

Airbus Imagery Supports IBM Efforts to Provide Vegetation Insights for Grid Reliability

February 25, 2021 – Airbus now provides very high-resolution satellite imagery to The Weather Company, an IBM Business. IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) uses it to help utility and energy companies better understand the state of vegetation near utility lines, in an effort to help them reduce the risks of electrical disruptions and improve overall grid reliability. A major challenge to the grid, vegetation is the leading driver of power outages according to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.^[1]

High-resolution 50cm satellite imagery from Airbus will be fed into the IBM Vegetation Management Platform, part of the [IBM Weather Operations Center](#). This advanced technology quickly crunches enormous amounts of geospatial (satellite, drone, aerial and LIDAR), IoT sensor and weather data to provide a view over time to help understand the state of vegetation across utility service territories.

Pléiades 50cm satellite imagery shows details about vegetation, empowering AI technology to discern tree canopies and then identify, segment and estimate their height. Ultimately, power companies will be able to proactively and efficiently prioritize trimming efforts to help zero-in on vegetation that is most at risk of causing power outages or starting wildfires.

“Our Pléiades satellites offer a great combination of very high resolution and large coverage capacity, feeding the IBM Vegetation Management Platform with accurate and up-to-date imagery data, which help to best monitor and preserve the integrity of utility lines,” said François Lombard, Director of the Intelligence business at Airbus Defence and Space.

“As part of the current data revolution, the more insight and visibility a team can have regarding the current state of vegetation, the more confidence companies can have in moving to a more conditioned-based management approach, which can ultimately lead to more benefits for customers and operations, said Rob Boucher, offering manager for energy & utilities, IBM. “Deep industry experience and technology from IBM informs the solution, such as artificial intelligence that reads the image to discern and identify canopies to help monitor and analyze assets.”

Pléiades 50cm satellite imagery will help enhance current IBM data sources, as well as support IBM in monitoring vegetation in locations where data sources could be lacking or hard to reach. In addition, Airbus will be launching Pléiades Neo in early 2021, which will provide IBM and others the opportunity to utilize 30cm resolution satellite imagery to further enhance the insights and coverage needed for predictive analytics.

Last week’s weather events in Texas and across the United States underscore the impact severe weather can have on utility services. This new high-resolution imagery is now included in the [IBM Vegetation Management Platform](#) within the [IBM Weather Operations Center](#).

For more about IBM’s The Weather Company, visit <https://www.ibm.com/weather>.

About Airbus

Airbus is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2019, it generated revenues of € 70 billion and employed a workforce of around 135,000. Airbus offers the most comprehensive range of passenger airliners. Airbus is also a European leader providing tanker, combat, transport and mission aircraft, as well as one of the world's leading space companies. In helicopters, Airbus provides the most efficient civil and military rotorcraft solutions worldwide.

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[1] Federal Energy Regulatory Commission: <https://www.ferc.gov/industries-data/resources/tree-trimming-and-vegetation-management>

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