



Rome, December 2011

## **Telespazio (Finmeccanica/Thales) presents the “Love Planet Earth 2012” calendar dedicated to forests**

Telespazio, a joint venture between Finmeccanica (67%) and Thales (33%), presents the 2012 edition of the “Love Planet Earth” calendar, dedicated to forests. Featuring 12 extraordinary ultra-high resolution radar and optical satellite images produced by e-GEOS (ASI/Telespazio), the sixth edition of the calendar illustrates the transformations currently taking place on our planet, showing how increasing deforestation (and the consequent disappearance of vast original forests), pollution and global warming are threatening a vital resource for life and the protection of ecosystems.

The latest data released by the FAO reveal that around the world, 10 hectares of forest are destroyed every minute, or 4.9 million hectares each year. Between 1990 and 2005, 72.9 million hectares of forest vanished. The rate of net forest loss is also increasing: rising from 4.1 million hectares between 1990 and 2000 to 6.4 million hectares between 2000 and 2005.

Forests represent the most biodiverse systems on Earth. They are home to around two-thirds of all living animal and plant species, providing a wide variety of habitats for plants, animals and micro-organisms, they produce highly prized woods and act as cloud factories, playing a crucial role in preventing desertification. But the survival of this ancient ecosystem is in danger. In many regions of our planet, especially in Asia and South America, the conversion of forests into plantations and the logging of forests for timber, the indiscriminate exploitation of the land, imminent climate change, forest fires and pollution are having a potentially disastrous effect on biodiversity.

Europe is home to one billion hectares of forests, covering 45% of the continent’s surface area, which are growing at a rate of 800,000 hectares per year and are able to absorb up to 10% of its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Italy’s 9.1 million hectares of forests have grown significantly in recent years. This is mainly due to the move away from higher ground. Although this provides an opportunity for forests, it often translates into a further cause of disruption in the area.

The “migration” of green spaces is another phenomenon that can today be observed through the increasingly watchful eye of satellites, which provide ever more accurate data for studying and safeguarding forests.

Telespazio has for many years been involved in the observation of the Earth and, along with its subsidiary e-GEOS, a company created in partnership with the Italian Space Agency, is one of the major global operators in the field of geospatial information, offering an integrated

---

**Telespazio**, a joint venture between Finmeccanica (67%) and Thales (33%), is one of the world’s leading operators in satellite management services, Earth observation and satellite navigation, as well as in the field of integrated communications and scientific programmes. Telespazio plays a leading role in the reference markets harnessing technological experience acquired over the years and through its participation in major European space programmes such as: Galileo, EGNOS, GMES and COSMO-SkyMed. The company in 2010 generated sales of EUR 437 million, and employed around 2,500 staff.

range of application solutions, content and services, based on high-resolution optical and radar data.

This year, Telespazio's "Love Planet Earth" calendar will for the first time feature 12 satellite images, of which five are ultra-high resolution radar images captured by the satellites of the Italian COSMO-SkyMed constellation, data from which is distributed around the world by e-GEOS.

The calendar is printed on paper certified under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) programme, indicating that the wood used comes from forests managed in accordance with strict environmental, social and economic standards. Sustainable forest management is one of the potential solutions to the difficulties currently afflicting these habitats.

From today, the Love Planet Earth calendar and individual images can be downloaded to a PC desktop from Telespazio's website ( <http://www.telespazio.com/calendar12/index.html> ), where there is also an extensive section dedicated to these environmental topics, together with news and in-depth reports from a range of sources.