

Press release: Scottish space technology tackles global environmental issues

This National Space Day (3 May 2019), the Department for International Trade (DIT) celebrates the success of the Scottish space sector which could be worth £4bn by 2030.

Scotland plays a key role in the wider UK space industry valued at £15bn and growing by 3.3% per annum, making it a global success story.

In 2016/17, UK space exports were worth £5.5bn, and the industry currently generates more than 37% of income from abroad. In the same year, the UK space industry supported 41,900 jobs – with nearly a fifth based in Scotland.

One company boosting Scotland's space sector is Edinburgh-based Ecometrica. The space and sustainability business uses innovative satellite data to help combat global challenges such as deforestation and climate change.

Dylan Thomas, Deputy Director of Technology, Entrepreneurship and Advanced Manufacturing at DIT, said:

“Ecometrica is a great example of how satellite technology can help tackle economic, societal and environmental issues, solving the most pressing global challenges of our time.

“The Scottish space sector is dynamic and ever growing, and Scotland alone is home to more than 130 space businesses, generating a combined income of £140m.

“Businesses like Ecometrica ensure that the UK continues to thrive in the space sector, which is why the Department for International Trade is committed to providing support for hundreds of Scottish businesses to identify export opportunities.”

Ecometrica's satellite mapping technology provides businesses and governments with actionable insights using images gathered from space, air and land, changing the way space data is used globally.

With 25 employees based in Edinburgh, Ecometrica exports its services to nine countries including Malaysia, Sweden and Turkey. The company also has offices in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

Gary Davis, CEO of Ecometrica, said:

“Our latest growth phase has seen us focus on export markets and expand geographically, especially in the Americas. Our Agile Space approach means we are constantly thinking of new ways to adapt and improve the Ecometrica Platform, and our Research & Development team works very closely with our

customers to ensure it meets their current and future needs.

“We will continue to focus on satellite mapping, which will be an ongoing part of our story as many more governments, organisations and industries wake up to the power of geospatial data and satellite mapping.”

Ecometrica is currently leading on Forests 2020, a UK Space Agency project, to help protect and restore up to 300 million hectares of tropical forests through satellite data by improving forest monitoring systems in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Ghana, Kenya and Indonesia.