



The POSTEL Land Surface Thematic Center as a source of time series of vegetation variables and land cover at global scale

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POSTEL is a Land Surface thematic center that produces spatialized biogeophysical products derived from space observations, and distributes them to the scientific community and other users through its Web interface (<http://postel.mediasfrance.org>). It is intended to become a service element in the forthcoming GMES environmental monitoring services to be implemented in 2008 and beyond.

The key POSTEL products are : (i) time series of vegetation variables (LAI, fCover, fAPAR) derived at global scale at 1 km resolution every 10 days from the VEGETATION sensor, and (ii) a global land cover map of 23 thematic classes derived at 300 m resolution from MERIS data acquired in 2005 and 2006. The vegetation time series have been developed under the FP5 / CYCLOPES project, while the land cover has been produced in the framework of the ESA / GLOBCOVER project. Both products are essential to assess changes in vegetation cover.

Intercomparison exercises with other data sources show that the quality of both products is among the best available worldwide. The paper will present the POSTEL structure and objectives, the characteristics of both products and a discussion of their quality and potential to assess land cover change.