

ESA provides space images to Google Earth

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The European Space Agency says it will create special content to appear in Google Earth, focusing on such events as volcanic eruptions and dust storms.

The special layer of content will make use of ESA satellite images, including those of natural phenomena and man-made landmarks such as the Palm Islands in Dubai.

In addition to exploring detailed images of some of the world's landmarks, the ESA said it will provide bubbles of facts and figures, scientific explanations and theories beneath the images.

"We are inspired to see the European Space Agency using Google Earth to show such fascinating information about our planet ...," said Google Earth Director John Hanke. "This is another important step in helping people around the world to understand more about their environment."

The images are acquired by the ESA's Envisat -- the largest environmental satellite ever built -- as well as the ERS, or European Remote Sensing Satellite, and Proba, one of the most advanced small satellites ever flown in space.

The new images can be accessed by clicking on the "Featured Content" checkbox in the Google Earth sidebar and further clicking on the ESA icon.

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