

## World news story: UK Space Agency to run £2.2mil project in Malaysia & Indonesia

The UK Space Agency (UKSA) will be running a £2.2 mil project in Malaysia and Indonesia to use satellite observations and measurements to monitor peatland areas, thereby reducing the occurrence of forest fires and haze in South East Asia. The project, named Peatland Assessment in SE Asia by Satellite (PASSES) will be delivered by CGI IT UK Ltd in partnership with the Global Environment Centre (GEC) of Malaysia.

The state-of-the-art project will map peat condition using observations from satellites through the EU Copernicus programme and emerging industrial hosted processing capabilities. By monitoring water levels and improving hydrology in the peatland areas, the risk of fire can be dramatically reduced.

Her Excellency Vicki Treadell CMG MVO, the British High Commissioner to Malaysia, welcomed the initiative and said:

This project is the latest example of the UK's partnership with Malaysia in tackling global environmental challenges. This cutting-edge UK space technology will monitor risk areas, so it helps to reduce forest and peatland fires as well as haze that they cause. As such it will also reduce the significant health risks from haze as well as global CO2 emissions. So whether on the ground or now from space, Britain's partnership with Malaysia is helping to improve the lives of Malaysians and the environment in which they live.

Faizal Parish, Director of Global Environment Centre (Malaysia) said:

The PASSES project will further develop and demonstrate new cost effective satellite technology suitable for detecting and monitoring vertical displacement over very large peatland areas. As such it will be highly strategic in enabling more efficient targeting and monitoring of results of management actions including water management and peatland restoration as well as supporting fire and haze prevention, both in Malaysia and Indonesia. PASSES is one of 10 new projects under UKSA's International Partnership Programme announced by the UK Science Minister Sam Gyimah on 8 Feb 2018. The projects underline the importance of bringing together the UK's world-class research and expertise to deliver innovative solutions to real world problems across the globe.

The successful projects, worth £38 million in total, are led by a diverse range of organisations from the UK's growing space sector, from large companies such as Inmarsat and CGI, to start-ups such as Guildford-based Earth-i. The UK Space Agency and industry are working together to grow the UK's share of the global space market to 10% by 2030.

Science Minister Sam Gyimah said:

The UK Space Agency's International Partnership Programme will help developing countries tackle big issues like disaster relief and disease control, while showcasing the services and technology on offer from our leading space businesses.

The International Partnership Programme is part of the UK's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's Global Challenges Research Fund. It is a £1.5 billion fund from the UK Government, which supports cutting-edge research and innovation on global issues affecting developing countries.