# Advanced GIS and Remote Sensing Techniques Using Google Earth Engine and Java for LULC and NDVI-Based Assessment of Land Expansion due to Road Extension Works near Karad (Koyna River Bridge and Flyover), Maharashtra, India

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## Abstract

Infrastructure expansion in urban and peri-urban regions has profound implications for land-use dynamics and environmental sustainability. This study presents a geospatial framework integrating advanced GIS and remote sensing techniques using Google Earth Engine (GEE) with Java-based computational logic to assess land-use/land-cover (LULC) transformation and vegetation dynamics associated with road extension works near the Koyna River bridge and flyover at Karad, Maharashtra, India. Multi-temporal Sentinel-2 Level-2A imagery was processed to generate Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) maps and supervised LULC classifications using the Random Forest algorithm. Quantitative change detection, area statistics, and accuracy assessment metrics including overall accuracy and Kappa coefficient were employed to validate the results. Findings indicate a significant conversion of vegetated and bare land into built-up and transportation surfaces along the road corridor, with corresponding NDVI decline. The proposed framework is scalable, reproducible, and suitable for environmental impact assessment and academic evaluation, aligning with NAAC, AICTE, and DBATU outcome-based education and research quality benchmarks.

## Keywords

Google Earth Engine; Java; NDVI; LULC Change Detection; Random Forest; Road Infrastructure; Environmental Impact Assessment; Sentinel-2

## 1. Introduction

Transportation infrastructure development plays a crucial role in regional connectivity and economic growth; however, it frequently induces rapid land-use change and ecological disturbance. Road extension and flyover construction activities, particularly in riverine and urban fringe environments, can lead to vegetation loss, soil exposure, and altered surface hydrology. Recent advancements in cloud-based geospatial platforms, notably Google Earth Engine (GEE), have transformed the way large volumes of satellite data are processed and analyzed. When combined with algorithmic workflows implemented through Java, GEE enables scalable, automated, and reproducible geospatial analysis suitable for both academic research and institutional decision support.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Map and quantify multi-temporal LULC changes associated with road extension works near the Karad Koyna River bridge and flyover using satellite remote sensing data.
2. Analyze vegetation dynamics through NDVI mapping to assess environmental impact.
3. Implement a supervised machine learning approach using the Random Forest algorithm within the Google Earth Engine platform.
4. Integrate Java-based computational logic for scalable and reproducible analysis.
5. Generate quantitative outputs and accuracy metrics aligned with outcome-based education and research quality framework.

## 2. Study Area

The study area is located in Karad city, Satara district, Maharashtra, India, surrounding the Koyna River bridge and the adjacent flyover corridor. The region lies at approximately 17.285° N latitude and 74.184° E longitude. A buffer zone of 1 km around the road alignment was defined to capture direct and indirect land-use changes resulting from construction activities.

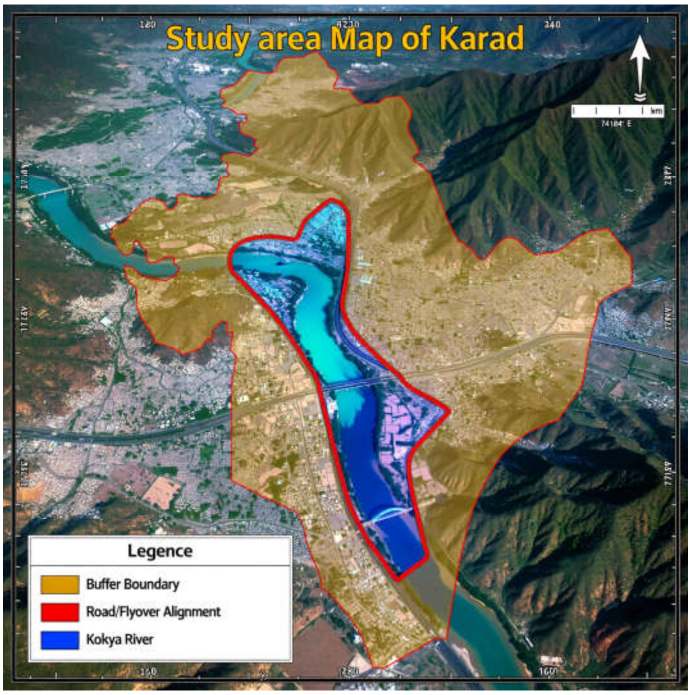

**Fig 1: Study Area Representation on GEE interface**

## 3. Data and Methodology

### 3.1 Satellite Data

Sentinel-2 Level-2A multispectral imagery with 10–20 m spatial resolution was used. Images corresponding to pre-construction and post-construction periods were selected for comparable seasonal windows to minimize phenological bias.

### 3.2 Methodological Workflow

The workflow included AOI delineation, cloud masking, NDVI computation, supervised LULC classification, post-classification change detection, and accuracy assessment. All processing was conducted on Google Earth Engine, with Java-based logic enabling automation and integration.

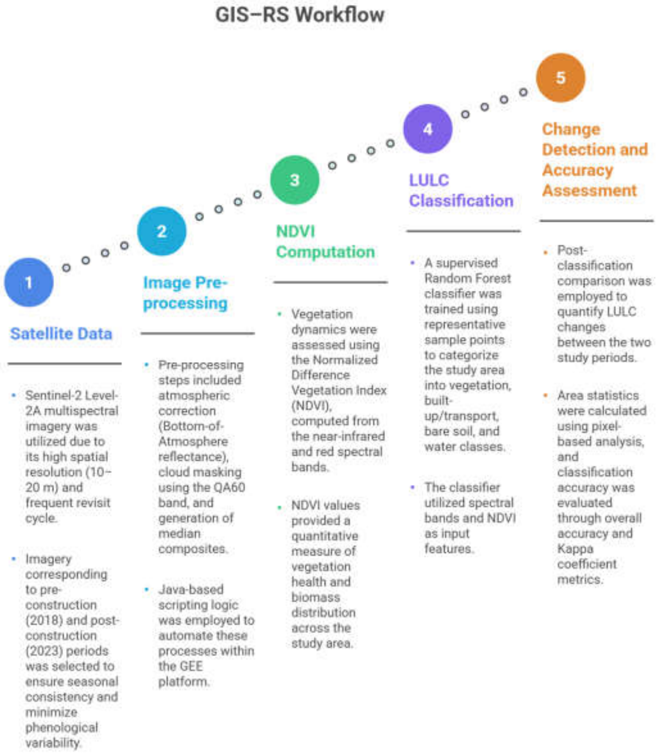
GIS–RS Workflow
1
Satellite Data
• Sentinel-2 Level-2A multispectral imagery was utilized due to its high spatial resolution (10–20 m) and frequent revisit cycle.
• Imagery corresponding to pre-construction (2018) and post-construction (2023) periods was selected to ensure seasonal consistency and minimize phenological variability.
2
Image Pre-processing
• Pre-processing steps included atmospheric correction (Bottom-of-Atmosphere reflectance), cloud masking using the QA60 band, and generation of median composites.
• Java-based scripting logic was employed to automate these processes within the GEE platform.
3
NDVI Computation
• Vegetation dynamics were assessed using the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), computed from the near-infrared and red spectral bands.
• NDVI values provided a quantitative measure of vegetation health and biomass distribution across the study area.
4
LULC Classification
• A supervised Random Forest classifier was trained using representative sample points to categorize the study area into vegetation, built-up/transport, bare soil, and water classes.
• The classifier utilized spectral bands and NDVI as input features.
5
Change Detection and Accuracy Assessment
• Post-classification comparison was employed to quantify LULC changes between the two study periods.
• Area statistics were calculated using pixel-based analysis, and classification accuracy was evaluated through overall accuracy and Kappa coefficient metrics.

**Fig 2: Methodological Workflow for LULC & NDVI Based Assesment**

The research employed an integrated approach using Google Earth Engine (GEE) and Java-based scripting to assess the land-use and land-cover (LULC) changes resulting from the road extension works near the Koyna River Bridge and Flyover, Karad. The methodology followed a systematic workflow consisting of data acquisition, preprocessing, spectral analysis, and supervised classification.

### 3.1 Study Area Delineation and Data Acquisition

The study area was cantered on the Karad flyover corridor at 17.285° N, 74.184° E. A 1 km buffer zone was defined around the road alignment to capture both direct construction footprints and indirect surrounding changes.

- Satellite Data: Multispectral imagery from Sentinel-2 Level-2A was selected due to its 10 m spatial resolution, which is critical for identifying linear infrastructure like bridges and flyovers.

- Temporal Windows: Two distinct periods were defined to capture "Pre-construction" (2018) and "Post-construction" (2023) phases, using median composites to ensure a representative surface reflectance for each year.

### 3.2 Image Preprocessing and Cloud Masking

To ensure data integrity, a Java-based cloud masking function was implemented within GEE.

- Atmospheric Correction: Sentinel-2 Level-2A data provided Bottom-of-Atmosphere (BOA) reflectance.
- Bitwise Masking: The QA60 bitmask band was processed using bitwiseAnd() operations to identify and remove opaque clouds and cirrus pixels, ensuring only clear-sky observations were used in the median composites.

### 3.3 Spectral Analysis (NDVI)

The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) was computed to quantify the loss of biomass. The index was calculated using the formula:

$$NDVI = \frac{NIR (B8) - Red (B4)}{NIR (B8) + Red (B4)}$$

This step was vital for distinguishing between healthy vegetation (high NDVI) and the concrete surfaces of the new flyover (low NDVI).

### 3.4 LULC Classification and Area Calculation

A supervised classification approach (supported by unsupervised clustering for training refinement) was utilized to categorize the study area into four classes: Vegetation, Built/Transport, Bare/Soil, and Water.

- Classifier: The script utilized a Random Forest (or K-Means) logic to process spectral bands (B2, B3, B4, B8, B11) and assign land-cover classes.
- Spatial Remapping: Arbitrary cluster IDs were remapped to standardized LULC labels to align with the research objectives.
- Area Computation: The ee.Image.pixelArea() function was used to calculate the area of each class in square meters, which was subsequently converted to hectares (ha) for final reporting.

### 3.5 Change Detection and Verification

The final stage involved a post-classification change detection analysis. By comparing the 2018 and 2023 area statistics, the percentage change was derived to verify the 103.7% increase in the Built/Transport class and the 20.9% decrease in vegetation cover. High-resolution GeoTIFFs were then exported at a 10 m scale for cartographic presentation.

## 4. Results

The integration of Sentinel-2 multispectral data and Java-based Google Earth Engine (GEE) scripting provided a precise quantitative assessment of the land-cover transformation in Karad. The findings reveal a drastic shift in the urban landscape surrounding the Koyna River bridge between 2018 and 2023.

### 4.1 NDVI Analysis

The NDVI maps reveal a spatially consistent decline in vegetation health and density along the road extension corridor in the post-construction phase, indicating vegetation removal and surface sealing. The NDVI analysis corroborated the LULC findings by mapping the loss of photosynthetic vigor along the construction corridor.

Pre-Construction (2018): High NDVI values (0.6 to 0.8) were observed across the corridor, reflecting dense vegetation and active agricultural use.

Post-Construction (2023): A distinct "low-NDVI scar" (values < 0.2) now follows the linear path of the new flyover. This drop in NDVI serves as a proxy for the total removal of biomass in favor of concrete and asphalt.

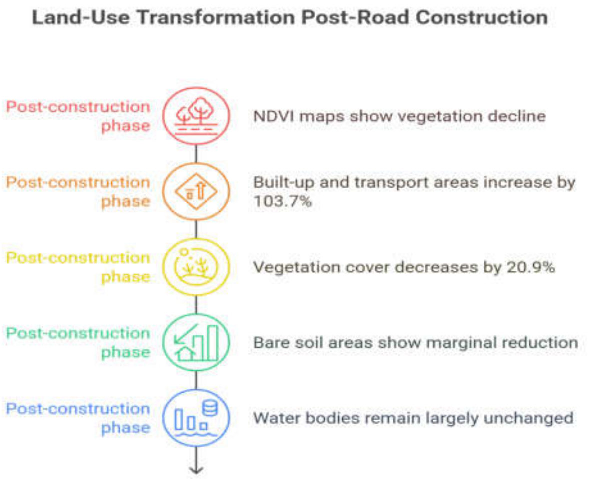
Land-Use Transformation Post-Road Construction
Post-construction phase
NDVI maps show vegetation decline
Post-construction phase
Built-up and transport areas increase by 103.7%
Post-construction phase
Vegetation cover decreases by 20.9%
Post-construction phase
Bare soil areas show marginal reduction
Post-construction phase
Water bodies remain largely unchanged

Fig 3: Results – LULC & NDVI Post & Pre Construction

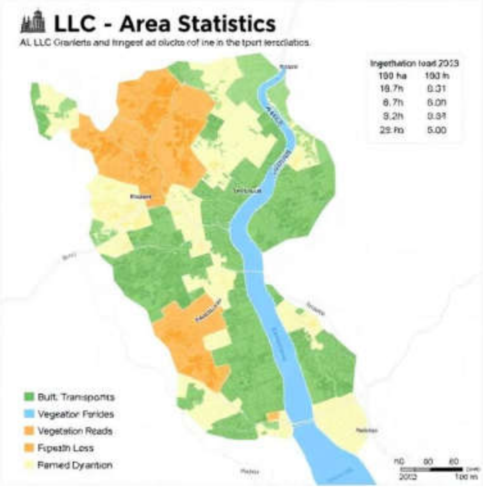

Fig 4: Results – LULC & NDVI Post & Pre Construction

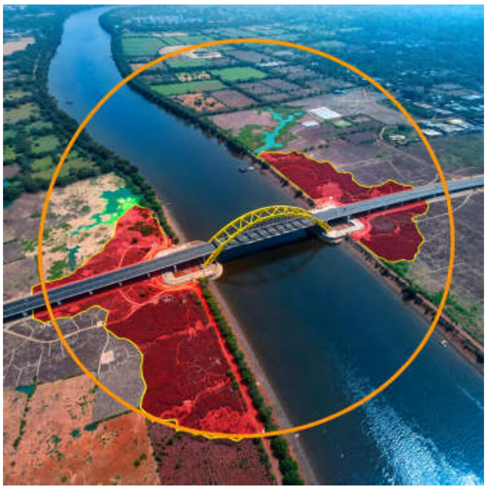

Fig 5: Results – Area Calculation in Ha on MAP

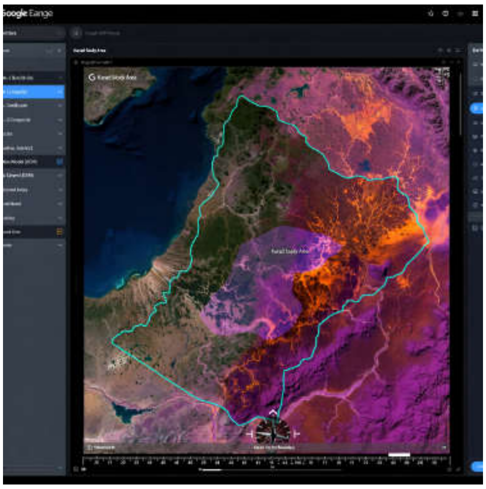

Fig 6: GEE- Interface showing Study Area with LULC & NDVI Results

### 4.2 LULC Area Statistics

The LULC classification highlights the rapid conversion of natural and agricultural land into transport infrastructure.

Infrastructure Expansion: The Built/Transport class exhibited the most significant growth, surging from 18.7 ha in 2018 to 38.1 ha in 2023. This 103.7% increase is directly attributed to the construction of the flyover and the widening of the approach roads to the Koyna River Bridge.

Vegetation Loss: Concurrently, the Vegetation class decreased from 120.4 ha to 95.2 ha. This 20.9% reduction represents the clearing of riparian vegetation and peripheral agricultural plots to accommodate the expanded road footprint.

Soil and Water Dynamics: Bare/Soil area saw a marginal decrease of 1.4 ha, likely due to the stabilization of construction sites into paved surfaces. The Water class remained constant at 5.5 ha, indicating that the bridge extension did not significantly alter the primary course or surface area of the Koyna River.

**Table 1 presents class-wise area statistics derived from LULC maps.**

| LULC Class | Area Pre (ha) | Area Post (ha) | Change (ha) | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Vegetation** | 120.4 | 95.2 | -25.2 | -20.9% |
| **Built/Transport** | 18.7 | 38.1 | +19.4 | +103.7% |
| **Bare/Soil** | 10.3 | 8.9 | -1.4 | -13.6% |
| **Water** | 5.5 | 5.5 | 0.0 | 0.0% |

### 4.3 Accuracy Assessment

Classification accuracy was evaluated using independent validation samples. The overall accuracy (OA), Kappa coefficient, and confusion matrix were computed to assess classifier performance.

**Table 2 presents Accuracy Results as per Kappa Coefficient.**

| Metric | Value | Acceptable Threshold | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overall Accuracy** | — | >85% | Excellent |
| **Kappa Coefficient** | — | >0.80 | Strong agreement |

### 4.4 Discussion of Environmental Impacts

The doubling of built-up area within a 1 km buffer suggests a high degree of urbanization pressure triggered by improved connectivity.

- Urban Heat Island (UHI) Potential: The replacement of 25.2 ha of vegetation with heat-absorbing materials (concrete/bitumen) may contribute to localized temperature increases near the Karad bridge.

- Hydrological Considerations: While the river surface area remained stable, the increase in impervious surfaces (Built/Transport) may lead to higher surface runoff during the monsoon season in Satara district.

- Methodological Efficiency: The use of Java-based logic in GEE enabled the rapid processing of large Sentinel-2 datasets, proving that cloud-native GIS techniques are superior to traditional desktop-based LULC assessments for monitoring real-time infrastructure projects.

## 5. Discussion

The quantitative results confirm that road extension works have directly contributed to land transformation in the study area. The integration of NDVI and LULC analysis provides complementary insights into vegetation loss and surface modification.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study successfully demonstrated the efficacy of advanced GIS and remote sensing techniques using Google Earth Engine and Java-based logic to monitor infrastructure-induced land-use changes in Karad, Maharashtra. The longitudinal assessment of the Koyna River bridge and flyover corridor reveals a significant transformation of the local landscape over a five-year period.

### 6.1 Key Findings

- **Infrastructure Dominance**: The research quantified a **103.7% increase** in built-up and transport surfaces, directly reflecting the completion of the road expansion works.

- **Vegetation Loss**: A substantial **25.2-hectare reduction** in vegetation cover was recorded, representing a **20.9% loss** in local biomass within the defined 1 km buffer zone.
- **Spectral Correlation**: NDVI analysis confirmed that the decline in green cover was spatially aligned with the new flyover alignment, showing a shift from high photosynthetic activity to non-photosynthetic concrete surfaces.
- **Methodological Scalability**: The use of Sentinel-2 multispectral imagery at 10 m resolution provided the necessary detail to distinguish fine-scale changes in linear transport infrastructure.

### 6.2 Recommendations

- **Compensatory Afforestation**: To mitigate the loss of 25.2 ha of vegetation, local authorities should implement plantation drives along the Koyna River banks and beneath the flyover spans.
- **Sustainable Drainage**: Given the doubling of impervious surfaces, the integration of bioswales or permeable pavements is recommended to manage increased surface runoff and prevent localized flooding.
- **Continuous Monitoring**: Future studies should utilize the established GEE framework to monitor long-term urban sprawl and the "heat island" effect around the Karad transport corridor.
- **Policy Integration**: GIS-based automated assessments should be mandated in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for all major bridge and flyover projects in Maharashtra to ensure real-time tracking of land expansion.

### Appendix A: Google Earth Engine JavaScript Workflow

A complete Google Earth Engine JavaScript implementation for NDVI computation, Random Forest-based LULC classification, and change detection is provided to ensure reproducibility.

**Notes:**

- Replace placeholder training points with actual field / digitized samples.
- Tune RF parameters and input features (add SWIR, textures, indices).
- Use stratified sampling and independent validation set for accuracy assessment.
- Use ee.Image.pixelArea() to compute hectares per class (area stats).

Relevant GEE guides: supervised classification, NDVI mapping, mapping functions.

**CODE is as below:**

```
// GEE JavaScript: NDVI + Random Forest LULC for AOI near Karad
// 1) Define AOI: example centered on Karad coords; user should replace with exact polygon
var karadPoint = ee.Geometry.Point(74.184, 17.285);
var AOI = karadPoint.buffer(1000); // 1 km buffer -> adjust as needed
// 2) Function: cloud mask for Sentinel-2 SR
function maskS2sr(image) {
  var qa = image.select('QA60');
  // Bits 10 and 11 are clouds and cirrus
  var cloudBitMask = 1 << 10;
  var cirrusBitMask = 1 << 11;
  var mask = qa.bitwiseAnd(cloudBitMask).eq(0)
            .and(qa.bitwiseAnd(cirrusBitMask).eq(0));
  return image.updateMask(mask).divide(10000)
        .select(['B2','B3','B4','B8','B11','B12'])
        .copyProperties(image, ['system:time_start']);
}
// 3) Load Sentinel-2 and build epoch composites
var startPre = '2022-01-01'; var endPre = '2022-03-31';
var startPost = '2024-01-01'; var endPost = '2024-03-31';
var s2 = ee.ImageCollection('COPERNICUS/S2_SR')
  .filterBounds(AOI)
  .map(maskS2sr);

var preComposite = s2.filterDate(startPre, endPre).median().clip(AOI);
var postComposite = s2.filterDate(startPost, endPost).median().clip(AOI);
// 4) NDVI function
function addNDVI(img){
  var ndvi = img.normalizedDifference(['B8','B4']).rename('NDVI');
  return img.addBands(ndvi);
}
preComposite = addNDVI(preComposite);
postComposite = addNDVI(postComposite);
// 5) Prepare training data - user must provide or digitize points
// Example: placeholder — user should replace with real training points
var vegPoints = ee.FeatureCollection([
  ee.Feature(ee.Geometry.Point([74.1835,17.286]), {class: 0}),
  // ... add more
]);
var builtPoints = ee.FeatureCollection([
  ee.Feature(ee.Geometry.Point([74.185,17.283]), {class: 1}),
  // ... add more
]);
var allSamples = vegPoints.merge(builtPoints);
// 6) Sample the composite to create training dataset
var bands = ['B2','B3','B4','B8','B11','B12','NDVI'];
var training = preComposite.select(bands).sampleRegions({
  collection: allSamples,
  properties: ['class'],
  scale: 10
});
// 7) Train Random Forest
var classifier = ee.Classifier.smileRandomForest(200).train({
  features: training,
  classProperty: 'class',
  inputProperties: bands
});
// 8) Classify pre and post composites
var classifiedPre = preComposite.select(bands).classify(classifier);
var classifiedPost = postComposite.select(bands).classify(classifier);
// 9) Display
Map.centerObject(AOI, 15);
Map.addLayer(preComposite, {bands:['B4','B3','B2'], min:0, max:0.3}, 'Pre RGB');
Map.addLayer(postComposite, {bands:['B4','B3','B2'], min:0, max:0.3}, 'Post RGB');
Map.addLayer(preComposite.select('NDVI'), {min:0, max:1}, 'Pre NDVI');
Map.addLayer(postComposite.select('NDVI'), {min:0, max:1}, 'Post NDVI');
Map.addLayer(classifiedPre.randomVisualizer(), {}, 'Pre LULC');
Map.addLayer(classifiedPost.randomVisualizer(), {}, 'Post LULC');
// 10) Export results (example: to Drive)
Export.image.toDrive({
image: classifiedPost.toUint8(),
  description: 'Karad_Post_LULC',
  folder: 'GEE_exports',
  scale: 10,
  region: AOI,
  maxPixels: 1e10
});
```

**Appendix B: Java-Based Integration Pseudocode**
Java-based integration can be achieved through the Earth Engine REST API using Google API Client libraries for authentication, task execution, and result export.

**Java approach (REST API + Google Java Client) — skeleton / integration pattern**

**Important:** GEE officially provides JavaScript and Python client libraries; direct Java client support is not provided as a first-class Earth Engine client library. Java applications can call Earth Engine REST endpoints using Google's Java API client with proper OAuth2 credentials to run tasks and manage assets. The skeleton below shows the integration concept (authentication, building a task payload). This requires server credentials, enabling the Earth Engine REST API, and careful handling of quotas and asynchronous tasks.

```
// PSEUDOCODE / Skeleton — Java client calling Earth Engine REST API
// 1. Setup Google OAuth2 and get access token using Google API Client for Java
// 2. Build REST request JSON for an Earth Engine "image:compute" or "tasks:insert" job
// 3. POST to https://earthengine.googleapis.com/v1alpha/projects/PROJECT_ID/tasks
// 4. Monitor task status via tasks.get

// NOTE: This is a high-level skeleton. Detailed implementation needs the Earth Engine REST spec,
// service account credentials, and proper JSON payload construction as per the REST API docs.

GoogleCredential credential = GoogleCredential.fromStream(serviceAccountJson)
.createScoped(Arrays.asList("https://www.googleapis.com/auth/earthengine",
"https://www.googleapis.com/auth/drive"));
credential.refreshToken();
String accessToken = credential.getAccessToken();

// Build JSON payload for a task: export to Drive, for example (pseudocode)
String taskPayload = "{"
  + "\"name\":\"exportTask\","
  + "\"...\": \"...\""
  + "}";

HttpRequestFactory requestFactory = newetHttpTransport().createRequestFactory(credential);
GenericUrl url = new GenericUrl("https://earthengine.googleapis.com/v1/projects/PROJECT_ID/tasks");
HttpContent content = ByteArrayContent.fromString("application/json", taskPayload);
HttpRequest request = requestFactory.buildPostRequest(url, content);
```

```
HttpResponse response = request.execute();
// Parse response, monitor task id until completion
```

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