

# UNLOCKING WATER MANAGEMENT FROM PATTERNS OF THE PAST



**Digital Earth**  
AFRICA

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# Digital Earth Africa is using satellite imagery to improve the management of Africa's water resources.

Water is among the most precious of natural resources. As global populations continue to grow and industrial processes increase, so too does our demand for fresh water.

In Africa, 86% of water withdrawals are used for agricultural purposes<sup>1</sup>. However, inefficient irrigation, evaporation and a lack of storage mean trillions of litres of water are wasted each year.

By providing farmers with decision-ready data to improve irrigation plans and adjust timing and resource allocation, Digital Earth Africa could help to save 176 billion cubic meters of water a year, equivalent to a \$880 million USD reduction in water abstraction costs<sup>2</sup>.

A continental-wide Water Observations from Space service is available for all of Africa to understand where water is permanent, intermittent or occurs rarely. Users can identify trends in changes to water supply over time, informing more sustainable agricultural practices and a greater understanding of flood and drought.

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1. FAO (2019), FAOSTAT
2. Mohammad Faiz Alam (2016), 'Evaluating the benefit-cost ratio of groundwater abstraction for additional irrigation water on global scale.'

