

GAF successfully completes provision of services in Western Madagascar for the UN-IFAD and ESA

Munich, May 3rd, 2011

GAF AG, an internationally active geo-information technology and consulting company, announces that it has successfully completed the provision of services in Western Madagascar for the UN-IFAD and ESA. For an area of about 14,000 km² in Madagascar, GAF has provided dedicated state of the art EO products which have been customised to meet the specific user requirements of the UN-IFAD in the best possible way.

International financial institutions (IFI) provide financial support and professional advice for development activities on local and regional scales in developing countries. Their activities are generally organised in dedicated projects financed by long-term loans or grants covering social and economical development aspects in a wide range of fields. For certain fields, EO (Earth Observation) products and services have been identified as a useful tool for supporting the monitoring and management of IFI projects in order to improve the efficiency of the investments made and to assess the impact and social benefits of the financed development activities.

ESA, as part of its Value Adding Element (VAE) programme, has been interacting with IFI and their stakeholders to understand their working environment and also their information requirements in particular with regard to EO services. This process resulted, among other things, in the definition of service specifications for the UN-IFAD (UN International Fund for Agricultural Development), which were put out to tender. GAF was awarded the Service Trial 2 contract, which was directly driven by the requirements of the supported IFAD project and its local stakeholders (the AD2M project, www.ad2m.mg).

For an area of about 14,000 km² in Western Madagascar (Menabe region), GAF has provided dedicated state-of-the-art EO products, such as

- Recent land cover map with 10m spatial resolution
- High resolution digital elevation model
- Customised information layers regarding slope and aspect for GIS import
- Basic drainage system mapping for irrigation planning and flood prevention

All the products were customised to meet the specific user requirements of the UN-IFAD in the best possible way. The UN-IFAD assessed all the products in detail. Benoit Thierry, the IFAD's Madagascar Country Programme Manager, stated after the final user workshop at UN-IFAD headquarters in Rome:

"With these products, we can get details about the land and develop action plans much quicker and only send teams to select areas. Of course, this is also true of monitoring and assessing the implementation of projects."

For more detailed information, please consult the news section of ESA's website, where the outcomes of all the projects implemented in Madagascar have been detailed extensively.

Link: http://www.esa.int/esaEO/SEM3NDYGRMG_index_0.html

About UN-IFAD – Italy

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a specialized agency of the United Nations, was established as an international financial institution in 1977 as one of the major outcomes of the 1974 World Food Conference. IFAD is dedicated to eradicating rural poverty in developing countries.

Working with rural poor people, governments, non-governmental organizations and many other partners, IFAD focuses on country-specific solutions to improve agriculture production, which can involve increasing rural poor peoples' access to financial services, markets, technology, land and other natural resources.

Since 1979, IFAD has funded 13 rural development projects in Madagascar for a total of US\$156.9 million. More on IFAD: www.ifad.org

About ESA / ESRIN – Italy

ESRIN, the ESA Centre for Earth Observation, is one of the five ESA (European Space Agency) specialised centres situated in Europe. Located in Frascati, a small town 20 km south of Rome in Italy, ESRIN was established in 1966 and first began acquiring data from environmental satellites in the 1970s. Since 2004, ESRIN has been the headquarters for ESA's Earth Observation activities.

ESRIN acts as an interface between ESA and those who use its services. The centre has close links with European industry, the European Union and the civil protection, agriculture and environment ministries within ESA Member States. ESRIN also cooperates with international organisations including UN agencies and the European Commission, and plays an important role in many international projects. More information about the ESA programme Value Adding Element is available at:

<http://www.eomd.esa.int/index.asp>

About GAF AG – Germany

GAF AG, an e-GEOS, Telespazio company, is globally active and has an international reputation as a skilled provider of project design, management and implementation services in the fields of geo-information, satellite remote sensing and spatial IT consultancy for private and public clients. Over the past 26 years, GAF has been active in more than 100 countries throughout Europe, Africa, South-America and Asia. More information about GAF is available at www.gaf.de

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