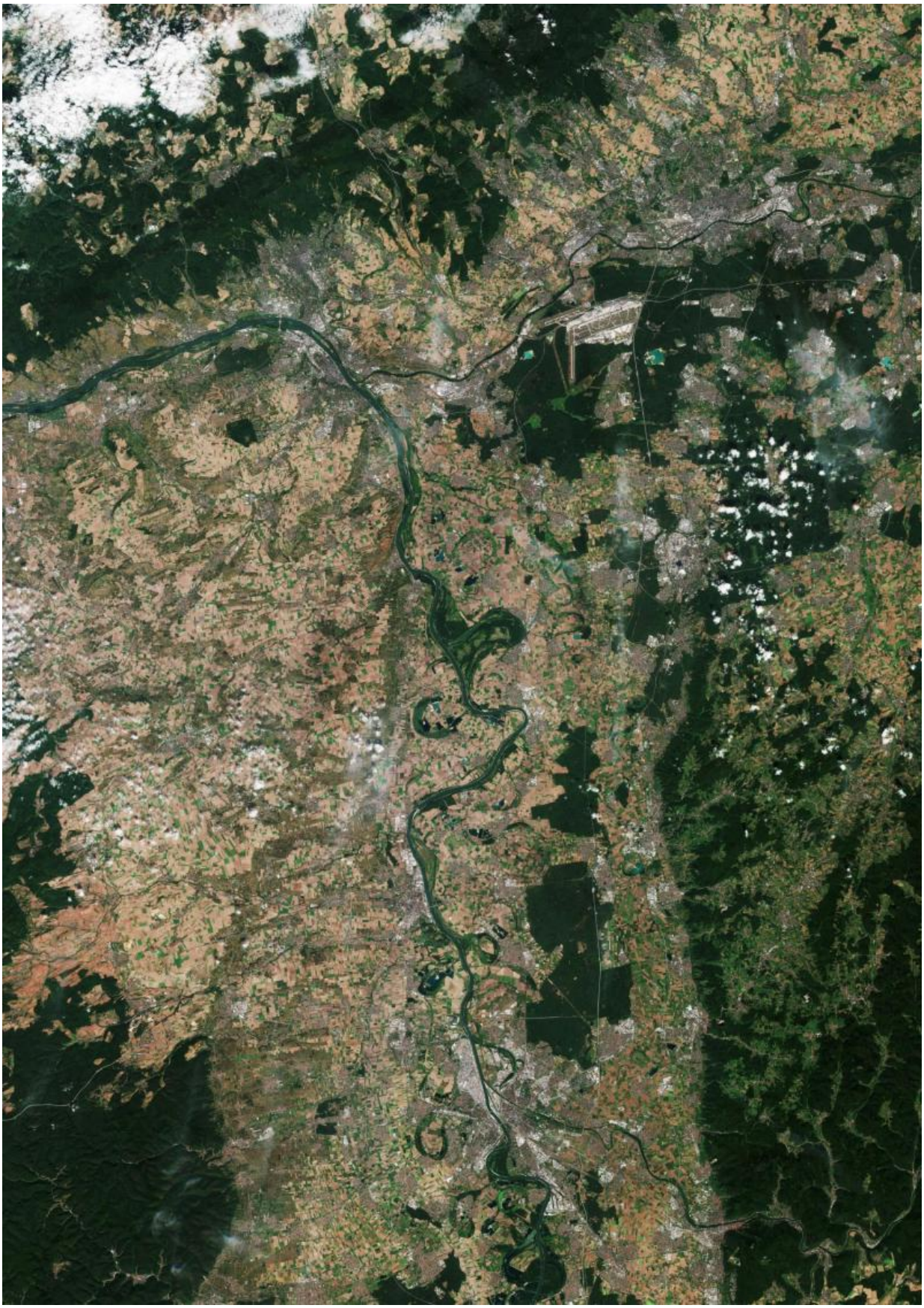
Image: Sentinel sees Rhine-Main area south of the city of Frankfurt

November 17 2016



Credit: Contains modified Copernicus Sentinel data (2015), processed by ESA

This image was taken by the Sentinel-2A satellite on 29 August 2015. It spotlights the Rhine-Main area south of the city of Frankfurt, one of Europe's leading business, transport and innovation hubs.

It clearly shows Frankfurt airport at upper centre, the city itself, to the right and a little north of the airport, and the meeting of the Rhine and Main rivers, with the Rhine flowing from bottom centre towards the upper left, and the much narrower Main flowing from top right through the city.

It also shows the city of Darmstadt, 35 km south of Frankfurt, sitting on a gentle slope between the forested Odenwald mountains and the Rhine River. (Darmstadt is seen as the built-up area to the right of the 'V' intersection between Autobahns 5 and 67, directly south of the airport.)

Darmstadt is an important centre for scientific institutes, universities and high-tech companies – and, since 1967, it has hosted the centre known today as ESA's European Space Operations Centre.

It is home to Sentinel-1 and -2 mission control, from where the three satellites of the two dual missions are operated, 24 hours/day, year round. The fourth, Sentinel-2B, is set for launch in 2017.

There are about 900 ESA staff and contractors working at the centre, with 11 missions comprising 17 spacecraft now flying and nine missions in preparation.

In September 2017, the centre will mark its 50th anniversary.

Provided by European Space Agency