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20-Jun-2011

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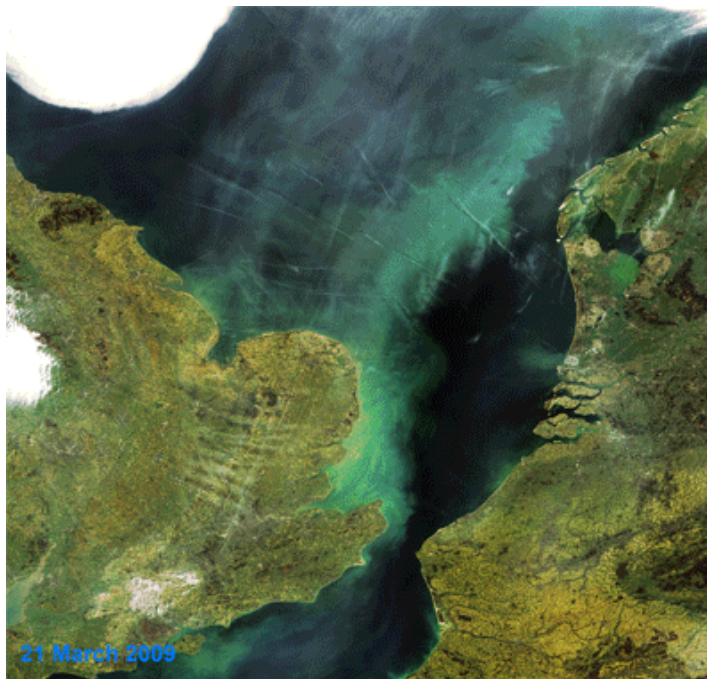


Article Images

Earth from Space: Contrail-free European skies

23 April 2010

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These two Envisat images over the North Sea illustrate the absence of aircraft over Europe following the ban on air travel enforced due to safety concerns over volcanic ash plumes billowing from the recent eruption in Iceland. The first image, acquired on 21 March 2009, captures numerous aircraft condensation trails, or 'contrails', while the second image, acquired on 20 April 2010, shows a contrail-free airspace. The images were acquired by Envisat's Medium Resolution Imaging Spectrometer (MERIS) instrument, working in Full Resolution mode to provide a spatial resolution of 300 m.

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