



Space Sustainability, a multidisciplinary approach- ENG- 587

*Introduction to the
Space Sustainability
Rating (SSR)*

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Rating Vice-president

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OUR MISSION

Encouraging space actors to **design & implement sustainable & responsible space missions** for the long-term sustainability of the space environment



A GLOBALLY SHARED RESOURCE UNDER PRESSURE



Space infrastructure
& services are
essential to **life on
Earth**



A growing number of
objects are **orbiting
around earth**

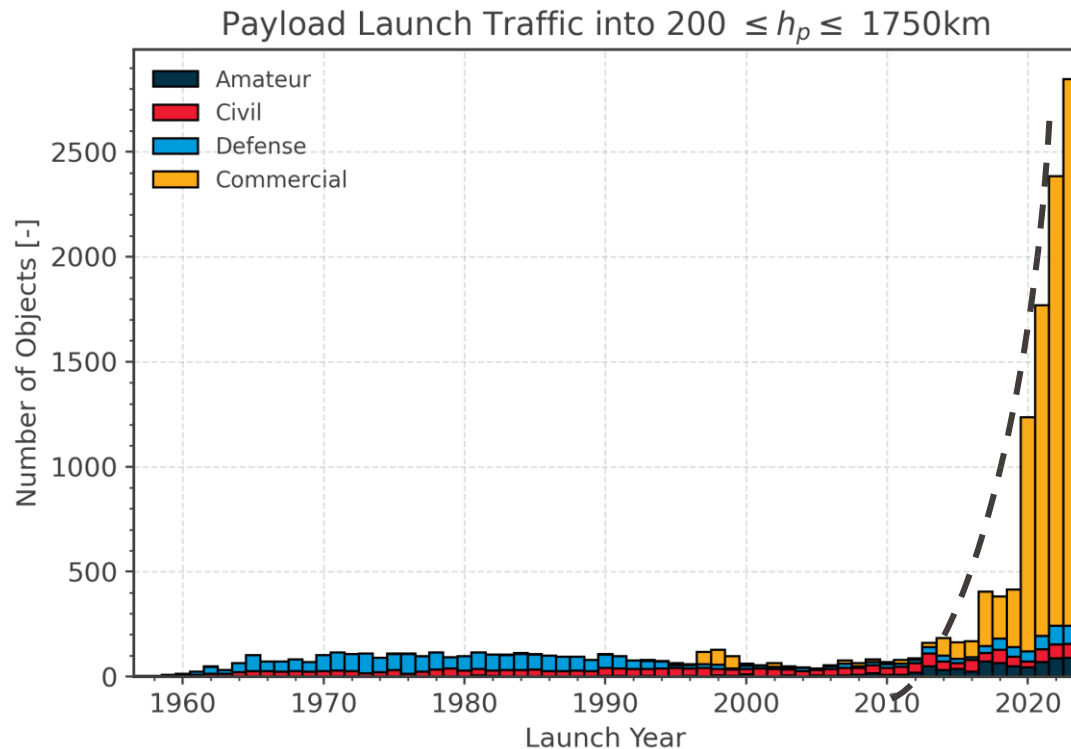


Increasing awareness
on the challenges
raised by **space
debris &
unsustainable space
operations**



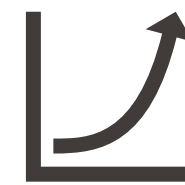
A number of existing
**international
guidelines** are not
enforced

AN INCREASINGLY CROWDED SPACE ENVIRONMENT...



Source: ESA, [Space Environment Statistics](#)

Launch traffic, 1960-2022

**x10**

In the last decade



Launch traffic forecast, 2022-2031

24,500

Satellites to be launched in the coming decade

**+327%**

Of active satellites the next decade

Source: Euroconsult [Satellites to be Built & Launched, 25th edition](#)

... THREATENING OPERATIONAL SAFETY

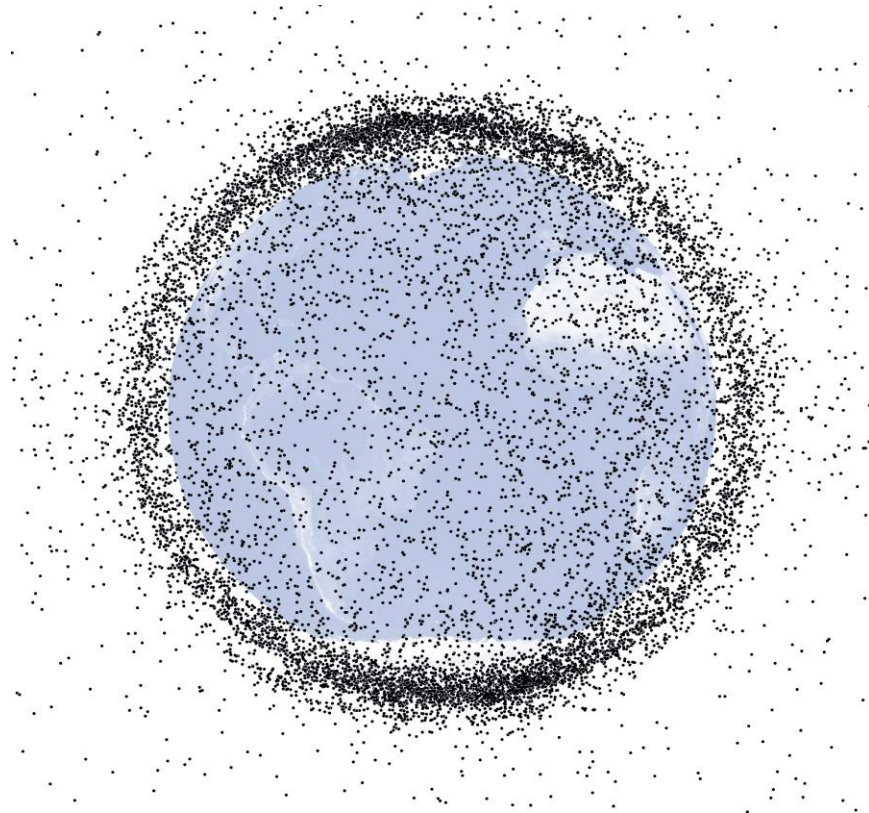
40,500

*Debris greater than 10
cm in size in 2024 ⁽¹⁾*

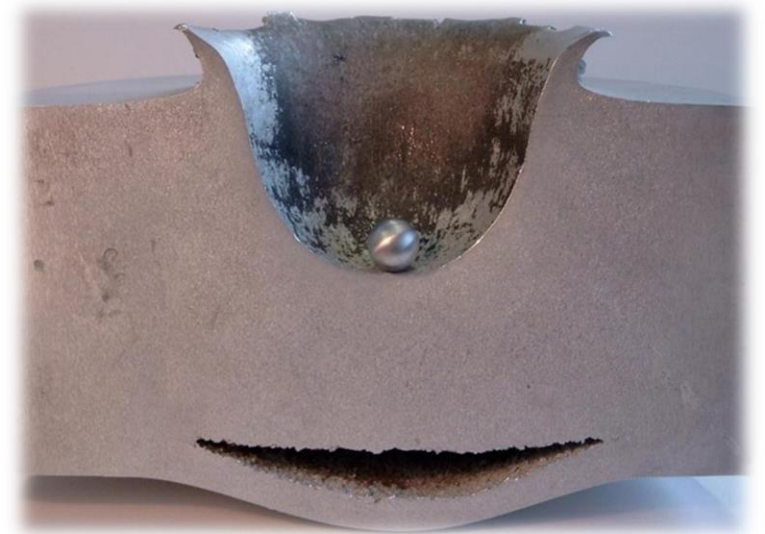
1,100,000

*Debris greater than 1
cm in size in 2024 ⁽¹⁾*

Source: ESA, [Space Environment Statistics](#)



Source: NASA Orbital Debris Program Office, image based on models (debris size not to scale), 25 August 2009

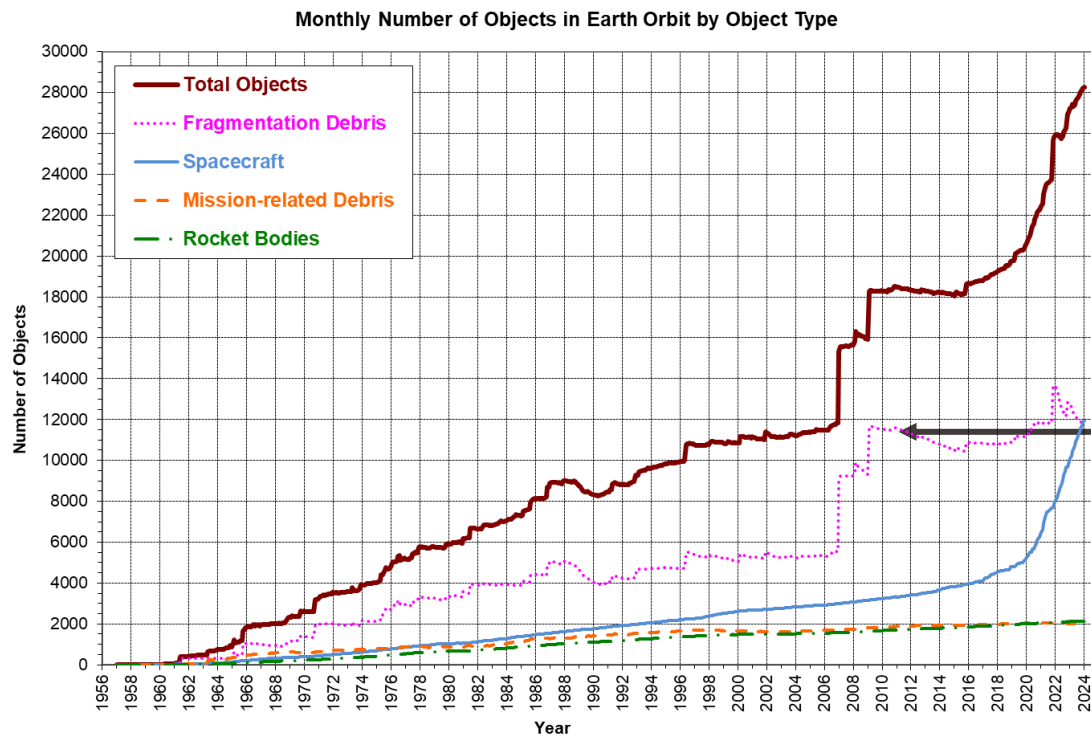


1 cm \approx 

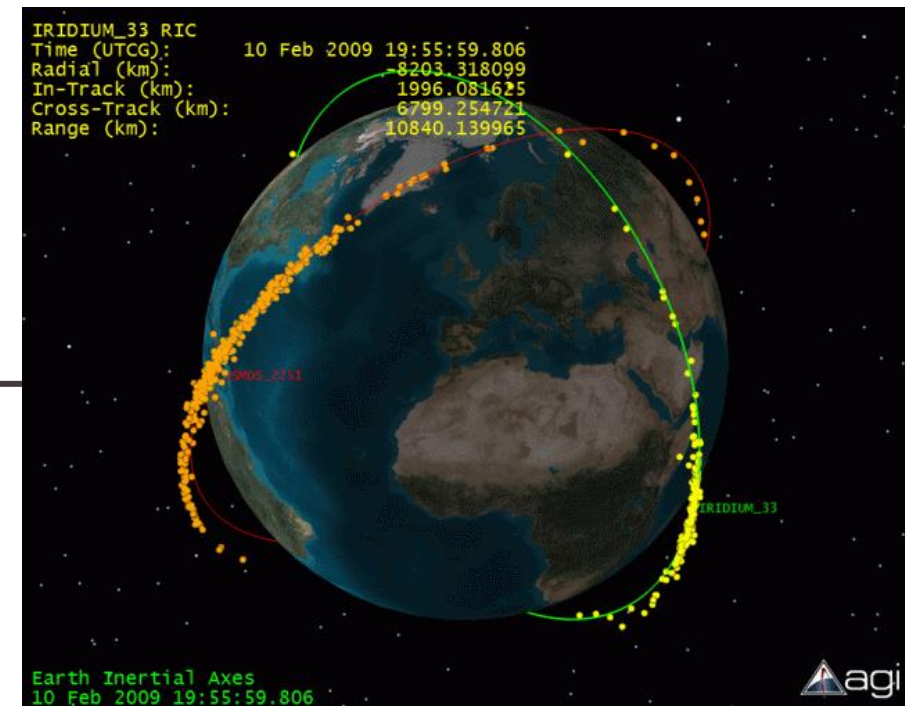
Source: ESA, [effects of hypervelocity impacts](#)

CATASTROPHIC COLLISIONS

cause **significant financial losses**, create **thousands of new debris objects** and **endanger the long-term use of orbits**



Source: NASA [Orbital Debris Charts](#), April 2024



Source: AGI 2009 [Iridium-Cosmos Satellite Collision](#)

BUSINESS AS USUAL IS RECKLESS

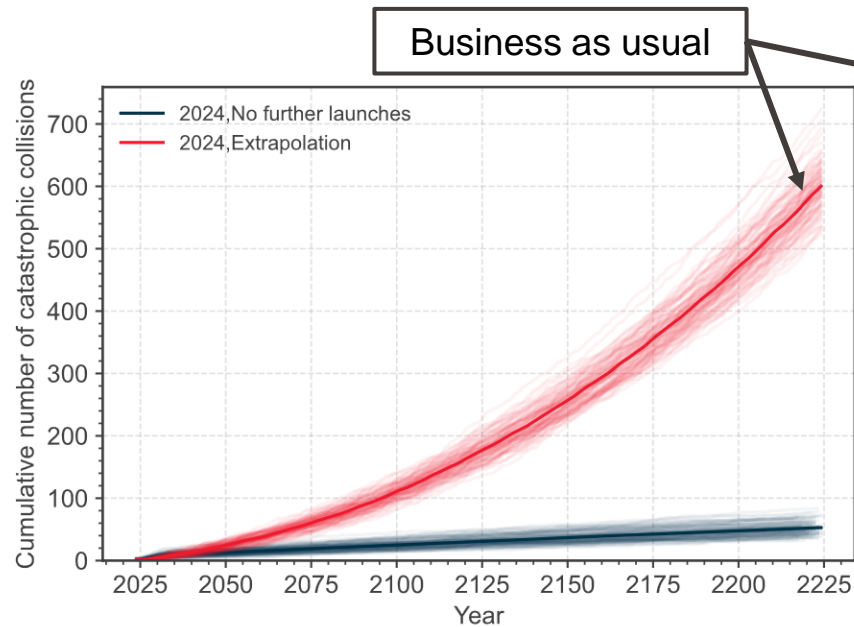
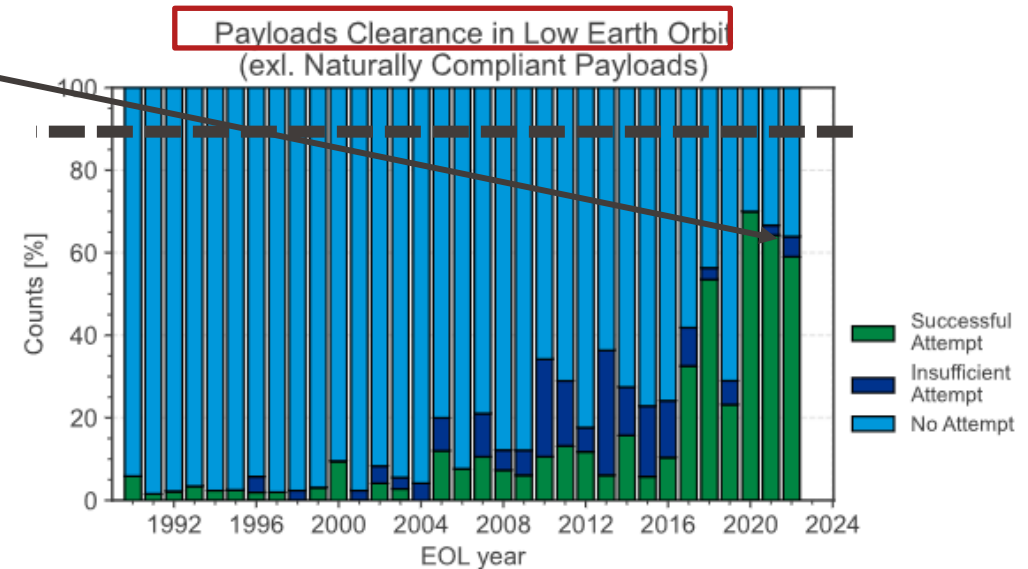


Figure 7: Number of cumulative collisions in LEO_{IADC} in the simulated scenarios of long-term evolution of environment.



(a) Relative clearance of LEO_{IADC} by payloads.

Low level of compliance

To mitigation measures for spacecraft disposal in the LEO region

Source: ESA'S [ANNUAL SPACE ENVIRONMENT REPORT](#)

BRACE FOR CHANGE



Anticipate a more **stringent regulatory landscape**

SPACENEWS

FCC approves new orbital debris rule

Jeff Foust September 29, 2022

ESA seeks global adoption of "zero debris" policy

Jeff Foust January 20, 2023

Updated space safety document outlines rules of the road for avoiding collisions

Jeff Foust April 5, 2023



Growing importance of **public perception & protect reputation**



IMPLEMENTING A FUTURE-PROOF VISION

**Take an active role in making space safer
& more sustainable, for all**

Design
missions compatible
with **responsible**
operations



Operate missions
minimizing **impact**
on the orbital
environment &
other operators



Communicate on
space
sustainability &
debris mitigation
efforts



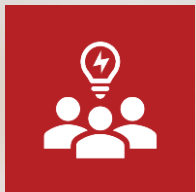
REWARDING RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR IN SPACE



A **rating system** informed by **transparent, data-based assessments** of the level of sustainability of space missions

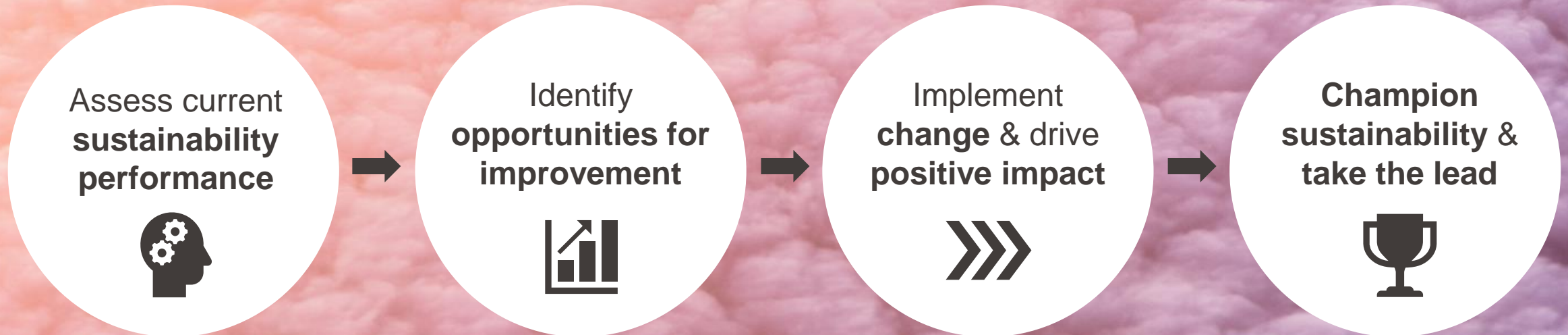


Practical guidance on how to **improve** sustainability performance & practices



A **platform for action-focused collaboration** centered on the rating system to support research and leverage best practices

SUPPORTING SPACE ACTOR'S SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY



A SINGLE SCORE TO MEASURE SPACE SUSTAINABILITY



SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**



BRONZE



SILVER



GOLD

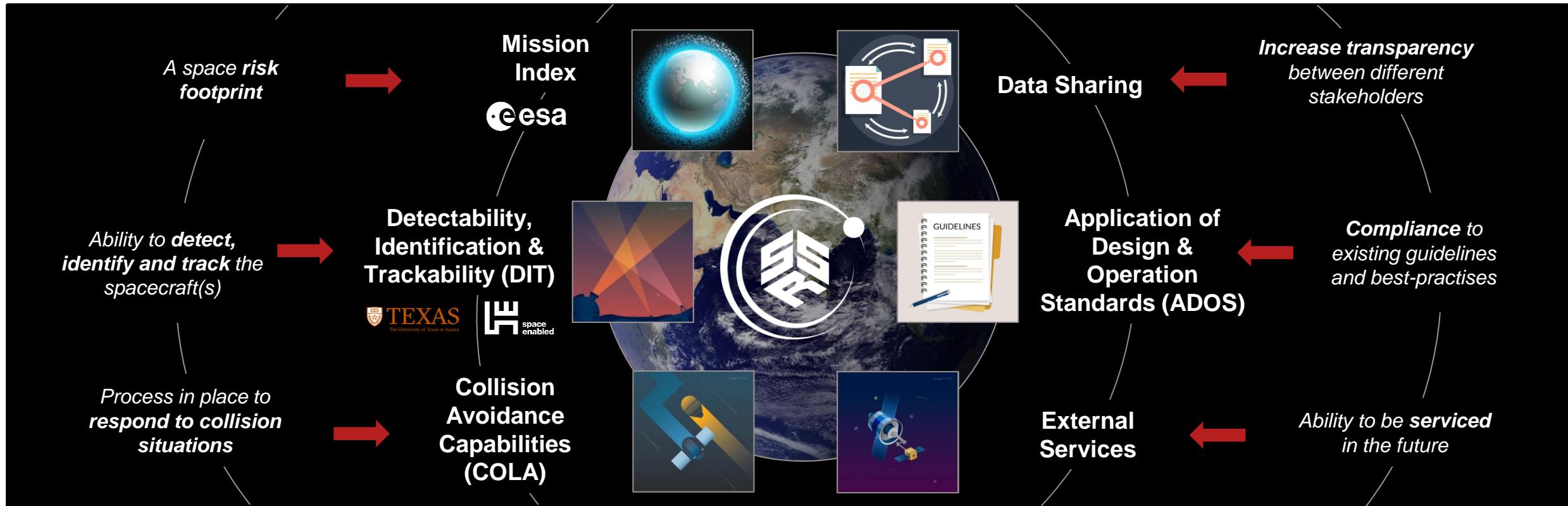


PLATINUM

RATING SCOPE

- **Satellite** missions in **near earth orbits**
- A mission can consist of a **single satellite**, a **satellite and launch vehicle**, or **larger combinations of these elements**, e.g. several satellites and launch vehicles
- A rating is valid for **12 months**, upon its finalization (regular reassessments are needed to ensure the rating trustworthiness)
- A rating can be performed at **any mission phase**, including in preliminary design and in orbit phases

A MODULAR RATING

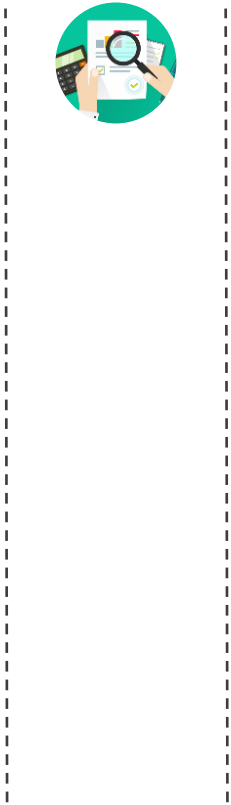


IN A NUTSHELL

- **Collision probability** over the entire mission lifetime
- **Risk reduction** thanks to collision avoidance strategy
- **Post mission disposal** efficiency and reliability
- **Collision avoidance** capabilities (processes)
- **Transparency** when it comes to spaceflight safety data sharing
- **Compliance with existing design and operation standards** for debris mitigation (i.e., guidelines, best-practises)
- Ability of spacecraft to be **detected, tracked**
- Readiness to be **removed or serviced**

HOW IS A MISSION RATED?

1. Data collection
and verification





THE SSR DATA VERIFICATION ASSESSMENT

Level of verification	Factor
Assertion Affirmative statement by the applicant is provided, without supporting documentation	0.5
Technical documentation supporting the assertion Supporting technical documentation on the mission design is disclosed to the SSR entity	0.6
Public release of the technical documentation Supporting technical documentation is submitted to a government or non-profit available for public review	0.8
Authority – independent technical review An independent technical review or confirmation of compliance by a third-party technical expert is provided	1

Each information provided shall be associated with a confidence level

Number of satellites

Positive Integer only
Verification is a required field

Select a verification level ▼

Mass (kg) ⓘ

Positive Float only
Verification is a required field

Select a verification level

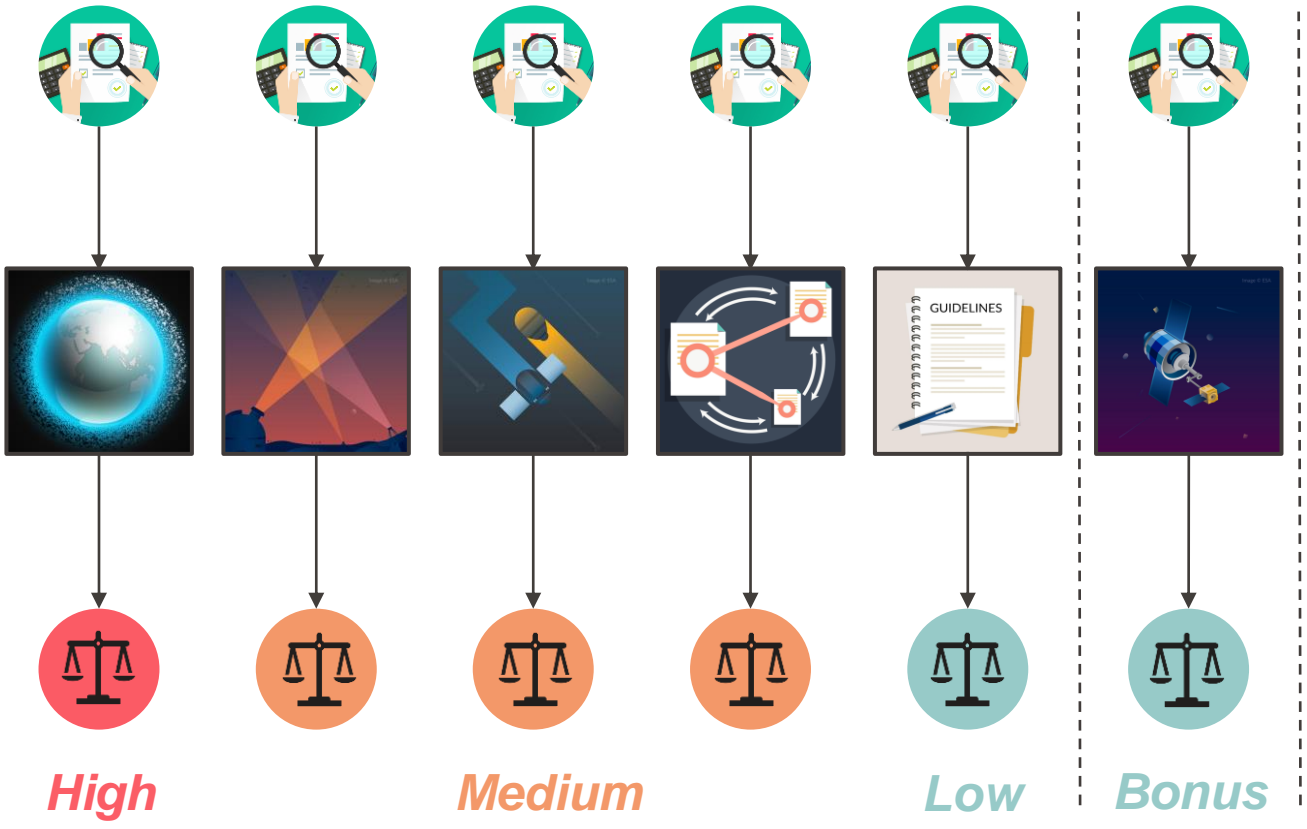
- N/A
- Assertion
- Assertion+Documentation
- Public Release
- Authority

HOW IS A MISSION RATED?

1. Data collection and verification

2. Module evaluation

3. Weighting



81 – 100 %



71 – 80 %



56 – 70 %



40 – 55 %



SPACE
SUSTAINABILITY
RATING

[Operator's logo]

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY RATING

CERTIFICATE

[Company and Mission Name],
completed a rating and achieved a **Gold Rating** with **Two Bonus Stars**.

Scope of certificate: [Mission Phase]



★ ★ GOLD

Date of issue

[Date]

[Signature]

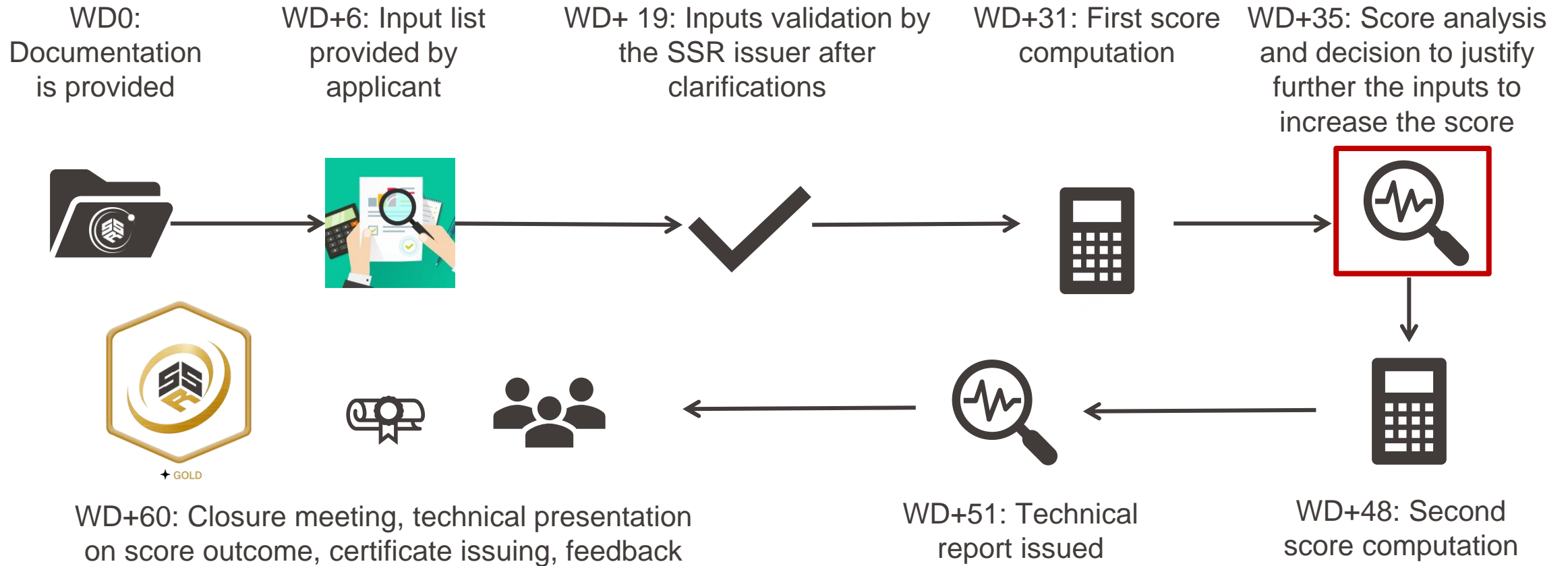
Prof. Jean-Paul Kneib
Academic Director
eSpace - EPFL Space Center

This document is not an official certification and is valid during the [Mission Phase] of the assessed mission.
This rating can be re-evaluated upon request of the applicant, or if it is deemed necessary by the issuer. This certificate is the property of Space Sustainability Rating.

COMMUNICATE YOUR **SUCCESS**

- There are three possible ways of communicating your rating:
 1. The SSR announces collaboration with your company, but no rating performed nor results shared
 2. The SSR announces collaboration with your company, and that it has been rated
 3. The SSR announces collaboration with your company, that it has been rated and the final score

EXAMPLE OF A RATING PROCESS TIMELINE





FEEDBACK **LOOP**

- After first computation, the score is communicated, with an **analysis** including the identification of the main **mission strengths and weaknesses** (score-wise)
- A feedback is provided under the form of **written recommendations** and the projected score including the recommendations is computed
- An operator can implement the recommendations and ask for **one score recomputation**

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

INCREASE YOUR SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE



— **Mission** — Mission_Reco



Mission Index



External



DIT



ADOS



COLA

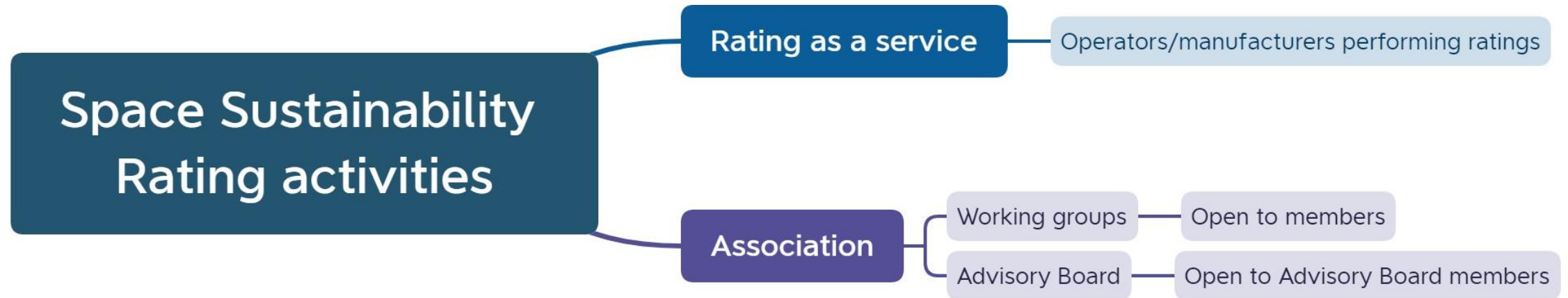
Data Sharing



Reco. *	Description	Score increase (module)	Score increase (Tier)
MI_1	Comment	+3.5%	+1.75%
DS_1	Comment	+4%	+0.66%
COLA_1	Comment	+12%	+1.98%
DIT_1	Comment	+5%	+0.6%
...
Total SSR Score increase			+8.29%
New tier			Gold

Tier Score 87.71 % from 64.65 % ↑ 23.06 %		Bonus Score 79.85 % from 57.71 % ↑ 22.14 %	
Mission Index 96.67 % from 61.03 % ↑ 35.64%	Collision Avoidance Capabilities 100 % from 89.44 % ↑ 10.56%	Data Sharing 95.95 % from 52.93 % ↑ 43.02%	
Detection, Identification and Tracking 33.33 % from 69.17% ↓ -35.83%	Application of Design and Operation Standards 60.92 % from 46.88% ↑ 14.05%	External Services 100 % from 50 % ↑ 50%	

THE SSR ACTIVITIES



Rating as a service

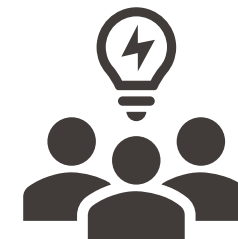
Engage with satellite operators or manufacturers to perform ratings.



PLATINUM

Association activities

Enable involvement of various stakeholders through active participation (Working Groups) or consultation (Advisory Board)





RATING AS A SERVICE

- Assess the mission's level of sustainability based on third party assessment, without disclosure of sensitive mission data
- Demonstrate compliance to international policies and standards for space debris mitigation
- Publicly communicate around effort implemented for improving space sustainability
- Improve current practises based on recommendations issued from an SSR assessment



Interested in knowing more from a rated entity ? Read [IAC-23,A6,8-E9.1](#)* on general perspective from a rated entity: EnduroSat

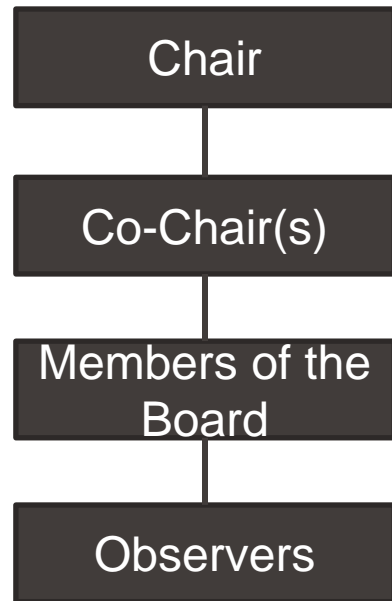


SSR ASSOCIATION BODIES

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

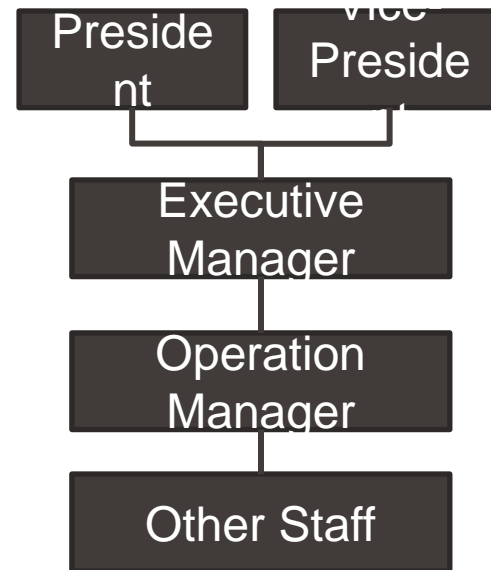
CONSULTATIVE BODY

Advisory Board



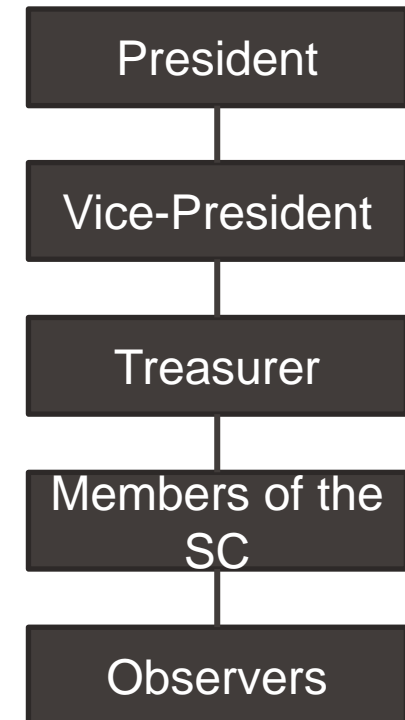
EXECUTIVE BODY

Executive Committee



GOVERNING BODY

Steering Committee





SSR ASSOCIATION: MEMBERS

- Participate in working groups of the SSR association
- Be actively involved in future evolution of the rating
- Support the establishment of the rating as an internationally recognized system
- Support the development of the rating certification scheme
- Be visible as an SSR member (SSR website, communications...)
- Global networking with organizations and individuals who are internationally recognized experts on space sustainability

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY RATING

RATING-USERS

Official ratings*

stellar



Computation partner



Beta-testing

AIRBUS

astrocast



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RATING

*Additional ratings are currently underway and will be announced later this year.

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MORE THAN 20 MISSIONS RATED (08/12/2023)

6

OFFICIAL
Ratings

Rating as a service
including score
analysis and
recommendations

8

BETA
Tests

Streamlining the
rating process with
satellite operators
and manufacturers

7

ALPHA
Tests

Rating computation
methodology fine
tuning using publicly
available data



SSR MEMBERS: A GROWING COMMUNITY

ALTER
TECHNOLOGY GROUP

Ansys


ENDUROSAT

CONFERS
FOSTERING THE SATELLITE SERVICING INDUSTRY

DEBRIS-X
· 德博睿 ·

infomaniak


LULEÅ
UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY



自主創造
日本大学
NIHON UNIVERSITY



neuraspace

PRIVATEER



SECURE
WORLD
FOUNDATION



SLINGSHOT
AEROSPACE



FOR SATELLITE
MANUFACTURERS &
OPERATORS



Flat fee of **CHF 20,000.-**
per rating

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

GET A RATING

Benefits:

- **Individualized and continuous support** from the SSR team, focusing at maximizing value, providing:
 - Up to two computations (i.e. one initial rating, one feedback and re-computation loop before final submission)



**FOR SPACE AGENCIES,
INSTITUTIONS, LARGE
INTEGRATORS**

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

GET A RATING

1

**GET
RATINGS**



- Customized package for multiple ratings

Benefits:

- **Multiple missions** being rated.
- **Customized agreement** based on the needs.
- Possibility to set up more than two computations per rating (enabling using SSR for **sustainability trade-offs** during a design phase for instance)



BECOME A MEMBER

2

BECOME A MEMBER



Membership fees:

- **CHF 5,000.-**
- **Valid one year upon joining**

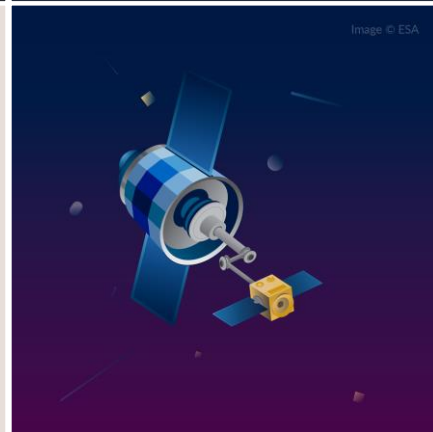
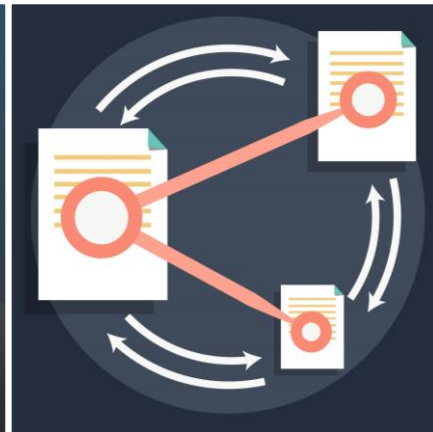
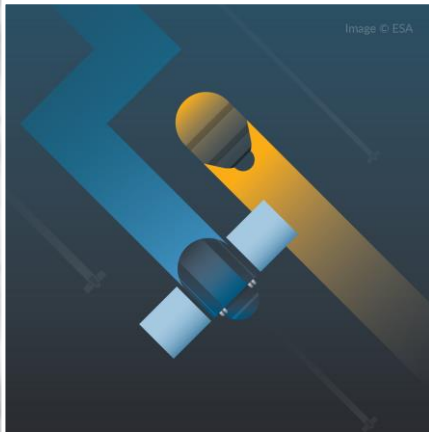
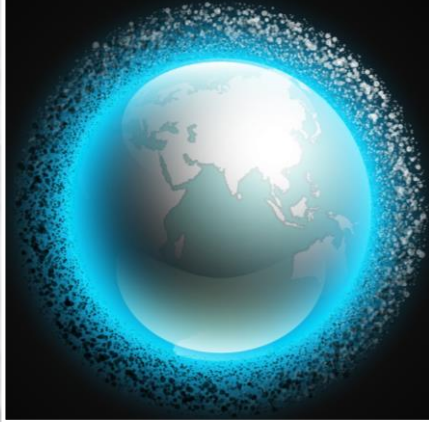
SSR Association provide the following benefits:

- Be part of the SSR Association
- Participate in the General Assembly
- **Visibility:** be featured on the SSR Website, presentations & other communications
- Get involved in the **Working Groups** (2025)



1. Outreach & Policy

- Write a white paper on the rating benefits



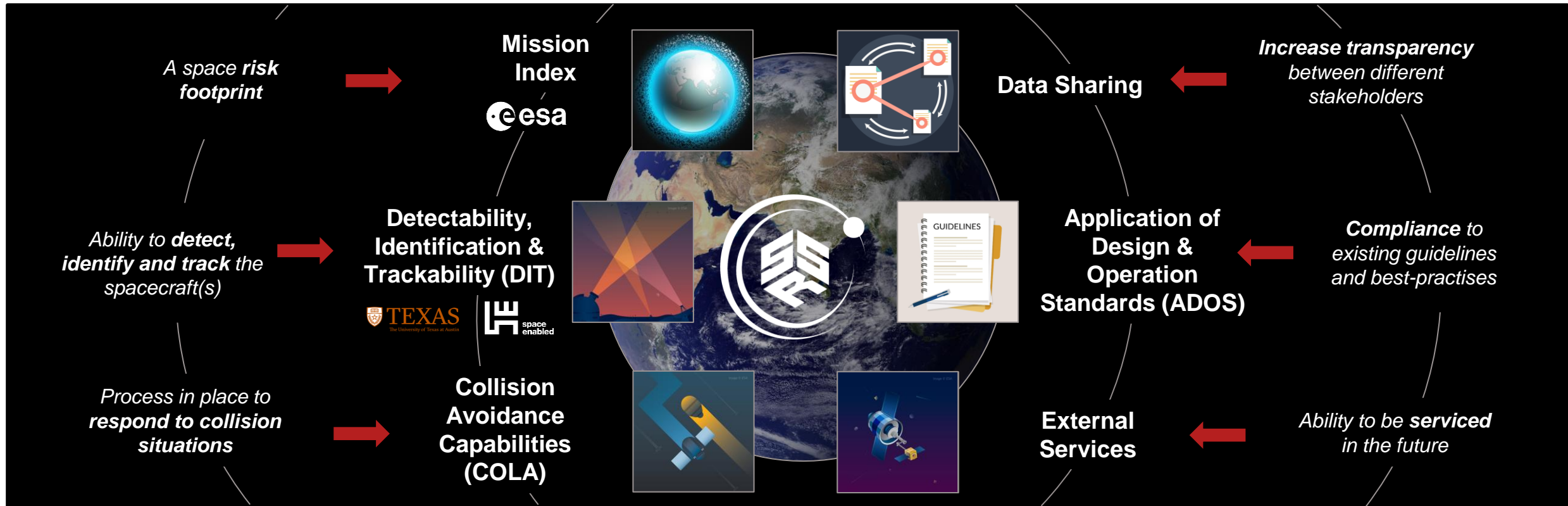
What's inside?

A deep-dive into the SSR Modules



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A MODULAR RATING



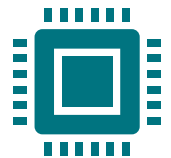
THE SSR MODULES

Modular evaluation based on a set of different criteria (modules)

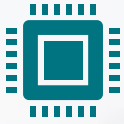
Modules	Weight	Type
Mission Index	50%	Quantitative
Collision Avoidance Capabilities	16.5%	Qualitative
Data Sharing	16.5%	Qualitative
Detectability, Identification and Trackability	12%	Quantitative
Application of Design and Operation Standards	5%	Qualitative
External Services	Bonus	Qualitative



Qualitative:
Compliance based



Quantitative:
Model based



Model based 50%



MISSION INDEX

*A **space risk footprint***

- Quantifies the **collision risk** using an index metric;
- Evaluates the risk contribution of a mission to the debris environment **compared to a capacity target**;
- Uses **high level parameters** that can be obtained early in the mission development;

Satellite & mission design

- Number of satellites
- Spacecraft mass
- Cross-sectional area
- Operational lifetime
- Deployment duration

Orbital parameters (at deployment epoch)

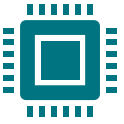
- Semi-major axis
- Eccentricity
- Inclination

Collision avoidance strategy

- Accepted collision probability level
- Lead time

Disposal strategy

- Success rate
- Target apogee and perigee
- Description



Model based



50%

MISSION INDEX - FORMULATION

Index formulation for one object, at a given epoch

Probability of collision p_c

$$I = \overbrace{p_c} \cdot \underbrace{e_c}$$

Severity of collision e_c

High $I \Leftrightarrow$ High risk \Leftrightarrow Low Score

I depends on orbital parameters and spacecraft physical properties

Environment simulated with



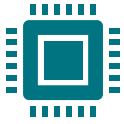
Cumulative collision probability

$$p_c = 1 - e^{-\rho \cdot \Delta V \cdot A \cdot \Delta t}$$

- ρ the density of object large enough to trigger a catastrophic collision (1)
- ΔV the relative impact velocity
- A the cross-sectional area
- Δt the timestep increment value

Collision severity (2)

- Synthetic fragmentation triggered and modelled (reformulated NASA breakup model)
- Propagation of the debris cloud (phase space density)
- Quantification of the **increased probability of collision for a set of representative objects**



Model based

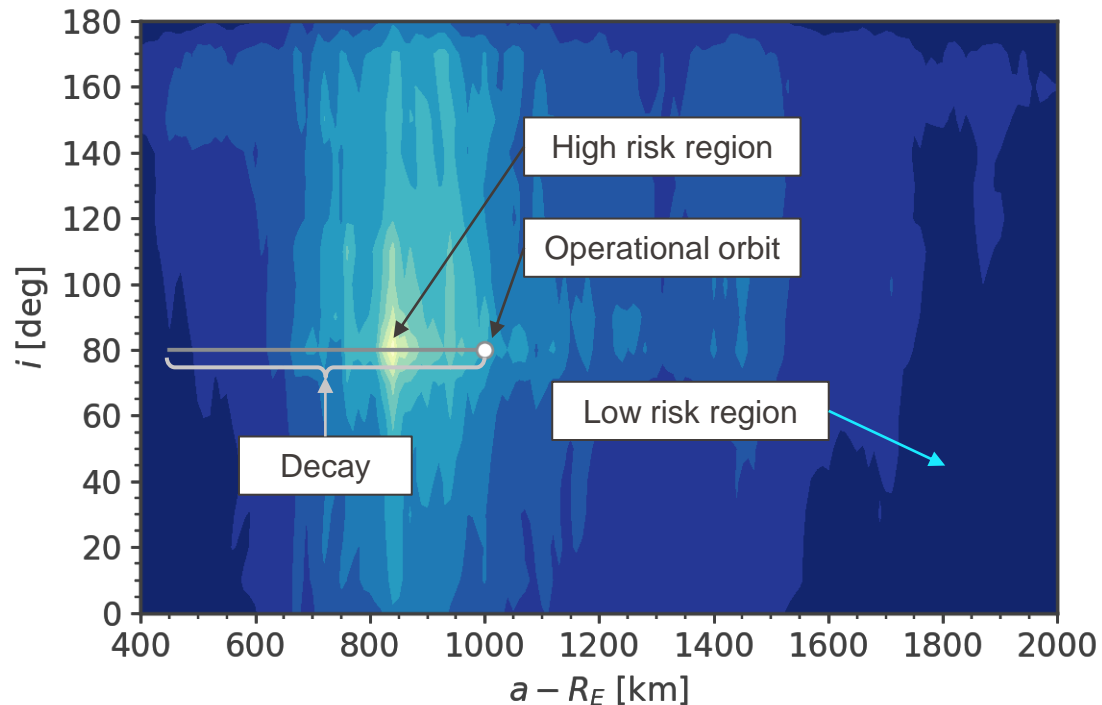


50%

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

MISSION INDEX – INDEX MAPS

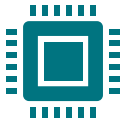
Index value heatmap (LEO region)



The index value is discretized, and integrated over the object's lifetime

$$I = \int_{t_0}^{t_f} (p_c \cdot e_c) dt$$

Discretized index allows to account for the spacecraft trajectory evolution (e.g. orbit raising, disposal manoeuvres, orbital decay)



Model based



50%

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY RATING

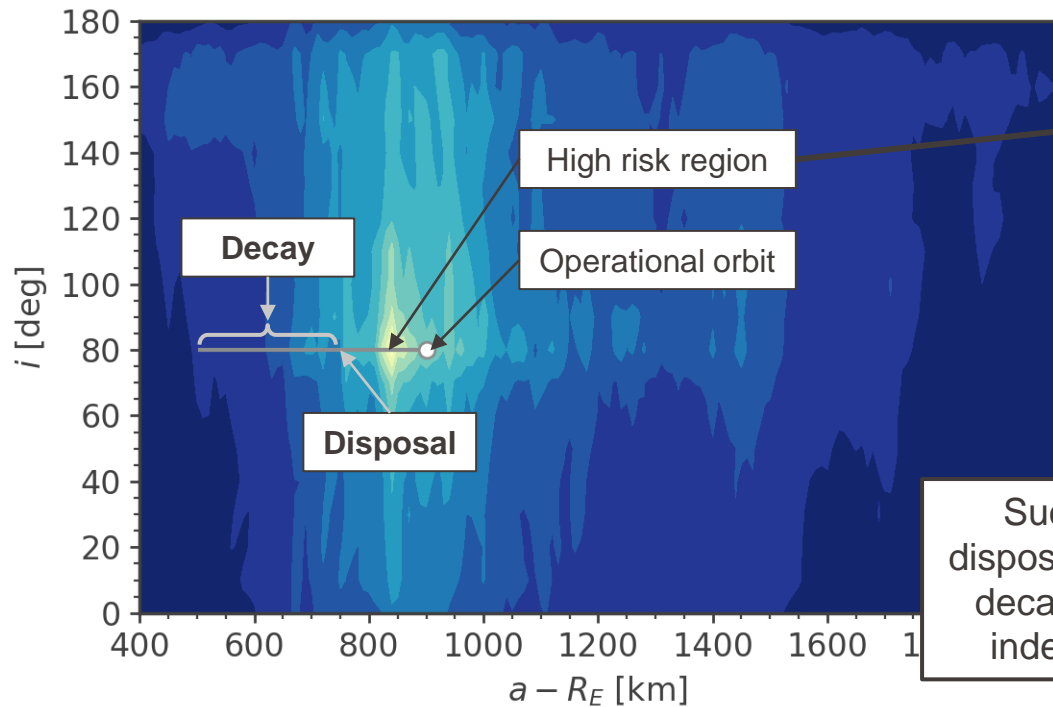
MISSION INDEX – TRAJECTORY EVOLUTION PMD

Mock mission data:

$A/m = 0.1$ (to highlight impact of trajectory evolution)

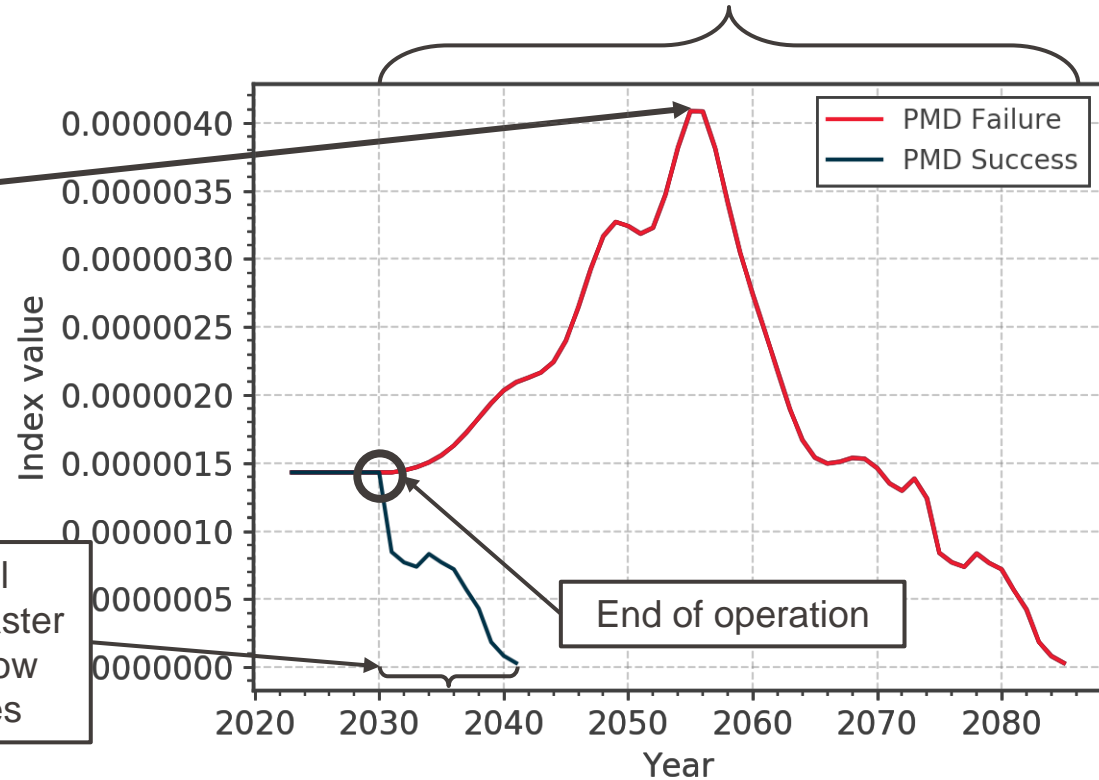
Initial altitude 900km

Post mission disposal to a 750 km altitude



Successful disposal \Leftrightarrow faster decay and low index values

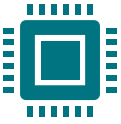
Failure \Leftrightarrow Long natural decay from failure altitude and higher index values



SPACE
SUSTAINABILITY
RATING

Courtesy: [debris index frontend](#), ESA space debris office

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Model based



50%

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

THE MISSION INDEX

Impact of the disposal strategy:

$$I_{disposal} = \underbrace{\alpha \int_{t_{EOL}}^{t_{fD}} I_{disposal} dt}_{\text{PMD Success}} + \underbrace{(1 - \alpha) \int_{t_{EOL}}^{t_{fND}} I_{abandoned} dt}_{\text{PMD Failure}}$$

α : Post Mission Disposal Success Rate*

Before launch:

α is obtained from spacecraft reliability analysis

During operation

α is set to 0 if a spacecraft fails
 α is set to 1 if a spacecraft is successfully deorbited



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* For a constellation, the value of α is aggregated for the entire fleet (i.e. weighted average)

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MISSION INDEX – DISPOSAL RELIABILITY

Accounting for disposal failure scenario:

$$I_{disposal} = \underbrace{\alpha \int_{t_{EOL}}^{t_{fD}} I_{disposal} dt}_{\text{PMD Success}} + \underbrace{(1 - \alpha) \int_{t_{EOL}}^{t_{fND}} I_{abandoned} dt}_{\text{PMD Failure}}$$

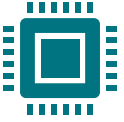
α : Post Mission Disposal Success Rate*

Before launch:

α is obtained from spacecraft reliability analysis

During operation

α is set to 0 if a spacecraft fails
 α is set to 1 if a spacecraft is successfully deorbited



Model based



50%

MISSION INDEX – COLLISION AVOIDANCE

$$I_{phases\ COLA} = \int_{t_0}^{t_{EOphase}} \left[\underbrace{(1 - \gamma)(p_{c_{trackable}} \cdot e_c)}_{\text{Collisions with trackable debris can be avoided}} + p_{c_{non-trackable}} \cdot e_{c_{non-trackable}} \right] dt$$

γ : Mitigated Collision Risk

Collisions with trackable debris can be avoided

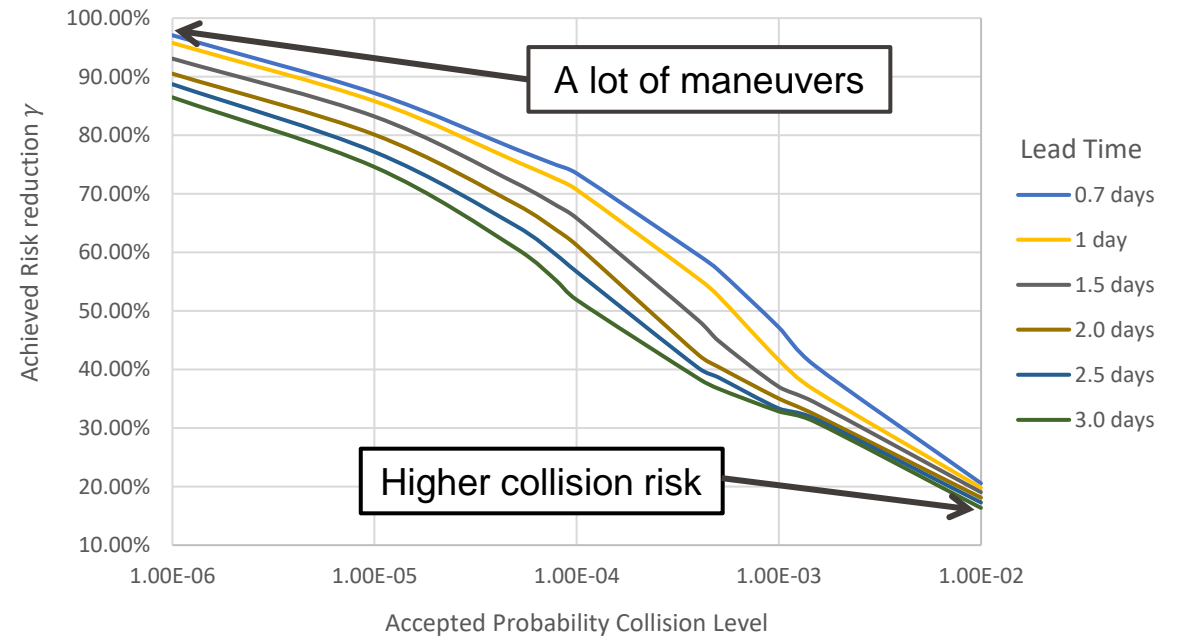
Risk reduction achieved by the implemented collision avoidance strategy **with respect to the case where no maneuver is performed**

mainly driven by two parameters:

Time required to perform a maneuver

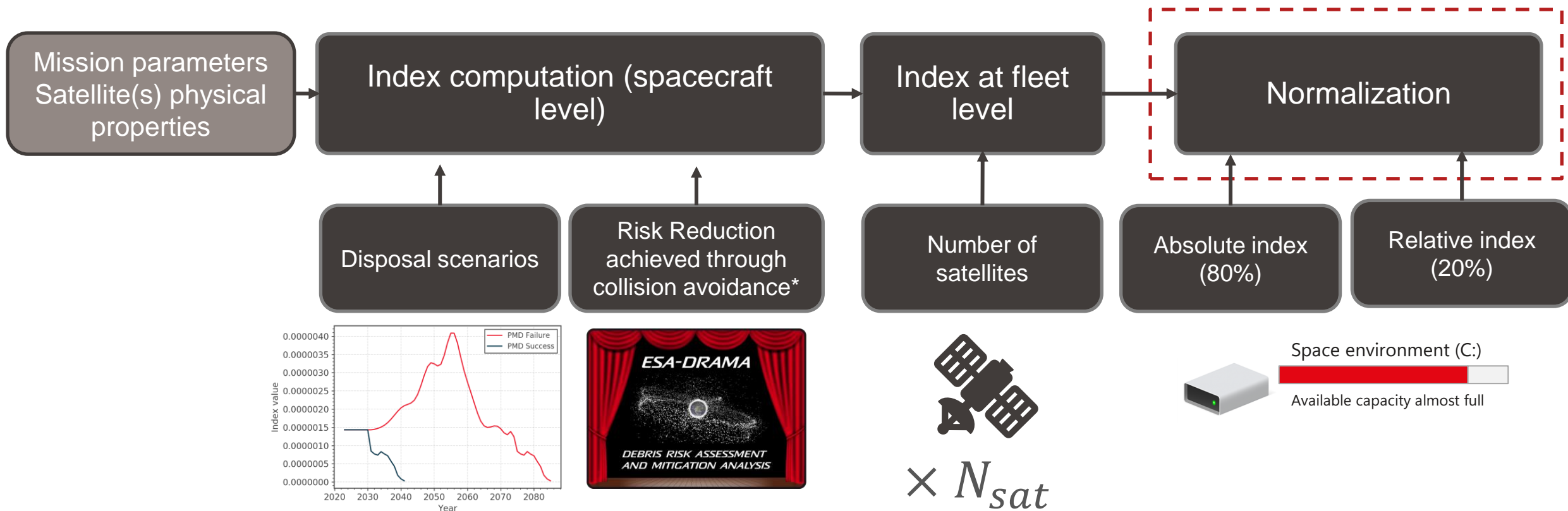
Accepted Collision Probability Level

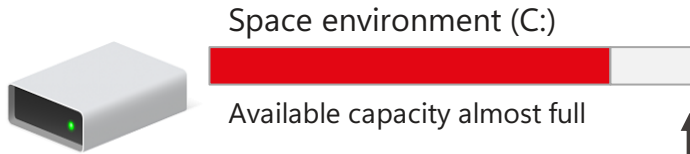
Mitigated Collision Risk vs. Accepted Collision Probability Level *



MISSION INDEX – NORMALIZATION

How to output a score?





What is “full”?

Capacity identified from long term extrapolation scenarios (the “capacity” C)

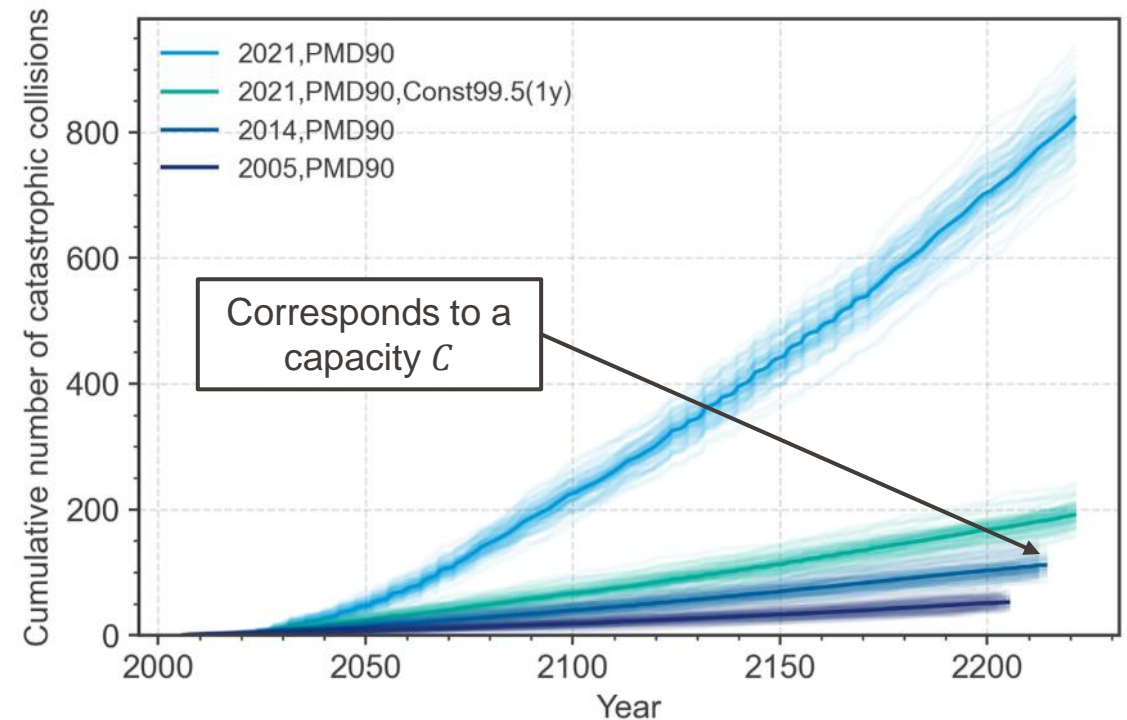
A normalized score is computed based on the **share of yearly available capacity** consumed by the mission

$$\hat{I} = I_{mission} / (C - I_{already\ used})$$

$$S_{abs} = 0.5 - \frac{1}{10} \log_{10}(\hat{I}) - \frac{\hat{I} - 1}{50} \leftarrow$$

MISSION INDEX – NORMALIZATION

(1)



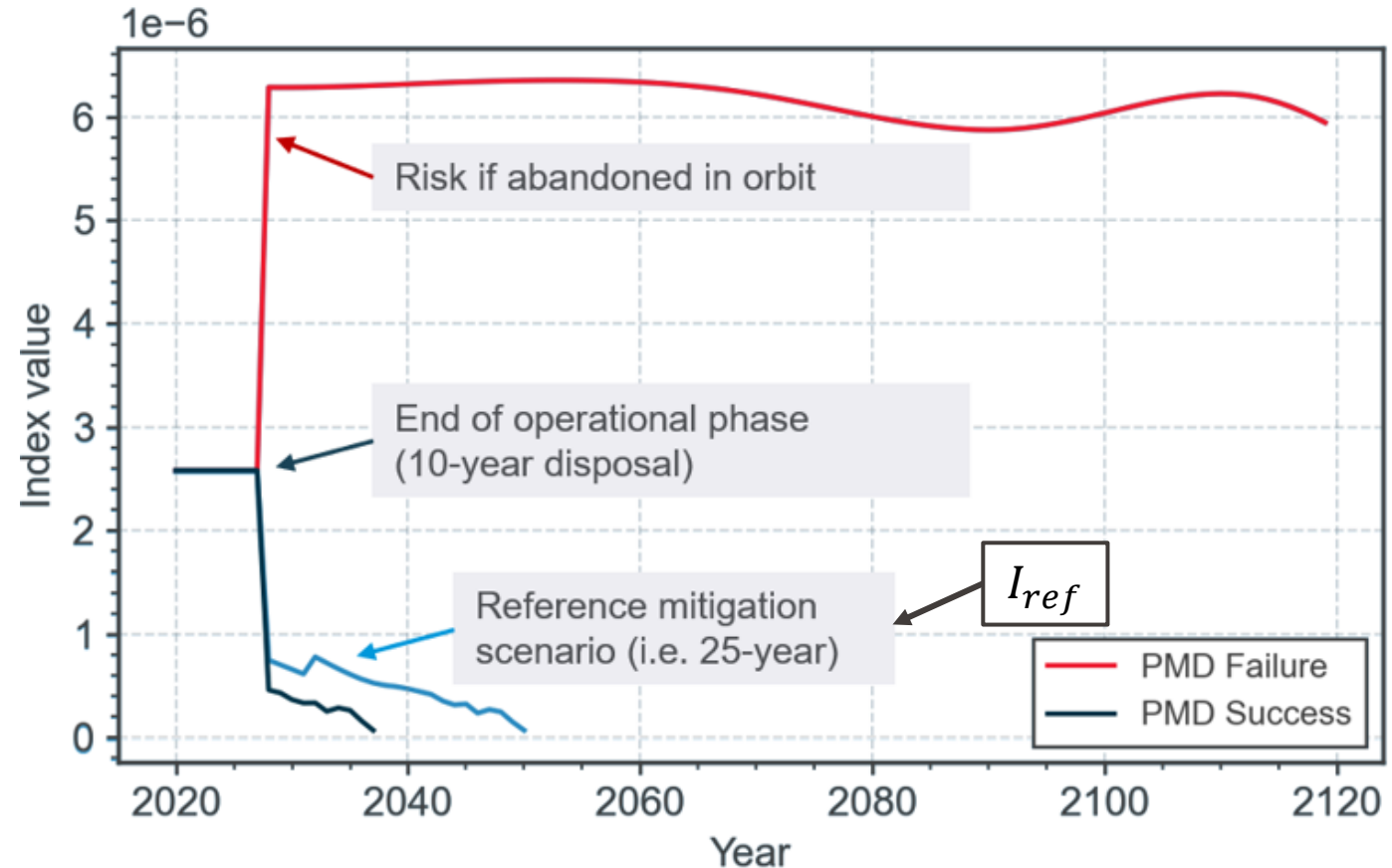
“Absolute” index score, 80% of the mission index score (2)

MISSION INDEX – NORMALIZATION**“Relative” mission index: going beyond recommendations**

- Definition of a reference case
- Comparison to the reference case

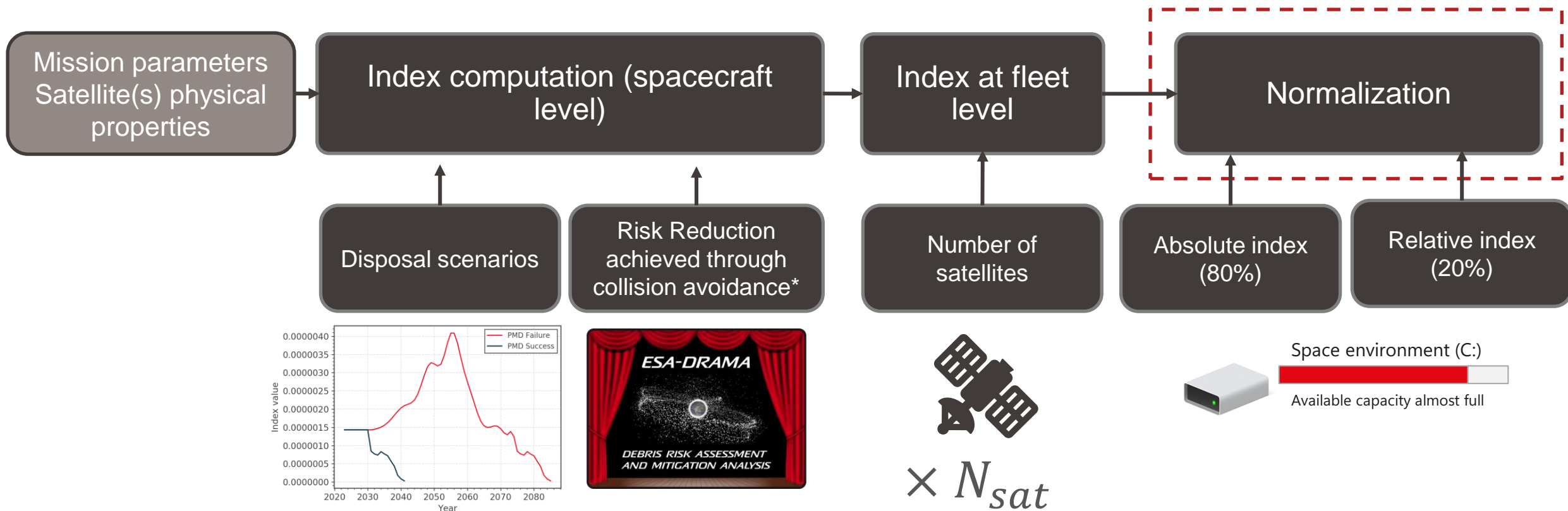
$$I_{relative} = I_{mission}/I_{ref}$$

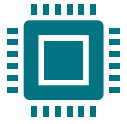
$$S_{rel} = 1 - (I_{rel})^3 \quad \longleftarrow \quad \text{“Relative” index score, 20\% of the mission index score}$$



MISSION INDEX – NORMALIZATION

How to output a score?





Model based



12%

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

DETECTABILITY, IDENTIFICATION AND TRACKABILITY

Detectability allows traffic management

Satellite physical properties

- Geometric shape
- Dimensions
- Face pointing Nadir

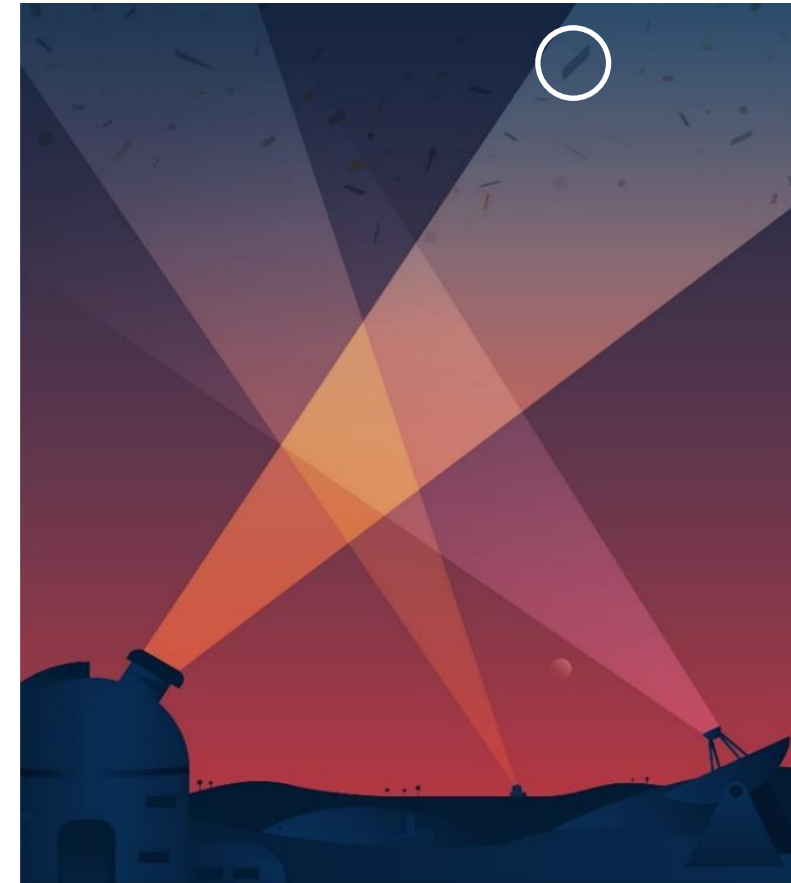
Orbital parameters

- Semi-major axis
- Eccentricity
- Inclination

Simulation of a ground sensor network (optical and radar), propagation of the satellite(s), compute access periods

Likelihood that an object can be **observed** by ground surveillance systems (without prior knowledge)

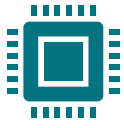
Feasibility of **orbit evolution** prediction for a detected objects (for an agent different from the operator)



SPACE
SUSTAINABILITY
RATING

R. Steindl et al., [Developing Detectability, Identifiability, Trackability Analyses for the Space Sustainability Rating](#), 2021
SSR [DIT webpage](#)

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Model based



12%

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

DIT Module normalization

Detectability Score

Sub-components	Metrics	Scoring thresholds		
		0	0.5	1
Optical Detectability score ($S_{D_{opt}}$)	Visual Magnitude		>15	<15
Radar Detectability score ($S_{D_{rad}}$)	Probability of Radar detection	<50%	50-75%	>75%

$$S_D = 0.5 \times S_{D_{opt}} + 0.5 \times S_{D_{rad}}$$

Trackability Score

Metrics (computed for both optical and radar)	Scoring thresholds			
	0	0.25	0.5	1
Pass duration ($Pass_d$)	<120"	120-180"	180-400"	>400"
Orbital coverage (O_c)	<10%	10-25%	25-60%	>60%
Interval duration (Int_d)	>12h		12h-6h	<6h

$$S_{T_{opt,rad}} = \frac{1}{3} Pass_d + \frac{1}{3} O_c + \frac{1}{3} Int_d$$

$$S_T = \max(S_{T_{opt}}; S_{T_{rad}})$$

DIT SCORE:

$$S_{DIT} = \frac{1}{3} S_D + \frac{1}{3} S_T + \frac{1}{3} S_{Questionnaire}$$



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Qualitative:
Compliance
based

QUALITATIVE MODULES SCORE COMPUTATION



Type of data shared	Points earned for sharing with:			
	SSA providers	Other operators	Network of operators	Public
Publish and update collision avoidance contact information	10	10	12	12
Publish and update collision avoidance contact time zone/hours of operation	3	3	3	4
Publish and update COLA contact/coordination request response time guarantees	1	2	2	1

Level of verification	Factor
Assertion	0.5
Supporting technical documentation	0.6
Public release	0.8
Authority – independent technical review	1

$$S_{module} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^n p_{input_j}}{Available\ points_{module}}$$



Qualitative



16.5%

COLLISION AVOIDANCE CAPABILITIES

Evaluation of the capabilities and processes to follow-up orbital state and be able to prevent collisions

Operator Action	Orbital State Knowledge	Availability to Coordinate	Capability to Coordinate		Maneuver capabilities
Lowest Performance	Rely on third party public SSA provider	Not able to coordinate	Operator has no dedicated process for conjunction screening, assessment, or mitigation.		No maneuver capabilities
Highest Performance	Maintain/update orbital state knowledge of object to within < 1km	Has a system for routine conjunction assessment and capability to respond to concerns 24 hours	Has documented procedures for collision screening, assessment, and mitigation;	Regularly screens operational spacecraft and planned manoeuvres against SSA sharing organization catalogue	Reaction (at least $\Delta v=1$ cm/s) within one orbital revolution



Qualitative



16.5%

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

DATA SHARING

Increase transparency between stakeholders

What information are you sharing?

- Ephemerides
- Covariance information
- Contact of person in charge for collision avoidance (and list objects by NORAD ID)
- Covariances
- Maneuvrability of the spacecraft(s)
- ...

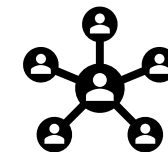
With whom?



SSA Providers



Other operators
upon request



Network of operators



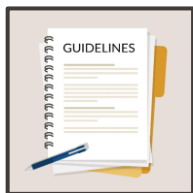
Public



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SSR [Data Sharing Webpage](#)

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Qualitative

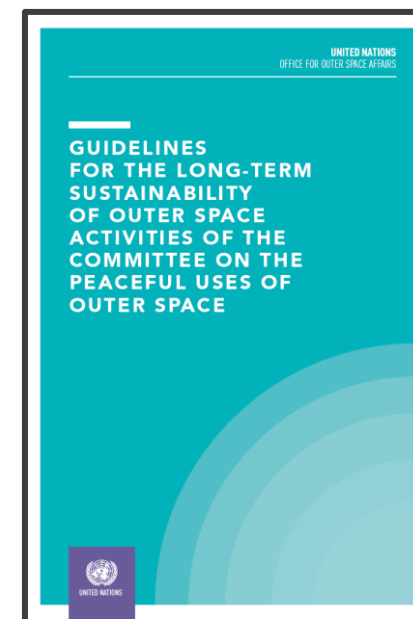
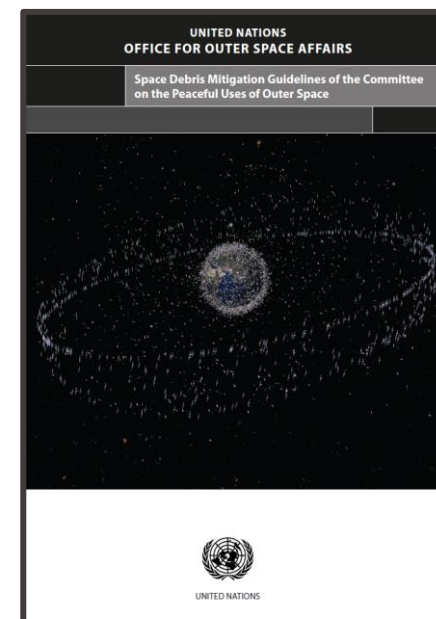
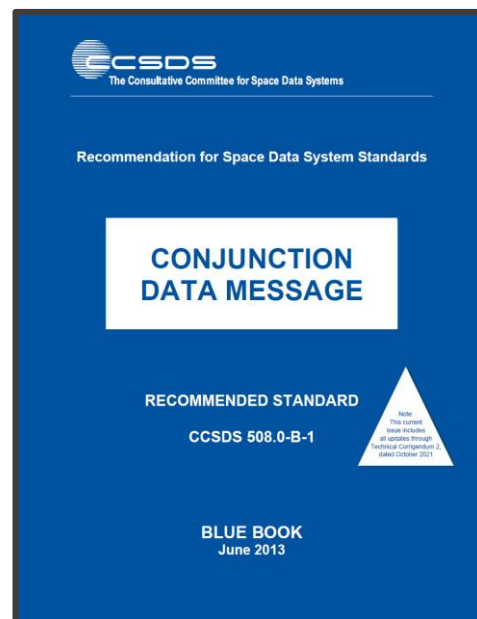
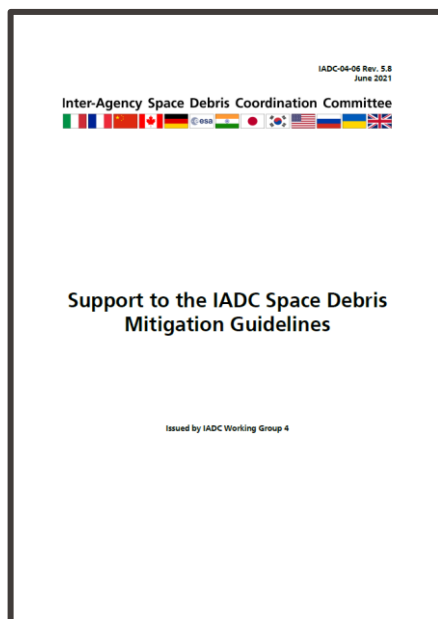


5%

SPACE SUSTAINABILITY **RATING**

APPLICATION OF DESIGN AND OPERATION STANDARDS

Incentivize further adoption of well-recognized standards, norms, guidelines for sustainable practises



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SSR [Application of Design and Operation Standards Webpage](#)

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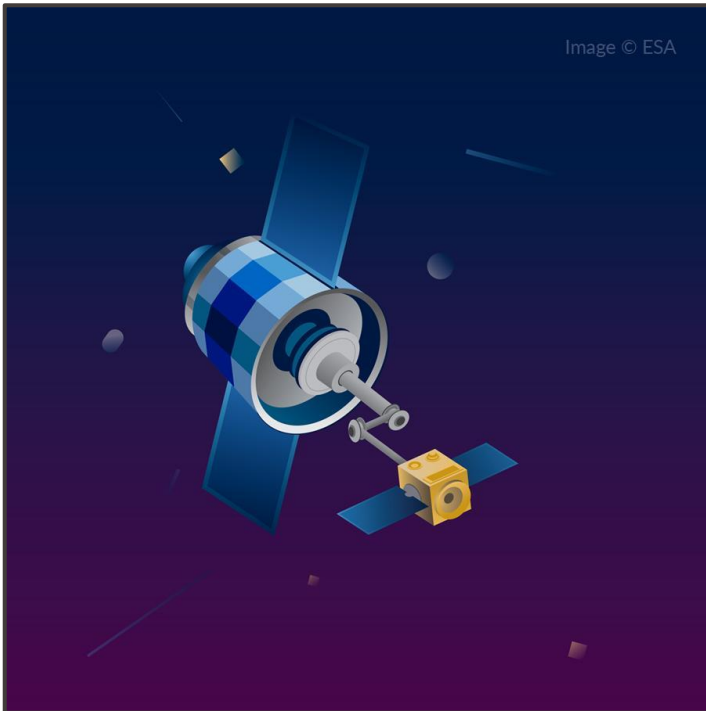
Qualitative



Bonus

EXTERNAL SERVICES

Prepare for removal!



Standardized
interface for
removal

Active debris
removal service
in case of
failure

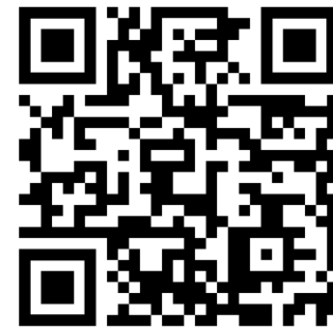
Visual fiducials

Grappling
fixtures



GET IN TOUCH

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spacesustainabilityrating.org



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Exercise

- Primary task: Compute index values and understand risk profile for different set of scenarios to understand risks associated with
 - Operational orbit
 - CAM/No CAM scenarios
 - Disposal trajectory
 - Disposal reliability / no disposal scenarios
 - Spacecraft size