

AUSTRIA, ITEM 5

**Space for sustainable development: technology and its applications,
including the United Nations Programme on Space Applications
61st Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (29 January–9 February 2024)**

Thomas Hollensteiner

Chair,
Excellencies – Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Satellites play a vital role in today's society. Space applications help to understand the big challenges of humanity. They also play a decisive role in implementing sustainable development policies.

The planned **UNOOSA Space Solutions database** will show examples of space solutions across the globe. Many thanks to the **European Space Agency** for cooperating with UNOOSA on this project. We are proud to announce that around **60 Austrian Earth Observation projects** have been integrated in this database. The database is a very important tool to disseminate research results and raise awareness on the contribution of space to the SDGs.

The **World Space Forum** and the **UN/AT Symposium in Graz** also make a significant contribution to further raising awareness of the role of space in implementing the SDGs. The **"World Space Forum" series** of events on **"space as a driver for socioeconomic sustainability"** has been taking place since 2019. With the World Space Forum, we opened the UN door for a bigger audience to companies, NGO's and younger generation with the aim to contribute to a multi-stakeholder dialogue on space matters. The **5th edition of the Forum on "Space 4 Our Common Future"** was from 12-14 December 2023 in the Vienna International Centre. With the event, we drew the attention to the contribution of space solutions to policy areas discussed in the Summit of the Future. The **main takeaway** is that it is essential how we communicate about the space sector with decision makers, users and young people and that we need to provide illustrative examples to explain the added-value of space data for other sectors. We thank Germany for **organising the World Space Forum this year**, and we are very much looking forward to it.

The **symposium series "UN/AT Symposium in Graz"** has existed since 1994, and since 2020 there has been a focus on **"Space4Climate Action"**. In **2023**, Brazil, Slovenia and South Africa presented their approaches for the application of space for climate action. In the last two years, the symposia were followed by **training courses** on the use of space data. In 2023, the courses were held by the Canadian Space Agency (CSA), the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA), the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Applied Remote Sensing Training Programme (NASA ARSET) and the South African Space Agency (SANSA). Many thanks to all co-sponsors for their support. We had in total **1.185 registrations** from **130 nations** for the symposium in September 2023, 45 per cent more than in 2022. This shows that the COPUOS circle has been successfully opened up to other UN member states. Therefore, we are glad to learn that UNOOSA has included Space4Climate Action in their strategy.

The **UNOOSA website on Space4Climate Action** co-sponsored by Austria is up and running as a very useful **platform for information, events and training**. New articles on this website are posted via social media every Wednesday.

At the **28th UN Climate Change Conference (COP)**, the **space sector** was really well represented for the first time and UNOOSA Director Holla-Maini participated in the Space Agencies Panel. We are very pleased that space and climate are also becoming better interlinked at UN level.

The **30th edition of the UN/Austria Symposium will take place from 16 – 18 July 2024**. We have moved the date of the Symposium to July in order to better prepare a space-related contribution for the COP29 UN Climate Change Conference in November 2024.

We look forward to further expanding the two event series, World Space Forum and UN/Austria Symposium, to strengthen the dialogue on space and the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.