidence to a wide range of stakeholders who may be considering using, partnering with, or investing in DE Africa.

How will we progress Alignment?

Personal trust and mutual goodwill will be the foundation of successful alignment. Recognition of common interests and shared opportunities will provide the impetus.

DE Africa will engage bilaterally with other programs to:

- establish mutual understanding and goodwill
- identify areas of natural complementarity
- promote cooperative approaches that are beneficial to the high level objectives of each.

Evidence of alignment will be the sharing of knowledge, data, systems, responsibilities, outputs, and communications (e.g., PowerPoint slides, signage and badging) between programs.

Examples of successful alignment will be when both programs modify their approaches to maximize shared benefits. For example DE Africa being able to re-use other's work, thus focusing more resources on the gaps, and other programs modifying their approaches in a way that accommodates or supports DE Africa.

Why is an Alignment Strategy useful?

The Strategy itself will empower us to take a considered, purposive and proactive approach to our relationship with other highly regarded and well-resourced programs in order to:

- avoid the risk of competition (perceived or real) between programs
- prevent the emergence of a 'patch-protection' mindset as DE Africa becomes more visible
- to allow other programs to share in the success of DE Africa (and thus lend their support).