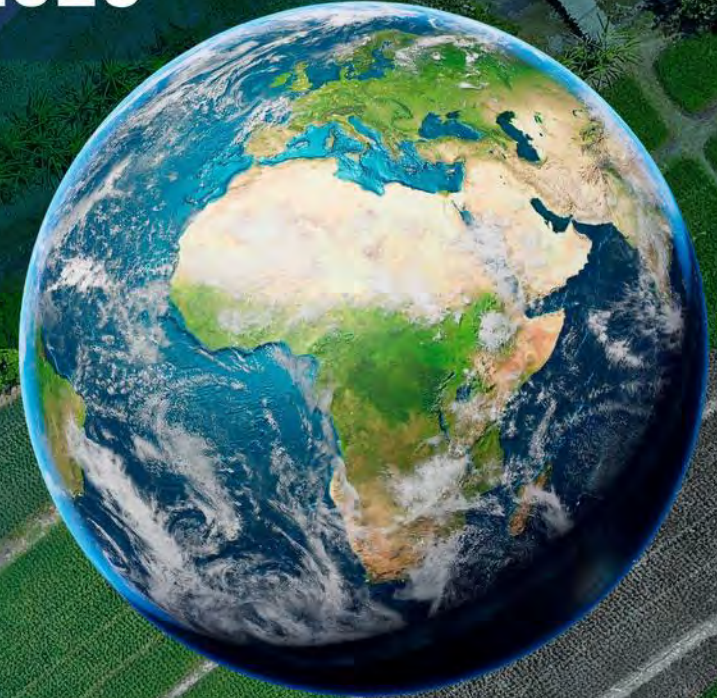


COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COP)
INTEGRATED WORKSHOP AND TRAINING **2026**

Earth Observation Infrastructure and Data Governance



INTEGRATED WORKSHOP

*An initiative of the DSTI that is hosted and
managed by the CSIR*

Co-Chairs

COP CO-CHAIRS

Dr Bolelang Sibolla



PhD Geoinformatics – University of Pretoria. BSc & MSc Geomatics – University for Cape Town.

15+ year experience in building EO applications, systems and downstream EO infrastructure

Current SA rep to the ISPRS & Secretary of ICWG on Openness in Earth Observation and Spatial Science

Mr Avin Mansookram



BScEng (Hons) (Electrical) – UND
BComm (Fin. Man.) – UNISA
MSS (Space Studies) – ISU

Over 25 years working across multiple sectors specializing in cloud optimization, data security, and IT governance

Recognized expert in satellite data management, Earth Observation data, and integrating AI with remote sensing for applications in agriculture, urban planning, and disaster management

Why this Community of Practice matters

*It responds to two linked needs: **trustworthy governance** and usable **EO infrastructure**.*

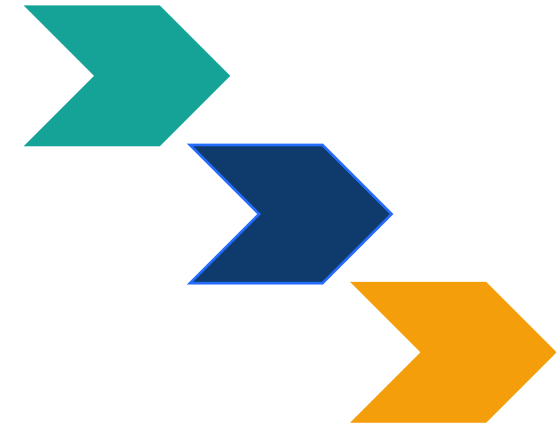
From fragmented EO assets...

Limited open-data policy uptake
Legal and compliance gaps
Scattered portals and systems
Skills gaps in processing and interpretation

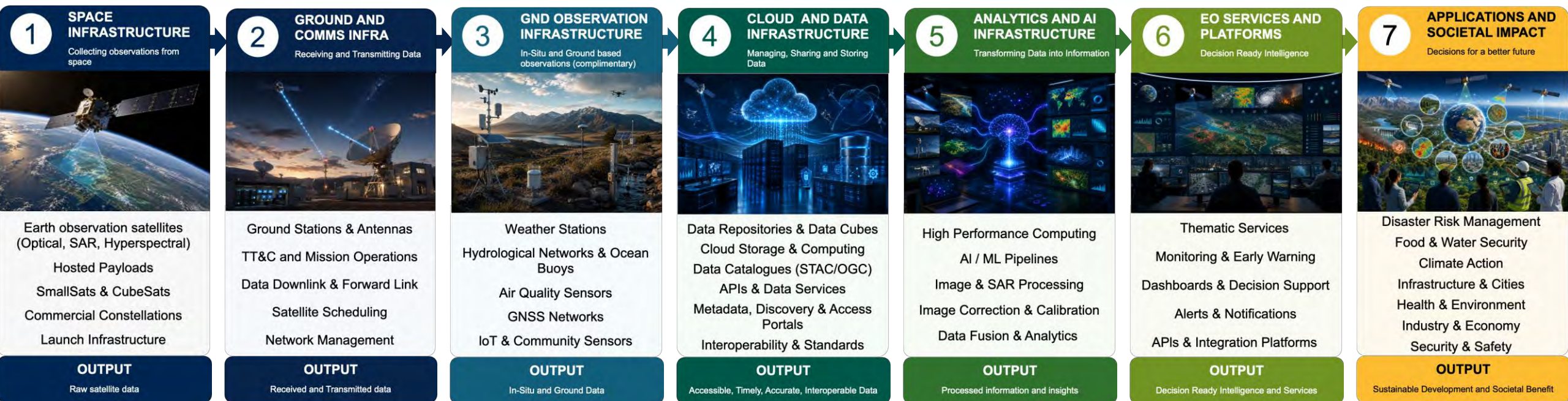


...to coordinated access, use and impact

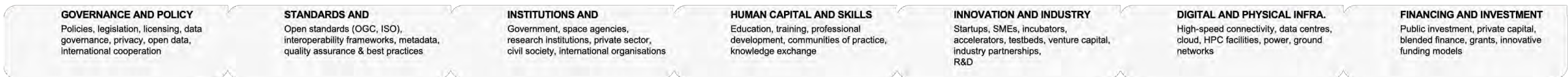
Principles for open EO data sharing
Operational discovery and access systems
Standards, best practice and coordination
Trained, connected users across sectors



EARTH OBSERVATION INFRASTRUCTURE VALUE CHAIN



FOUNDATION ENABLERS ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN



Overall goal: connect governance with infrastructure

The CoP links policy, standards, technical systems and user communities into a single improvement agenda.



Data Governance CoP: core objectives

Focus: reduce barriers to data sharing and strengthen policy, compliance and awareness.

1

Capacity building

Reduce barriers to implementing data policies and regulations.

2

Policy ToRs

Compile terms of reference for policy recommendations.

3

Framework awareness

Create awareness of available frameworks and initiatives.

4

Best-practice guidance

Support openness, transparency, stakeholder engagement and IPR practice.

Immediate problem focus: legal frameworks for access/sharing and stronger compliance with existing frameworks.

EO Infrastructure CoP: core objectives

Focus: operationalise infrastructure, improve discovery and access, and connect to international EO systems.



The CoP responds to growing EO data volumes and changing user expectations for easy access, processing and interpretation.

Priority challenges to address

The two CoPs converge around access, skills, coordination, legal frameworks and investment.

Data accessibility & availability

Legal access and sharing frameworks

Compliance with existing initiatives

Processing and system development skills

Interpretation capability

Infrastructure investment

Open data ideology

Coordination of custodians

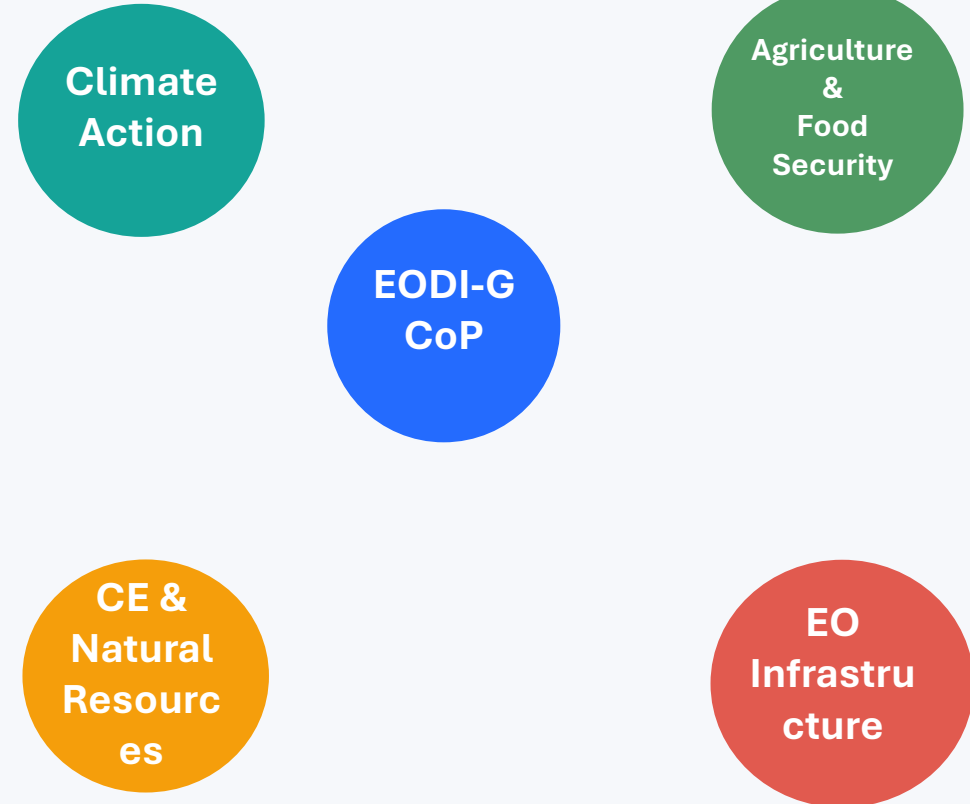
Expected outcomes and collaboration pathways

The intended value is more coordinated, discoverable and trusted EO data use across South Africa.

Expected outcomes

- Greater awareness of data-sharing policies
- Policy recommendations for open EO data
- Connected and trained users on existing databases and portals
- A single internet access point for data, imagery and analytical packages
- Access to links to existing systems
- Decisions informed by coordinated and sustained EO information

Collaboration ecosystem



Institutional alignment and work-plan emphasis

The work-plan can be structured over three years, with early emphasis on coordination, awareness and operational access.

National alignment

NSIF, CSI and data custodians
Spatial Data Infrastructure Committee
SANSA
SABS / ISO
Research and educational institutions

International alignment

CEOS Data Working Group
GEO data-sharing Working Group
GEOSS
ESA
Digital Earth Africa
EODC

Three-year work-plan emphasis

Year 1 Mobilise & assess

Year 2 Build & standardise

Year 3 Scale & institutionalise

Recommended immediate focus: confirm ToRs, map existing EO portals and custodians, agree data-sharing principles, and design a practical coordination mechanism.

DISCUSSION



THANK YOU

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