



Regional Workshop on CropWatch Innovative Cooperation Programme

“Advancing satellite-based crop monitoring to increase resilience in the face of global food insecurity.”

2-5 July 2024
Abuja, Nigeria

Concept note

Overview

Crop monitoring with earth observation on a massive scale are neither easy nor inexpensive exercises. However, both hold immense potential for better food security planning and progress toward Sustainable Development Goals. Yet, many developing countries do not have access to the required tools due to technology deficits or associated costs.

To overcome this, the CropWatch Innovative Cooperation Programme (CropWatch ICP) was launched in 2021 by the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO), and the Aerospace Information Research Institute (AIR) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). The programme could enhance capacities for food security early warning using the Earth observation satellite system for crop monitoring in developing countries. The CropWatch ICP programme aims to enable developing countries to conduct earth observation-based crop monitoring at a national and sub-national scale without additional investment in storage and computing facilities, allowing for better food security planning and achieving Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2: Zero Hunger.

Following a 2-month intensive online training in 2021, a side event titled “Application of Satellite Technology to Support Inclusive Implementation of the SDGs” was held at the 26th session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. This was followed by a regional workshop in August 2023 in Mauritius with 26 participants from Algeria, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lebanon, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, Syria, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It provided hands-on training to the participants and was highly appreciated by the participating countries.

The programme has been receiving a lot of interest from developing countries. Against this background, a regional workshop will be organized in Nigeria to bring together technicians, policymakers, and other stakeholders from West African countries to receive training to use the

CropWatch system. The workshop will also showcase the progress and effectiveness of the customized CropWatch system in Nigeria. Participants will be given access to the technology (both during and after the workshop), and provided with training to use it, including being shown how to customize it to specific local requirements. The workshop will be hosted by the National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA) of Nigeria in collaboration with UNCTAD, ANSO, and AIR-CAS.

Objectives

The main objective of this workshop is to facilitate and stimulate agricultural monitoring in the beneficiary countries for the advancement of the SDG goal of zero hunger. Specifically, the workshop aims to:

1. Train and educate participants to use the technology and tools made available to them under the CropWatch ICP project, enabling them to apply it in their countries to help achieve SDG 2: Zero Hunger. The technology will aid in better crop monitoring for food security purposes and providing the science-based information in support of food trade decision making.
2. Share knowledge alongside technology, providing participants from beneficiary countries with the skills and knowledge required to fully adopt the CropWatch system for their regular crop monitoring activities in the long-term, continuing to use the technology for crop monitoring autonomously after the project is finished.

Target Audience

The workshop will include 15-20 participants from the ministries of agriculture or space agencies of beneficiary West African countries. Priority will be given to those that participated in the online training in 2021 and are still interested in the project and working in the relevant field.