

Earth sciences using micro satellites starting from WEOS (Whale Ecology Observation Satellite).

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On December 14, 2002, Whale Ecology Observing Satellite (WEOS), nickname is Kanta-Kun, was launched together with big earth observation satellite (ADEOS-II) of JAXA. WEOS has been developed in university, and it is 50 kg small or micro-satellite. More than 100 students have joined the development since 1991 proposal. WEOS is aiming to study Whale ocean ecology by monitoring radio signals from transmitter attached to whales. WEOS has comparable or better function/performance compared with ARGOS data collection system operated by NOAA et al. WEOS can provide much better science data for diverse scientific fields with a lot less cost. And, it has proved that small satellite can be useful and practical for sciences.