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## Citizen Science and Deforestation Monitoring the ForestWatchers initiative

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Type:	Briefing
Location:	Geneva, Switzerland
Date:	21 Nov 2012
Duration:	1 Days
Programme Area:	Satellite Imagery and Analysis
Website:	<a href="http://www.unitar.org/unosat/">http://www.unitar.org/unosat/</a>
Price:	\$0.00
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Partnership:	INPE

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### BACKGROUND

Despite public awareness of the plight of tropical forests, it is difficult for concerned citizens to help preserve them. ForestWatchers solves this problem. It involves citizens around the globe in monitoring deforestation. Volunteers help monitor forests using a Web interface to review satellite images of forested regions, choose the highest quality images, and ultimately help in the assignment of forested and deforested regions.

Launched publicly in September 2012 to considerable media attention, the project is currently in a phase of intense public testing. The goal for 2013 is to go into production mode, providing volunteer-assisted deforestation assessment for countries and regions that do not have the necessary infrastructure or manpower. The possibility of combining the satellite-based results with local knowledge from the field, entered via mobile phones, will be explored at this stage, and integrated in the same platform.

ForestWatchers is at the vanguard of the “open science” movement, emphasizing Brazil's commitment at a national level to open source software and freely accessible satellite imagery, and producing results that are made available through open access publications and open data policies.

ForestWatchers is jointly coordinated by Brazil’s National Institute for Space Research (INPE) and the Citizen Cyberscience Centre (CCC) in Geneva, of which UNITAR is a founding partner. Research & development is being conducted by researchers and students from INPE and the Universidade Federal de São Paulo (UNIFESP).

## EVENT OBJECTIVES

This Meeting provides an opportunity for participants, through discussion and knowledge sharing, to:

- Understand the issue of deforestation
- Gain knowledge on the current research on the use of computer science for deforestation
- Share insights and experiences as to their professional work, objectives and priorities
- Inspire and motivate others with same tasks and responsibilities
- Identify priorities and means for the ForestWatchers Project in national and international arenas
- Express needs for support and capacity development
- Create networks for support and knowledge sharing across thematic fields

## TARGETED AUDIENCE

The meeting will target stakeholders involved in deforestation monitoring.