



EARSC Statement

EU Sustainable Food System

The European Association of Remote Sensing Companies (EARSC) is a trade association based in Bruxelles, representing the European downstream services sector. EARSC counts more than 120 members across 25 countries of Europe.

EARSC welcomes this initiative to make the EU food system sustainable and to integrate sustainability into all food-related policies. We would like to take this opportunity to remind that the use of Earth Observation (EO) data, such as Copernicus, is valuable to the overall agri-food ecosystem.

Indeed, remote sensing technologies allow to monitor the agricultural supply chain, bringing transparency and efficiency to the entire value chain. Earth Observation data and advanced computing capacity improve yield estimates and [crop nutrient management](#). This contributes to improve the financial planning of the producers, save on costs for the farmers and it also helps to improve sustainability of crop production. Accurate crop area estimates help different types of companies across the whole value chain (seed providers, fertilizers, herbicide producers, agriculture services, machinery companies, and many others) to better organize and plan their marketing and distribution strategies. Having accurate and timely information is also crucial for policy makers to organise mitigation plans if action is needed in case of an unusual shock to the food system, such as extreme weather conditions, global pandemic...)

As shown in our Sentinel benefits Cases¹, precision farming also leads to a more sustainable use of soil and land use as it contributes to strongly reduce the amount of fertiliser leaching

¹ https://earsc.org/sebs/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/1_full-report-Growing-Potatoes-in-Belgium.pdf

into the environment and surface-water sources. It also holds true for irrigation requirements with a more efficient water use on the field made possible thanks to the EO data.

Consequently, the whole agri-food value chain can benefit from the use of EO data and services as well as the society with environmental gains.

Therefore the EC should specify that Earth Observation data and added value services are operational solutions which shall be used to reach the objectives of sustainability. We remain available to support the Commission and work together on that objective.