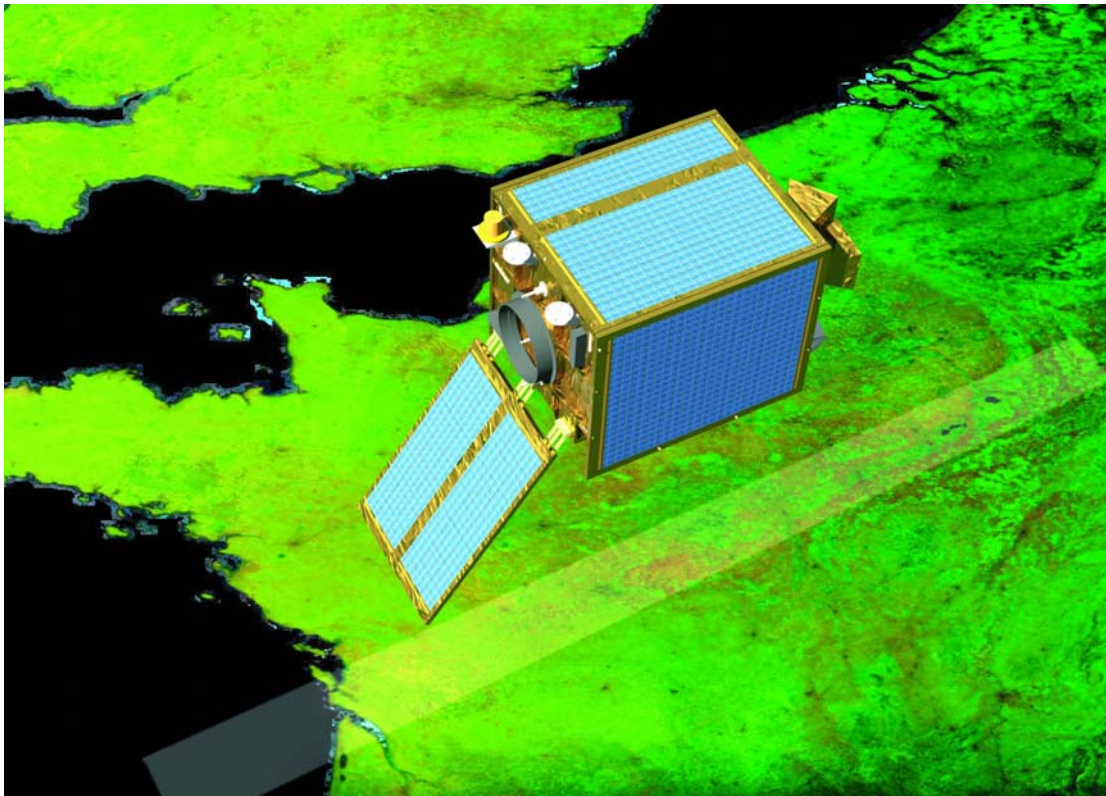




Go-ahead for the new Belgian satellite PROBA V



Early this year VERHAERT SPACE signed a contract with the European Space Agency ESA for the development of a new satellite in the PROBA-family. It concerns a first phase in the development of a new micro-satellite. "We expect that the second phase, with the full contract for the building of the satellite, launch and ground infrastructure, will be awarded the second half of this year" says Frank Preud'homme, Commercial Director at VERHAERT SPACE.

The first Belgian satellite PROBA 1, launched in 2001, confirmed the use of small satellites for earth observation, a market that strongly evolves and in which VERHAERT SPACE, as builder of PROBA, plays a prominent role. Continuing miniaturization of electronics and optronics provide to small satellites capabilities of their larger brothers. PROBA V will open up new horizons for small earth observation platforms. A platform of barely 160kg and an instrument of 25 kg will outperform an older satellite of several tons with an instrument of 150kg.

The goal of the PROBA V mission fits completely within the framework of the Global Monitoring for Environment & Security (GMES) programme of the European Commission and the ESA. Today the SPOT 4 and SPOT 5 earth observation satellites, which were launched in 1998 and 2002, each have one multi-spectral Vegetation instrument. It offers a global earth observation system, with daily global coverage satellite images, that are distributed to 7.500 end-users. The Belgian VITO is responsible for this service.

The images are used for environment and nature applications but also e.g. for environmental planning and nature or environmental disasters.

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PRESS RELEASE



The Vegetation observations will be continued with even better sensors by the ESA satellite Sentinel 3, which however will only be operational around 2015. PROBA V, which will be operational around 2011-2012, will fill the gap between the CNES and the Sentinel satellites and will complement the data of the future Sentinel 3.

The PROBA V micro- satellite will carry an improved Vegetation camera, which will make daily global coverage satellite images with a resolution of 100 meters in the visible and 200 meters in the infrared spectrum.

VERHAERT SPACE in Kruibeke is prime contractor. Spacebel in Liège is responsible for the on-board software and ground software. The compact assembly of 3 identical telescopes will be developed by the Belgian companies OIP Sensor Systems (Oudenaarde), Amos (Liège) and XeniCs (Louvain). The ESA-ground station in Redu, with Redu Space Services, will act as control centre.

VERHAERT SPACE currently employs 69 people in Kruibeke and 37 people in Redu, mostly highly skilled and many with postgraduate qualifications. VERHAERT SPACE currently recruiting new engineers to complete the new satellite projects

VERHAERT SPACE is a Belgian Space System Integrator, based in Kruibeke, Designing and building Small Satellites, Cornerstone subsystems like the International Berthing and Docking Mechanism to interconnect large spacecraft, and scientific instruments for research in Space. VERHAERT SPACE became a QinetiQ company in 2005. VERHAERT SPACE has longterm partnership agreements with VERHAERT New PRODUCTS & SERVICES that is active in industrial New Product Development.