

Brazil to launch new satellite to track deforestation

December 4 2014

Brazil will launch a satellite from China Sunday to keep an eye in the sky on deforestation in the Amazon, the National Space Agency (Inpe) said Thursday.

An agency spokesman said the launch of the Cbers-4 [satellite](#) was scheduled for 0326 GMT December from Tayuan, China, about 750 kilometers (460 miles) southwest of Beijing.

Brazil and China will share the \$30 million cost of sending the two-ton satellite into a 778-kilometer high orbit, the spokesman added.

Both countries participated in the development of the satellite, which has four cameras in its payload module.

The launch comes a year after its predecessor satellite failed to enter orbit because of a fault with the [launch vehicle](#), China's Long March 4B.

Cbers, standing for China-Brazil Earth Resources Satellite, will allow Brazil to keep a close watch from space on deforestation in the Amazon, the world's largest tropical rain forest, as well as administer agriculture and monitor livestock movement.

Brazil and China began space cooperation in 1988 and Cbers 1 was launched in 1999, with a second satellite in 2003 and a third in 2007.

Brazil has not received images from the Cbers program since Cbers-2B

ended its useful life in 2010, Valor financial daily reported Thursday, leading the South American giant to ink agreements for use of images from other satellites, including US observation satellite Landsat-8 launched in February last year.

Using Landsat images has been costing Brazil 200,000 reais (\$72,200) a year.

Brazil's space program, based out of a [launch site](#) at Alcantara in the northeastern state of Maranhao, suffered a blow in 2003 when 21 technicians were killed in an explosion while assembling the VSL-1 launch rocket as part of ongoing attempts to develop the country's own launcher.

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