

Abstract Sheet - Abstract number: 23

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Topic: 3 Calibration Methodology

ENVISAT ASAR Instrument Performance Update and Strategy for Systematic Data Quality and Sensor Performance Monitoring

After the ENVISAT launch on 1st March 2002, a Commissioning Phase period was devoted to perform the in-flight instrument calibration and preliminary products verification. The Commissioning Phase ended successfully on December 2002 with the result of all ASAR products (except Global Monitoring) being released to the users.

Monitoring of instrument performance and data quality is however continuously required through any mission lifetime. This is particularly true in the case of an active phased array antenna such as ASAR, which provides a large degree of operational flexibility, acquiring high to low-resolution data with a variable viewing geometry, together with new wide swath and selectable dual polarization capabilities.

This paper presents the strategy followed to routinely monitor the quality of acquired ASAR data and to assess the performance of the ASAR instrument. The paper provides also an updated review of the ASAR instrument status and performance.