

## World Satellite Business Week | China Quickly Weaning Itself Off Earth Observation Data Bought from Abroad

By [Peter B. de Selding](#) | Sep. 12, 2014

PARIS — China's major push into medium- and high-resolution satellite imagery has accomplished its first task in reducing to nearly zero the amount of Earth observation data China purchases from non-Chinese sources, the head of China's center for Earth imagery applications said Sept. 12.

In 2009, 80 percent of China's Earth imagery data was foreign-sourced, with Chinese organizations paying 120 million Chinese yuan (\$19.5 million) that year for the imagery.

By 2013, Chinese satellite data accounted for 80 percent of total Chinese domestic use, a figure that is expected to rise to 90 percent or more this year, said Zikuan Zhou, director of the China Center for Resources Satellite Data and Applications, or CRESDA, a unit of China Aerospace Corp. of Beijing.

Addressing the World Satellite Business Week conference organized by Euroconsult, Zhou said Chinese satellite data users paid just 7.7 million yuan for the imagery, most of it for processing charges for imagery that was provided free of charge from the Chinese satellites.

China's move to the higher-resolution end of the market was announced several years ago. Its most recently launched satellite, the GF-2, has an 80-centimeter ground resolution with a 45-kilometer swath width and is capable of swiveling off-nadir by 35 degrees. Five more GF-class satellites are scheduled for launch between 2015 and 2017, Zhou said.

The Chinese government, which has tested a hyperspectral imager aboard the Chinese space station, is also planning to enter the hyperspectral market — if only for Chinese domestic use at least to start — with a satellite scheduled for launch in the coming years.