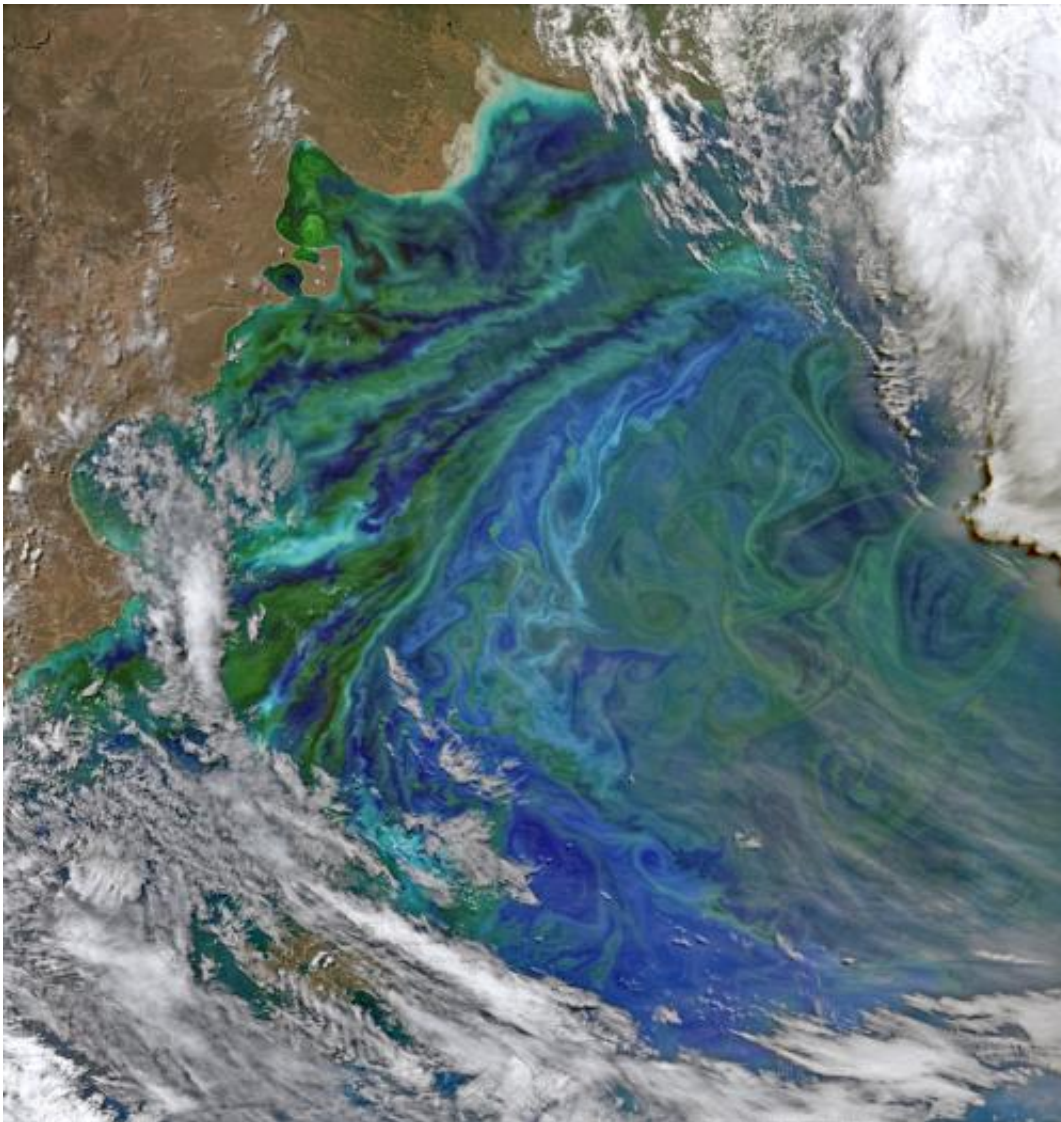


Colorful and plankton-full Patagonian waters

December 12 2014



Credit: Norman Kuring, NASA's Ocean Color Group, using VIIRS data from the Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership

Late spring and summer weather brings blooms of color to the Atlantic Ocean off of South America, at least from a satellite view.

The Patagonian Shelf Break is a biologically rich patch of ocean where [airborne dust](#) from the land, iron-rich currents from the south, and upwelling currents from the depths provide a bounty of nutrients for the grass of the sea—phytoplankton. In turn, those floating sunlight harvesters become food for some of the richest fisheries in the world.

The Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) on Suomi NPP captured this view of phytoplankton-rich waters off of Argentina on Dec. 2, 2014. Scientists in NASA's Ocean Color Group used three wavelengths (671, 551, and 443 nanometers) of visible and near-infrared light to highlight different plankton communities in the water.

Bands of color not only reveal the location of plankton, but also the dynamic eddies and currents that carry them.

Provided by NASA

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