



Earth Observation and Artificial Intelligence as Foundational Support

Lorenzo De Simone, PhD – Technical Consultant (Geospatial), ESA FAO Division



Why EO and AI are Crucial for SDG Statistics

Bridge Data Gaps

Fill data gaps where traditional surveys are missing

Timeliness

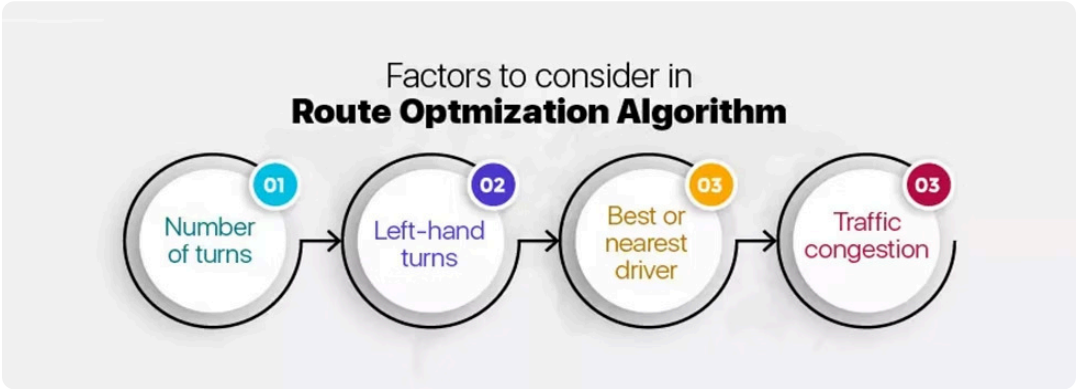
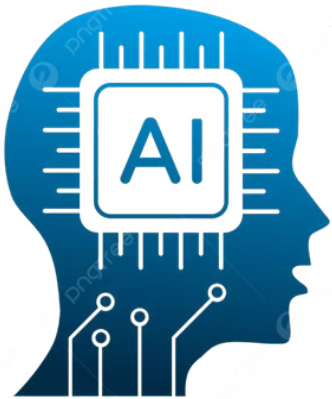
Improve the timeliness of statistical indicators

Disaggregation

Enable disaggregated statistics at the local level

Cost Efficiency

Increase economic efficiency for National Statistical Institutes





How EO and AI Work Together



Earth Observation

Consistent, scalable, and disaggregated monitoring of the territory



Artificial Intelligence

Automates analysis and extracts meaningful information from data



Practical Example

Sentinel-2 → land cover → crop type → yield estimation

Integration with Official Statistics



Agriculture

Estimating cultivated area and forecasting harvests to support SDG 2



Water Resources

Monitoring water quality and availability for SDG 6



Terrestrial Ecosystems

Monitoring deforestation and biodiversity for SDG 15

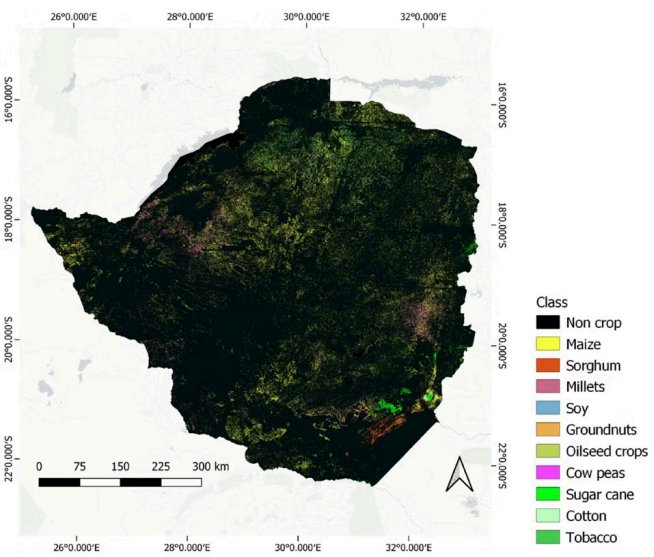


Key Benefits:

- Improved sampling design
- Field data quality control
- Direct linkage to SDG indicators

Use Case 1: Zimbabwe (SDG 2)

National Crop Type map



Results Achieved in 2024

95%
Accuracy

National crop mask with 95% accuracy

15%

Error Reduction in Acreage
estimation

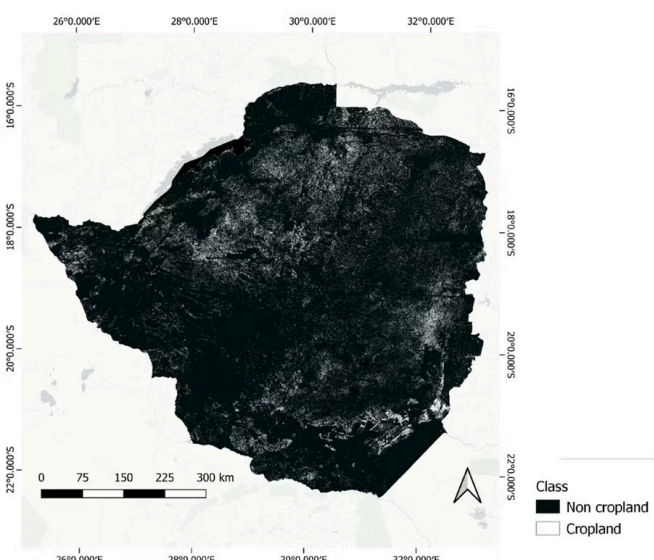
Cultivated area estimates with 15%
error reduction

Innovations Implemented:

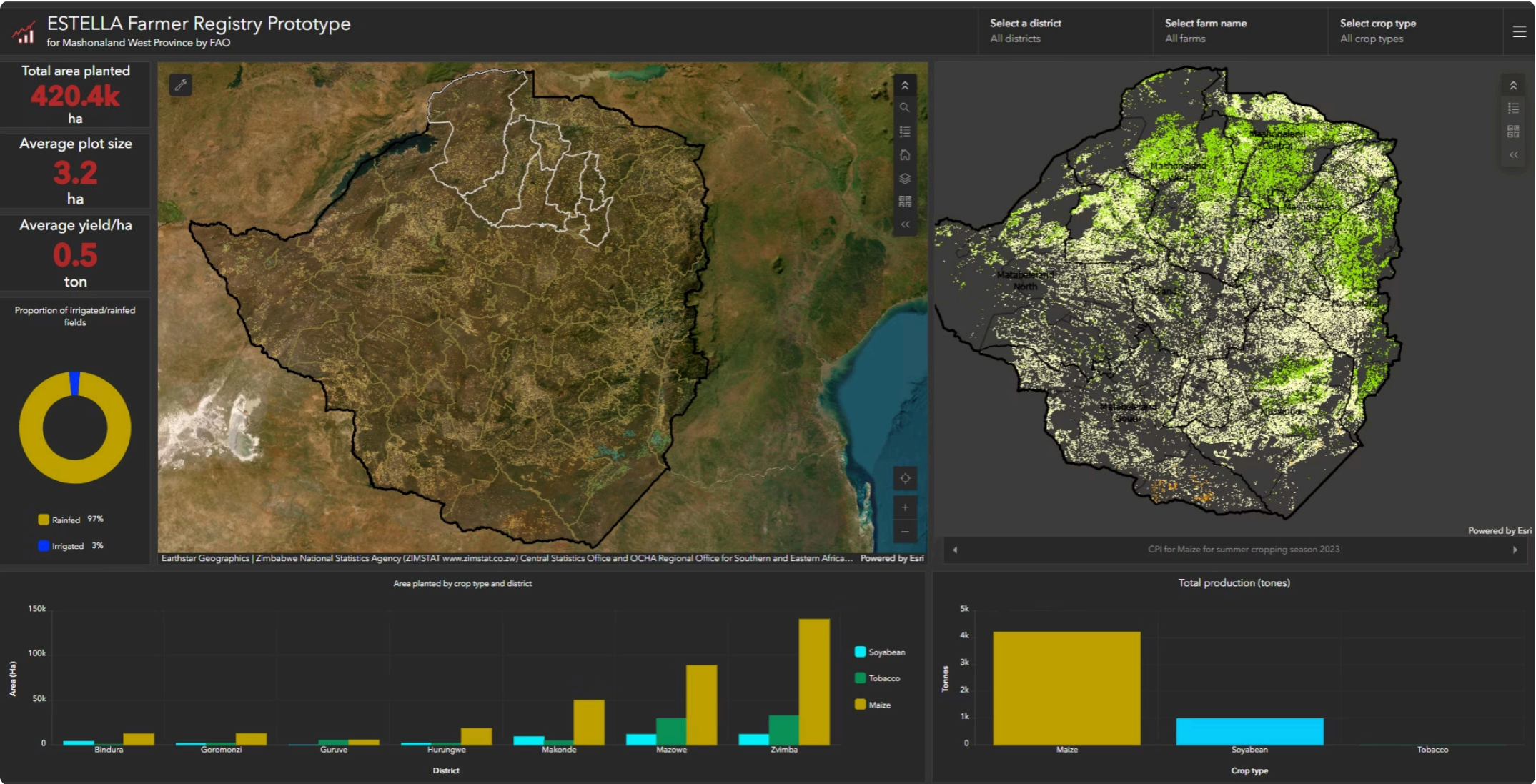
- Detailed crop type maps
- Sub-district level disaggregation
- Integration with national statistical data



National Crop Mask



Digital Farmer Registry - the next level for EO integration



Use Case 2: Tajikistan (SDG 1 & 2)

1

Mask Accuracy

Cropland mask with **88% accuracy**:

- 89%** for cropland
- 87%** for non-cropland

2

Innovative Prototype

Development of a prototype for area frame sample surveys integrated with EO

3

Data Integration

Link between Earth Observation and national farmer registry

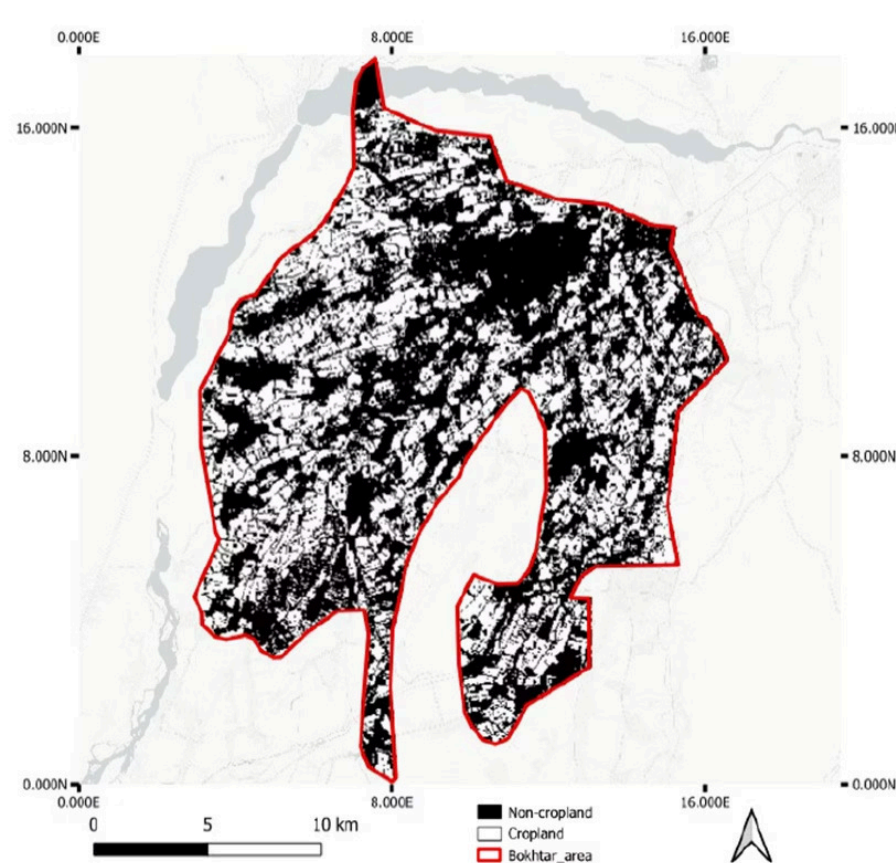
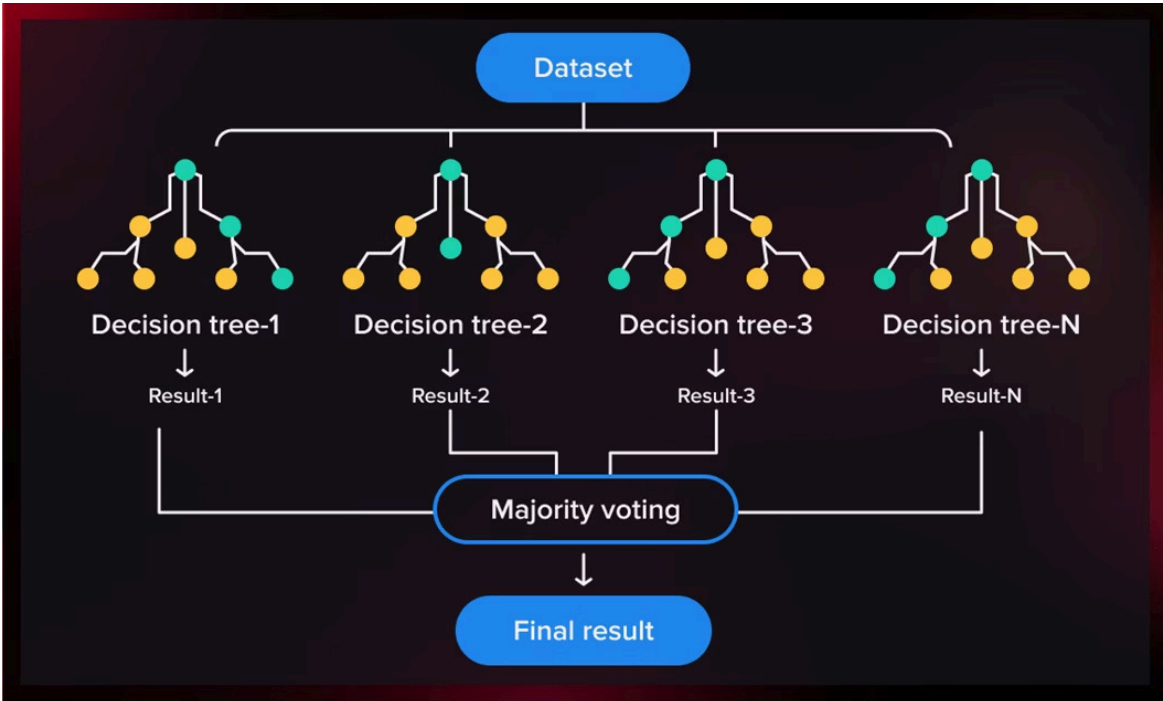


Figure 10-5. Cropland mask over Bokhtar area

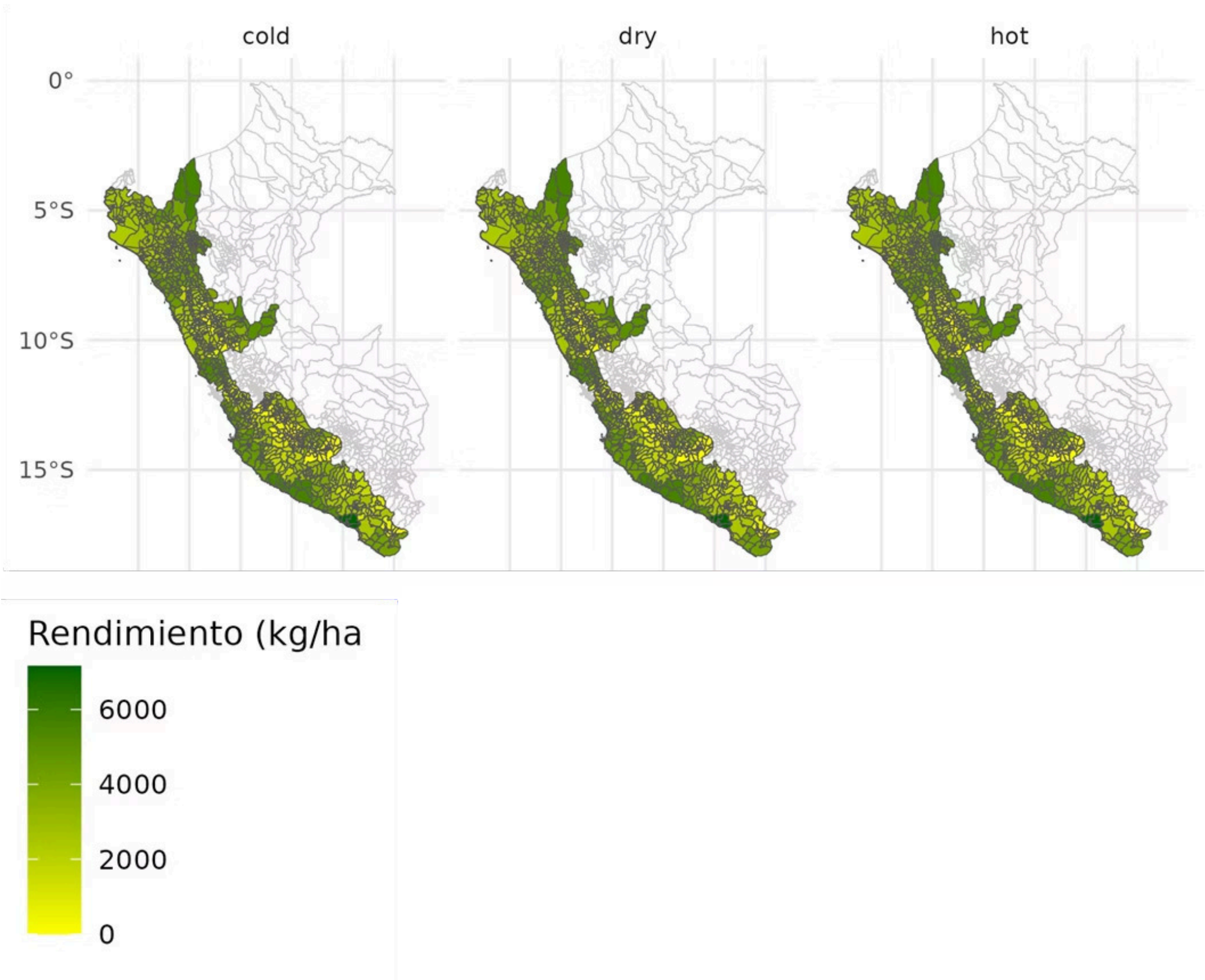


Use Case 3: Peru (SDG 12 & EU Compliance)

Digital Farmer Identity

Innovative application linking digital farmer identity with Earth observation data (**crop yield**) to support sustainable supply chains.

- 2 Million Registered Farmers**
Comprehensive database for national agricultural monitoring
- Sustainable Supply Chains**
Support for deforestation-free supply chains



Global EOStat Program (FAO)

24 Countries Supported

Global coverage with a focus on developing countries

Capacity Building

Dedicated webinars, training, and e-learning platforms

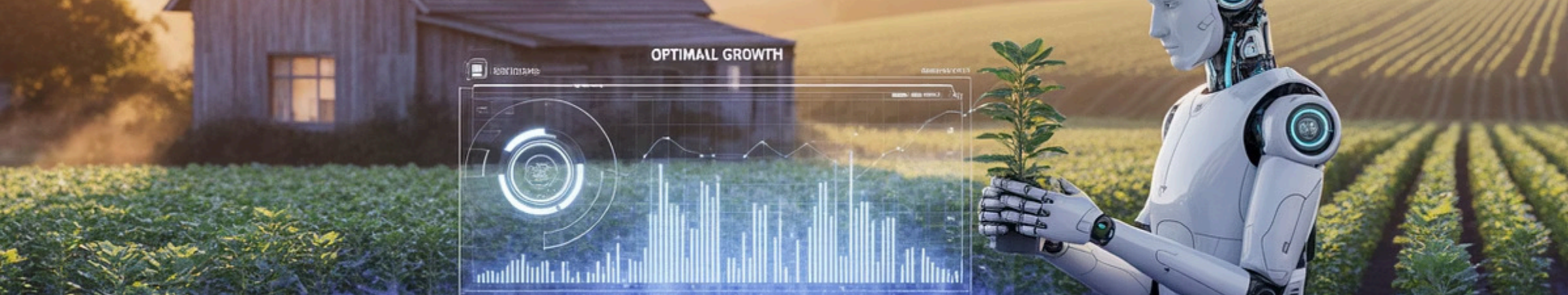


Crop Mapping

Applications for crop mapping and yield forecasting

Disaster Monitoring

Early warning systems for extreme weather events



Vision for Scaling Up

Agricultural Digital Twin

Comprehensive digital representation of national agricultural systems

Digital Identity for Farmers

Unified system for identifying and tracking producers

Precision Services

Precision agriculture and insurance services based on EO data

Policy Relevance



Strengthening NSOs

Earth Observation and Artificial Intelligence strengthen the capacity of National Statistical Offices through innovative methodologies and cost-effective solutions.



Cost-Efficiency

Cost-effective statistical methods for countries with limited resources



National Ownership

Support for nationally-owned SDG monitoring





Key Messages



Bridge Data Gaps

EO and AI fill data gaps and significantly reduce operational costs for National Statistical Offices



Timely Statistics

Enable timely, granular, and reliable statistics for informed decision-making



Evidence-Based Policies

Support evidence-based policy formulation and accurate SDG reporting

**Diqqətinizə görə təşəkkür
edirəm**

(Thank You)

Lorenzo De Simone, PhD

Technical Adviser(Geospatial)

FAO Statistics Division (ESS) and Agri-Food Economics and Policy Division (ESA)