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Telespazio (Finmeccanica/Thales) presents the “Love Planet Earth 2008” calendar dedicated to the North and South Poles

Telespazio, a Finmeccanica/Thales company, is proud to present its *Love Planet Earth 2008* calendar, dedicated - in the International Polar Year - to the coldest places on Earth, those where global warming has had the biggest impact.

Through magnificent high-resolution satellite images, the calendar illustrates how Alaska, Siberia and Antarctica are the first regions to show the visible signs of our planet's suffering. 2008 will be an important year for reflection and action in our efforts to tackle issues such as pollution, changes to ecosystems and the melting ice caps. The Arctic and Antarctic play a key role in regulating the Planet's temperatures and weather systems. Understanding this mechanism is a great challenge for science, which requires continuous, global and highly detailed imagery data. Satellite images can provide objective information on these phenomena, and help to identify solutions that provide a better future for the Planet.

The satellite images collected by Telespazio for the Love Planet Earth 2008 calendar show the different realities of the Poles, and month by month reveal fascinating landscapes; the images do not simply represent their beauty, but stir emotional responses and remove our certainty that the world will never change; we hope they will also create a new awareness within us all.

Images, like the one of the enormous C-19 iceberg, which calved off the Ross Ice Shelf and has thereby significantly hindered penguins' access to feeding grounds, speak much louder than words. Mere words can also not express the fragility of the Lena River delta, threatened by the possible exploitation of its mineral resources. A satellite photo of the Antarctic reminds us of the rapid decline of krill, the tiny crustaceans that provide sustenance for many species, which is caused by warmer waters. Then, what for years was a dream for merchants and travellers is today becoming a reality: the Northwest Passage through the Arctic has now become navigable, as documented by the Italian radar satellites of the COSMO-SkyMed constellation. In another image we see Franz Joseph Land in Siberia, where polar bears live and hunt on the fragmented ice flow, transported by the currents. The image of the island of Ellesmere in Canada shows us how the deterioration of the permafrost on which they have lived for thousands of years has made the Inuit the world's first environmental refugees, a sad position of leadership they share with the inhabitants of the Polynesian atolls.

From today, you can download the calendar and individual images to your PC desktop from Telespazio's website (www.telespazio.com/calendar), where you will also find an extensive section dedicated to these environmental themes, together with news and in-depth reports from a range of sources.

Telespazio, a joint venture between Finmeccanica (67%) and Thales (33%), is a world leader in satellite services: from management of satellites to Earth observation services, from satellite navigation to broadband multimedia telecommunications. Telespazio plays a leading role in the reference markets harnessing technological experience acquired over the years and through its participation in major European space programs such as: GALILEO, EGNOS, GMES and COSMO-SkyMed.