

**International Space Forum 2019 - The Mediterranean Chapter  
Space Technology and Applications meet Mediterranean  
Needs Reggio Calabria, 5th September, 2019**

**“Space services also on earth”!**

Thank you, Madam Chair,

Dear friends of space,

Dear space enthusiasts,

For my introduction allow me to get off the beaten track.

Do you know what is appealing in such an organization  
dedicated to space, in this case maritime?

The diversity of participants. Gathered here today are:  
Decision- makers, PHD’s, Researchers, Space Authorities,  
Scientific and Academic institutions as well as Heads of Space  
Agencies and representatives of International Space  
Organisations.

Great! But let us note that meetings like this attract only people  
from the Space Sector and people with an interest in this area.  
But I want to underline, the presence Ministers and Local  
Authorities, already convinced that space is a lever to develop  
their Country and cities.

## But why the diversity of participants is so interesting?

I'll tell you...

Because space needs advocates!

Because space still lives too much in isolation

Because space is not popular enough.

Because space is not well-known enough on the services it brings!

Allow me to explain: Everybody loves to see rockets, new spacecrafts, movies on space, astronauts and pictures of the Earth from space.

But people are unable to identify 10 services even 5 services provided by space! And worse they think that space is too expensive and the money invest in space will be better invest on earth! A fundamental problem! A dilemma!

Reasons why we need advocates!!

For my point of view, we have 3 major roles to play:

- Adapting our communication to the public. Most of the time the communication is too technical to be attractive. Space must be closer to civil society!!
- Convincing more Politicians, which shape public policy and allow funding's at all level (national, regional and

local), that space is a super tool to help them in their daily management.

- To make Space more in support in Academics initiatives unrelated to space.

As someone who has spent a career of 27 years in national politics in Belgium, I can say from my experience that we do not enough to convince politicians, who are unconnected with Space and the benefits that it can bring.

This effort of conviction, Eurisy is doing it now for 30 years. We do it of course with our members which are public institutions and mainly Space Agencies- in particular Italian Space Agency that I would like warmly thank for the co-organization of this conference.

Let me turn now to our subject: what satellite applications may do in the Mediterranean?

We have seen, in the keynote speeches and statements some great examples of how applications derived from national programmes and the space programmes of the European Commission provide services in the field of Maritime Surveillance, and monitoring the state and health of the Mediterranean Sea.

At Eurisy, most of the countries of our members have access to the sea, reason why we dedicated recently one of our staff on maritime questions.

In recent years Eurisy has collaborated at the concept of “satellite solutions for smarter islands”, focussing on user needs in field such as transport, water management, offshore energy, marine farming, and offshore pollution.

None of these fields is traditionally related to space, but all benefit greatly from the incorporation of satellite applications aimed at monitoring and managing activities.

This kind of actions can help decision makers to develop dedicated policies in civilian sectors which will take advantage of the benefits of satellite services.

Y last example is the “European Smart Islands Initiative” of which many Mediterranean Islands are members. This is an initiative that “seeks to convey the significant potential of islands to function as laboratories for technological, social, environmental, economic and political innovation”. Again, it does not mention satellite applications specifically anywhere, but it is clear from Eurisy’s work on Smart Islands that satellite applications play already a role and can play a more important role in all of these areas.

As you see, Eurisy is already working with a number of associations or networks representing different communities in civil society. By engaging with these communities, we help the user-needs to identify their needs and communicate it back to the Space Sector to help to develop satellite application solutions.

I conclude,

Forget, forget that space is just the world of high-level engineers and technicians working on propulsion, new materials or engines and robots for space missions!

Space also becomes the world of end-users, serving civil projects, helping for example entrepreneurs and farmers with new technologies, facilitating the life of the citizens at home, in the traffic, on sea but also for taking care of their health with telemedicine, emergency call and many many others services without forgetting the monitoring of pollution and climate change.

Yes, we can say that space definitively is a support, an opportunity and a chance for all of us on earth!!

Dominique Tilmans

Chair of Eurisy