

CSIR and Alcatel join forces to develop skills in space science

Space science expertise in South Africa and France will receive a boost following a skills development agreement between the CSIR and Alcatel Alenia Space France.

Cooperation is envisaged in the areas of landcover mapping; platform development and electronics (mechanical and optical); broadband solutions via satellite; satellite navigation and transport applications; spatial data infrastructure; and development in astronomy-related initiatives.

"Where human resource development is concerned, the CSIR and Alcatel have earmarked the areas of navigation, earth observation, environmental research and meteorology," explains Dr Phil Mjwara, CSIR Group Executive: Research and Development (R&D).

"Our collaboration will include R&D activities in satellite programmes, space data information systems, and customers' requests for information, to mention but a few areas," he says.

"Alcatel is very glad to have signed this memorandum of understanding with the CSIR. We believe that this agreement will pave the way for the implementation of space projects, enabling us to bridge the digital divide within Africa," comments Linda Khumalo, CEO of Alcatel South Africa.

A steering committee will oversee the implementation of the agreement. The committee, consisting of three people each from the CSIR and Alcatel, will also identify specific projects for collaboration.

The two organisations intend to consolidate global cooperation in the space domain to strengthen their respective competencies and knowledge. The aim is to contribute to socio-economic progress, both in South Africa and France .

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