

Darmstadt (Germany), 31 March 2021

Telespazio Germany will provide preparation and operations services for ESA's Biomass and FLEX missions

- **Telespazio Germany will provide the services to ESOC until at least the end of 2024**
- **ESA's Biomass and FLEX missions aim to help better understand the global carbon cycle and reveal new findings on the Earth's forests and vegetation**
- **This is the first time that ESOC is entrusting the responsibility for complete Service Teams for mission preparation and operations to a single service provider**

Telespazio Germany, a subsidiary of Telespazio – a joint venture between Leonardo (67%) and Thales (33%) – has been awarded a European Space Agency (ESA) contract to provide the European Space Operations Centre (ESOC) preparation and operations engineering services for Biomass and FLEX missions. The contract runs until at least the end of 2024.

Earth Observation missions Biomass (Earth Explorer 7) and FLEX (Earth Explorer 8), part of ESA's Living Planet Programme, aim to help researchers and scientists to better understand the global carbon cycle and reveal new findings on the Earth's forests and vegetation.

Thanks to its novel instrument FLORIS, realized by Leonardo and able to provide global maps of vegetation fluorescence, FLEX (Fluorescence Explorer) will measure for the first-time photosynthetic activity and plant health from space. The FLEX mission, built by a consortium led by Thales Alenia Space (joint venture between Thales 67% and Leonardo 33%) as program prime contractor, will provide the better understanding required for improved agricultural management and food security and contribute to meeting the growing world food production demand.

By 2022, ESA's Biomass Earth Explorer satellite – for which Leonardo and Thales Alenia Space will supply key equipment – will provide a global map of the amount of carbon stored in the world's forests and will reveal the condition of forests both on and subsurface. Biomass's research results will not only advance science, but also support UN goals in the reduction of emissions from deforestation (REDD+).

Telespazio Germany, as prime contractor, and its partners started delivering a new service model for the Biomass mission builds upon a set of services developed since time by Telespazio for the provision of engineering and operational capabilities for multiple Customers.

"The proposal combined all the best components from a wide range of service models that Telespazio Germany implements, at ESOC, DLR and EUMETSAT. This is the first time that ESOC is entrusting the responsibility for complete Service Teams for mission preparation and operations to a single service provider" has declared **Paul Bearman**, Head of Systems Engineering Division, Telespazio Germany.

Telespazio, a Leonardo and Thales 67/33 joint venture, is one of the world's leading operators in satellite services. Its activities range from the design and development of space systems to the management of launch services, from in-orbit satellite control to Earth observation, from integrated communications, satellite navigation and localisation services to scientific programmes. Telespazio plays a leading role in the reference markets harnessing technological experience acquired over the years. Since its establishment, the company has participated in major European space programmes such as Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus and COSMO-SkyMed. In 2019, Telespazio generated sales of EUR 535 million while employing 3,000 people in nine countries.