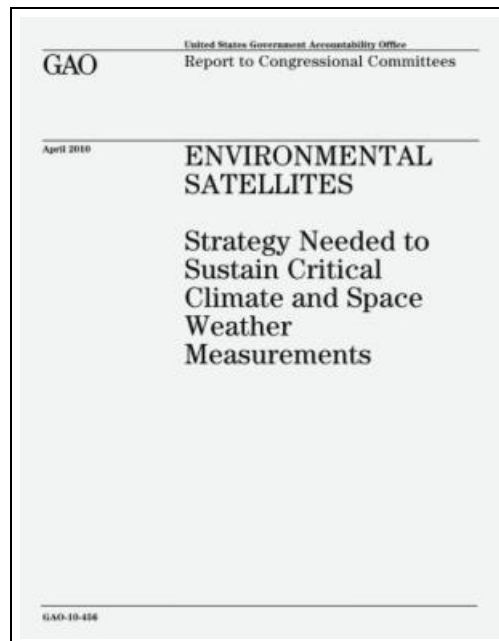


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ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITES: STRATEGY NEEDED TO SUSTAIN CRITICAL CLIMATE AND SPACE WEATHER MEASUREMENTS



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Createspace. Paperback. Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. 52 pages. Dimensions: 11.0in. x 8.5in. x 0.1in. Environmental satellites provide data on the earth and its space environment that are used for forecasting the weather, measuring variations in climate over time, and predicting space weather. In planning for the next generation of these satellites, federal agencies originally sought to fulfill weather, climate, and space weather requirements. However, in 2006, federal agencies restructured two key satellite acquisitions, the National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS) and the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite-R series (GOES-R). This involved removing key climate and space weather instruments. GAO was asked to (1) assess plans for restoring the capabilities that were removed from the two key satellite acquisitions, (2) evaluate federal efforts to establish a strategy for the long-term provision of satellite-provided climate data, and (3) evaluate federal efforts to establish a strategy for the long-term provision of satellite-provided space weather data. To do so, GAO analyzed agency plans and reports. After key climate and space weather instruments were removed from the NPOESS and GOES-R programs in 2006, federal agencies decided to restore selected capabilities in the near term. However, neither the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) nor the Department of Defense (DOD) has established plans to restore the full set of NPOESS capabilities over the life of the program. Further, NOAA has not made any plans to restore the advanced climate capabilities of the instrument that was removed from GOES-R. Expected gaps in coverage for the instruments that were removed range from 1 to 11 years, and begin as soon as 2015. Until these capabilities are in place, the agencies will not be able to provide key environmental data that are important for sustaining climate and space weather measurements. For over a decade, federal agencies...



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