



GDA goes Earth Action.

*Empowering the use of geospatial data for
informed decision-making*

22nd-23rd September 2026



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Objectives and Context

The ESA Global Development Assistance (GDA) programme has been implemented in partnership with key International Financial Institutions (IFIs), notably the World Bank Group and the Asian Development Bank, as well as EBRD, IFAD and others.

It builds on a long-standing collaboration with the World Bank starting in 2008, raising **awareness** about the potential of Earth observation (EO) among Bank task teams and stakeholders in developing countries by building demonstrators. This was followed by the implementing of regional-scale activities under the EO for Sustainable Development (EO4SD) initiative from 2016 onwards, addressing the full value chain of EO integration and fostering the broader uptake of EO services. Through GDA, ESA laid the foundations for the **adoption** of EO in international development programmes. The next phase, under Earth Action, will build on these achievements to accelerate operational integration and enable data-driven **digital transformation** across partner institutions.

This event brings together the programme partners including IFIs, country stakeholders, international organisations and EO industry representatives, to reflect on lessons learned and discuss the transition from project-based applications to the sustained adoption of EO through **global public goods, capacity building and the technical assistance facility**. The two-day programme is structured to facilitate learning on the **full adoption** pathway of EO-enable solutions, from strategic planning and **project design to implementation, monitoring and decision-making**.

Draft Agenda

Day 1

Integrating EO throughout the project cycle

Time	Session	Context
09:15 – 10:10	<i>Plenary:</i> Welcome	Visual data story of GDA's reach and key impacts: 174 completed case studies in 69 countries. EO innovation in relation to sectors addressed through the programme.
10:10 – 10:30	<i>Icebreaker:</i> Introduction Chain	Short exchange between participants.
<i>Coffee break (20 minutes)</i>		
Addressing priorities through the use of EO		
10:45 – 11:40	<i>Structured panel:</i> Linkages between development finance and EO	IFI speakers introduce their strategic priorities and operational structures. ESA secondees provide perspective on the integration of EO within those priorities and structures.
11:40 – 13:10	<i>Interactive simulation:</i> Operational Design Lab	IFI representatives, country stakeholders and EO company representatives form groups to identify an operational challenge (e.g. climate risk analysis, urban upgrading, identifying an investment site location, etc.) and pitch a product proposition including a structured assessment of the product's benefits, constraints and maturity. ESA technical know-how will inform the choices.
13:10 – 13:30	<i>Plenary harvest</i>	Brief synthesis of key learnings emerged across the two sessions.
<i>Lunch break (1 hour)</i>		
Design and delivery of EO services		
14:30 – 15:10	<i>Presentation and discussion:</i> User-centred design for enabling a digital transformation	A provocation on what user-centred design looks like, followed by discussions on the enabling factors needed to integrate EO throughout the entire IFI project cycle.
<i>Coffee break (20 minutes)</i>		
15:30 – 16:45	<i>Interactive simulation:</i> Fishbowl for integrating user-centred design	A live user-centred design process around a development challenge is conducted, where participants arrive at a service design concept, which integrates EO throughout the entire project cycle.
16:45 – 17:00	<i>Plenary</i>	Reflections on Day 1
<i>Icebreaker</i>		

Day 2

Enabling a digital transformation through EO public goods and capacity building

Time	Session	Context
09:15 – 09:35	<i>Plenary:</i> Opening	Visual synthesis of Day 1 and an introduction to geospatial digital transformation by the Phi Lab.
09:35 – 10:15	<i>Short presentations:</i> Analysing successful adoption through case study examples	Presentations to showcase case studies where EO has been embedded into national workflows to enable more informed decision-making.
Mainstreaming at scale through public goods		
10:35 – 11:25	<i>Plenary and discussion:</i> Success factors for adoption	What are the success factors needed to enable broader integration of EO?
11:25 – 12:30	<i>Presentation:</i> Adopting geospatial public goods	An overview of existing geospatial public goods, their integration into workflows and future plans for global public EO goods under Earth Action.
Integrating operational infrastructure		
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Presentations:</i> Overview of the infrastructure triangle	ESA technical leads present about data infrastructure (APP/APEX), the fast-co-financing facility (FFF) and the Knowledge Hub, covering the present and future outlook.
<i>Lunch break (1 hour)</i>		
14:30 – 15:15	<i>Workshop:</i> Reflecting on lessons learnt	Reflections by the FFF, APP, Knowledge Hub consortia followed by open discussions on the potential use of the assets.
<i>Coffee break (20 minutes)</i>		
Building regional and local capacity for an inclusive digital transformation		
15:35 – 15:55	<i>Plenary framing:</i> Introducing synergies with DG INTPA and Global Gateway activities	ESA delivers an overview of the various strands of capacity building initiatives ongoing under the CopPhil / CopLAC / EOAfrica activities.
15:55 – 16:30	<i>Structured peer learning:</i> Regional operational exchange	Participants join regional tables (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, etc.) facilitated by ESA Technical Officers and regional partners. They exchange about regional key priorities and operational challenges.
	<i>Parallel session:</i> GDA programmatic feedback	GDA participants can share additional feedback.
16:30 – 17:00	<i>Plenary:</i> Closing session	Synthesis and main themes.



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