



## The german SMOS project office

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The SMOS remote sensing mission planned to be launched in October 2008 is part of the opportunity missions of the European Space Agency's (ESA) Earth Explorer programme. Its aim is to obtain precise data concerning the global water cycle, including the exchange of water between land, ocean and atmosphere, which is one of the principal factors influencing weather and climate patterns. The goal of the mission is therefore to produce precise global maps of soil moisture and ocean salinity. The resolution of the final salinity and soil moisture maps will not be alike due to the different averaging procedures data over land and ocean. The desired accuracy of the data over the ocean is 0.1 psu with a spatial resolution of 200 x 200 km and a temporal resolution of 10 days. The intended accuracy over land is 0,035 m<sup>3</sup>/m<sup>3</sup> volumetric water content and 0.2 kg/m<sup>2</sup> vegetation water content with a spatial resolution of 60 km and a temporal resolution of 3 days.

The German SMOS project office is funded by the BMBF. Its role is to inform the scientific community and the public about the current mission status as well as to promote the use of the SMOS data products within Germany. One of the main fields of application will be given by data assimilation into meteorological or oceanographic models for forecast improvement. The Institute of Oceanography (IfM) of the University of Hamburg is supporting the mission by participating in calibration and validation studies of ocean salinity for the SMOS instrument. Soil moisture studies are provided by the Institute of Physical Geography, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University of Frankfurt/Main. Furthermore the project office will organise a series of workshops to develop user concepts for the SMOS data in cooperation with participating scien-

tists.