First GlobCover products are available online

The first GlobCover products have been made publicly available and can be downloaded from IONIA's GlobCover website.

Since 23 April 2007, two bimonthly composites for the periods May-June 2006 and March-April 2006 can be downloaded. The bimonthly products are temporal composites of MERIS full resolution data acquisitions at 300 m spatial resolution, which have been geometrically and radiometrically corrected using the developed GlobCover system. The products are written in HDF format including 13 spectral MERIS bands, a NDVI band and a pixel status map.

As from the end of June four further bimonthly composites, an annual composite and a land cover will be made available completing the period between May 2005 and April 2006.

Article to be continued on the next page.

Figure 1:
GlobCover bimonthly global composite for May to June 2005 based on Envisat's Medium Resolution Imaging Spectrometer (MERIS) instrument working in Full Resolution Mode with a spatial resolution of 300 metres.
Credits: ESA - MEDIAS France
Terradue S.r.l. has developed the data access tool on behalf of ESA. The download is based on BitTorrent technology, which ensures a stable download of the large GlobCover datasets in a reasonable time. The data is distributed as predefined global, continental and 20°x20° macro-tile allocations summarising the original 5°x5° GlobCover tiles needed to cover the selected region.

The products and the download tool have been presented during the ENVISAT Symposium held in Montreux, Switzerland, 23 – 24 April 2007. To this day, more than 2500 users have registered on the IONIA GlobCover website to download data.

First User Consultation Meeting
European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC), Ispra, 20 June 2007

The first User Consultation Meeting will take place at the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (JRC) in Ispra, Italy, on 20 June 2007. It will bring together ESA representatives, the GlobCover consortium, partners and users to review the quality of the first products.

Users are encouraged to provide feedback on data access and product quality by email to due@esa.int. Those interested in attending the user consultation meeting may apply by emailing the same address. The period for providing feedback and applying for the user consultation meeting was extended until 10 June 2007.
Environmental Conventions Panel
ENVISAT Symposium Montreux, Switzerland, 23-27 April 2007

A dedicated Environmental Convention Panel took place on 24 April 2007 during the ENVISAT Symposium in Montreux, Switzerland, reviewing the challenges and latest developments of Earth Observation in support of the UN Environmental Conventions.

The panel brought together invitees from the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the European Environmental Agency (EEA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) participated in the panel.

Science can support the convention processes actively by following the convention’s requests and guidelines, as Dr. Roberto Acosta (UNFCCC) pointed out. He stressed the growing need for Earth Observation data, ensured data continuity and improved analysing techniques to achieve a higher level of accuracy and reliability for environmental modelling. Dr. Jeff Tschirley (FAO) highlighted further the need for high resolution and operational real time Earth Observation products.

The late morning and afternoon sessions presented ongoing ESA projects supporting the environmental conventions, where the GlobCover project team took the chance to present the first bimonthly global MERIS composites for May-June 2005 and March-April 2006 to the audience.

The panel’s chairman, Dr. Volker Liebig, Director of Earth Observation Programmes (ESA), summarised the success of the convention session. The panel showed an increasing interest of the environmental community in the Earth Observation tools. For the scientists participating in the ENVISAT Symposium, this session was an occasion to see the effective application of their research. The international conventions, institutions and programmes can count on the continuous support of the European Space Agency.

The representatives of the convention secretaries, international organisations and programmes highlighted their perspectives and needs regarding a comprehensive Earth Observation system. It was the general consensus that the close communication between the science community and the convention is of particular importance to link science to users and applications.

Additional publications:

- Envisat Symposium 2007 (Vodcast)
  www.esa.int/SPECIALS/ESApod/SEMZHP12Z0F_0.html

- ESA presents the sharpest ever satellite map of Earth
  www.esa.int/esaCP/SEMZ76V681F_index_0.htm
Environmental Conventions Panel  
Tuesday, April 24, 2007

The Context  
8:40 - 10:20  
Chair: Dr. Volker Liebig, Director of Earth Observation Programmes, ESA  
Pr. Jacqueline McGlade, EEA Director  
Dr. Roberto Acosta: UNFCCC Coordinator of the Adaptation, Technology and Science programme  
Dr. Gregoire De Kalbermatten, UNCCD Deputy Executive Secretary  
Dr. Peter Bridgewater, Ramsar Convention Secretary General  
Dr. Jeff Tschirley, FAO Chief, Environment, Climate Change and Bio Energy Division  
Dr. Ron Witt, UNEP, Regional Coordinator, Division of Early Warning and Assessment  
Dr. Mario Hernandez, UNESCO, Head of Remote Sensing Unit  
Pr. Ann Henderson-Sellers, WCRP Chairperson  
Pr. Kevin Noone, IGBP Executive Director

Understanding and Monitoring the Global Environment  
10:50 - 12:30  
Chair: Arino O., ESA  
An Update on the GlobCarbon Initiative: Multi-Sensor Estimation of Global Biophysical Products for Global Terrestrial Carbon Studies  
A Contribution to Improved Modelling of Arctic Sea Ice Dynamics in Global Climate Models: Early Results from the GlobIce Project  
GlobColour: Developing a Merged Global Ocean Colour Data Set for Carbon-Cycle Research  
Land Cover Observations to Support the UN Rio-conventions  
GlobCover - A Global Land Cover Service with MERIS

Supporting the Conventions  
14:00 - 15:40  
Chair: Arino O., ESA  
Space for UNFCCC and the Kyoto Inventory and GSE Forest Monitoring projects  
Space for UNCCD and the DesertWatch project  
Space for RAMSAR and the GlobWetland project  
Space for UNCBD and the Biodiversity project  
Space for the World Heritage Convention and the BEGo project