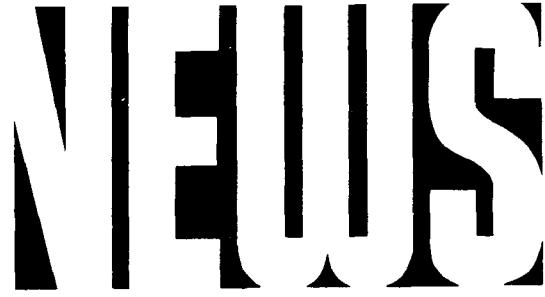


European Community



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EC JOINT RESEARCH CENTER TO PARTICIPATE IN WORLD SPACE CONGRESS

The European Community's Joint Research Center will send top officials and a major exhibition to the World Space Congress, August 28-September 5 in Washington, which marks International Space Year and celebrates the past, present, and future of space exploration and cooperation.

Attending the Congress will be Jean-Pierre Contzen, Director-General of the Joint Research Center (JRC) and Raymond Klerys, Director of the JRC's Institute for Remote Sensing Applications.

At 3.00 pm on September 3, Mr. Contzen will give a press conference at the World Space Congress, Room 3, Lower Level, Washington Convention Center, 900 9th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001. Members of the press are invited to attend.

The European Community's exhibition will highlight its Institute for Remote Sensing Applications (IRSA) as a major user of space technology in the service of mankind, particularly in the application of earth observation to world needs. IRSA, the largest institute of its kind in Europe, performs research in:

- **Remote Sensing Applied to European Agriculture**

A pilot project named MARS (Monitoring Agriculture with Remote Sensing) uses space images intensively: in one of its activities 53 test sites are observed 4 times a year by interpretation of SPOT (a French satellite system for earth observation) or Landsat Thematic Mapper images.

The new reforms of the EC's Common Agricultural Policy will rely on this project in estimating areas under cultivation and in monitoring set-aside. The project also studies vineyards, citrus orchards and olive groves and sends the data to the EC Commission's statistical office, EUROSTAT.

- **Monitoring the Marine Environment**

IRSA performs marine studies including the analysis of global change, coastal monitoring, study of the Northwest African Upwelling Area, the establishment of an Ocean Color European Archive Network (OCEAN).

- **Monitoring Tropical Vegetation**

In a joint project with the European Space Agency (ESA), IRSA has launched a major operation to monitor forests and biomass burning in the whole tropical orbit. This project called TREES (TRopical Ecosystem Environment observations by Satellite) should be a substantial contribution to the preservation of our ecological system.

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To assist EC development aid policy, IRSA has for many years used earth observation techniques in monitoring agriculture production in Sahelian countries and environmental conditions in large watersheds.

- Microwave Remote Sensing

IRSA utilizes the potential offered by the European Space Agency's ERS 1 satellite for new earth observation techniques such as microwave remote sensing with pilot projects in forestry and agriculture in its International Forest Investigation (IFI) program. These projects go beyond the application of operational techniques using SPOT, Landsat or NOAA/AVHRR (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration/Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer) data.

IRSA has recently inaugurated a unique facility, the largest civilian laboratory for studying microwave signatures measuring 15 by 20 meters. The European Microwave Signature Laboratory will serve many research centers as well as the aerospace industry. Collaboration with NASA, the US Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the US Department of Agriculture is foreseen.

Together with the ESA, IRSA set up a European Airborne Remote Sensing Capability (EARSEC) which offers to interested researchers the possibility to test the capability of airborne microwave remote sensing and other advanced sensors like imaging spectrometers.

- Environmental Mapping and Modelling

IRSA conducts research in land use planning in European marginal areas, land degradation and desertification and develops expert systems for land cover discrimination and mapping.

- Exploration of space data

A new initiative is being investigated through feasibility studies in order to establish a network of earth observation centers in Europe for an improved exploitation of environmental data and information.

IRSA is part of the EC Commission's Joint Research Center. Its four sites in Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands house eight different institutes, each with its own focus of expertise. These are:

Central Bureau for Nuclear Measurements, Geel, Belgium
Institute for Transuranium Elements, Karlsruhe, Germany
Environment Institute, Ispra, Italy
Institute for Remote Sensing Applications, Ispra, Italy
Institute for Safety Technology, Ispra, Italy
Institute for Systems Engineering and Informatics, Ispra, Italy
Institute for Advanced Materials, Petten, the Netherlands
Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, Ispra, Italy

JRC statutory staff amounts to 2180. The JRC also hosts 179 visiting scientists, experts from various national organizations and scientific fellows. The 1991 budget of the JRC was 250 million ECU, about \$313 million.

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