



CODE OF CONDUCT

For Responsible AI
in the Earth Observation Domain
(09/2023)



OPEN CALLS

find more information at ai4copernicus-project.eu

AI4Copernicus Code of Conduct
for Responsible AI in the Earth Observation Domain
(09/2023)

Preamble: AI and Earth Observation Data (EOD) have a transformative power in addressing societal and environmental challenges. Relevant AI systems need to be developed and used responsibly aligned with the legal and ethical AI frameworks. By adopting this Responsible AI Code of Conduct we demonstrate our commitment to ethical and responsible AI use and practices at the local, regional and national levels, aligning with EU values and principles and promoting trust among stakeholders and ensuring the long-term well-being of our planet and our society.

Organisational Responsibility: Our organization integrates specific considerations into its organisational values, AI values set and ethical AI framework, so as to ensure that all services and products using EOD have a positive societal impact at the local, regional and national levels.

AI Values Set:

Values (AI Project -PROJECT NAME) set: A clear and well defined value set, which adheres specifically to the EU values (human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law, and human rights) is crucial in order to underpin the organization's mission and personal integrity, to guide its actions and decisions and to avoid worst case scenarios. The principal values for the organization, as a developer of AI apps using EOD are:

- **Beneficence:** Strive to make a positive local, regional or national impact on global challenges, such as climate change, disaster response and resource management. Aligned with the principles of fairness, non-discrimination, human dignity, accountability, and transparency among others.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** Minimise the environmental impact of your products/services as well as of your data collection and processing activities.
- **Legal & Regulatory Compliance:** Ensure compliance with all laws and regulations governing EOD usage and support as well as environmental regulations.
- **Responsible AI Commercialisation:** Committed that AI is used for responsible commercial purposes and not for unethical or harmful purposes.

Ethical AI Responsibility: We implement the ethical AI Principles as per the Assessment List for Trustworthy AI (ALTAI). More specifically:

- **Human Agency & Oversight:** Our services & products complement human decision processing rather than replace it. Mechanisms for human oversight and intervention are always at play in critical decisions, especially in areas, applications and scenarios with significant societal impact.
- **Technical Robustness & Safety:** Conduct thorough testing and validation and establish processes for identifying and addressing technical vulnerabilities and safety risks that could affect local, regional or national stakeholders.
- **Privacy & Data Governance:** Implement strong data protection measures in compliance with EU data regulations and obtain informed consent when necessary. Clearly define data ownership and access controls taking into account the interests of local, regional or national stakeholders.

- **Transparency:** Provide clear explanations of how our tools work and the data sources we use. Local, regional or national stakeholders can understand and interpret our tool's output.
- **Diversity, Non Discrimination & Fairness:** Regularly assess and mitigate potential biases, particularly those affecting local, regional or national stakeholders.
- **Societal & Environmental Well Being:** Align our decision-support tools with the well-being and interests of local, regional or national populations and assess its impact accordingly.
- **Accountability:** Implement mechanisms to ensure clear internal accountability for ethical decision making, data handling and tool development. Our organization is held accountable for the social and environmental impact at the local, regional and national level by providing relevant channels for users and stakeholders to report concerns.

Human Rights, Social and Ethical Impact Assessment: We are committed to assessing and mitigating potential social and economic impacts of our AI systems. Thus, following the ALTAI principles, we clearly define the scope, criteria and objectives of relevant assessments, while measuring how EOD adhere to human rights and ethics as well as potential risks thereof.

Crisis Response & Disaster Preparedness: We are committed to assisting with crisis response and disaster preparedness and aid at local, regional and national levels.

Environmental Responsibility & Environmental Impact Assessment: We are committed to use our AI systems to protect our environmental ecosystems and minimise the impact of the AI Earth Observation (EO) activities (such as energy consumption, waste generation). Thorough environmental impact assessments as per the operational context of our products/services shall be conducted when necessary.

Continuous Improvement: We are committed to continuous monitoring, assessment and improvement of our AI products' and services' ethical performance. As such we constantly seek feedback and respond to emerging ethical challenges as per each of our products/services. Towards this aim, regular audits and assessments will be conducted to ensure compliance at a legal and ethical level of our AI products and services aligned with our Responsible AI Code of Conduct, which will also be regularly updated.