

New website shows impact of European virus confinement

June 5 2020

Environmental and economic impacts of the coronavirus in Europe can now be seen using satellite data provided by the European Space Agency, it announced Friday.

The ESA and the European Commission launched an internet-based programme that compares pollution levels during the health crisis with a baseline scenario, measures chlorophyll concentrations or illustrates economic parameters such as harvests.

The Rapid Action Coronavirus Earth observation (RACE) dashboard uses the Copernicus Sentinel satellite network, partner company data and [artificial intelligence](#) to make an interactive map of Europe (race.esa.int) that compares current industrial and transport activity with that of previous years, an ESA statement explained.

The platform will "measure the impact of the coronavirus lockdown and monitor post-lockdown recovery," it said.

RACE tracks "key environmental parameters—such as air and water quality changes, economic and human activities including industry, shipping, construction, traffic, as well as [agricultural productivity](#)" in 22 ESA member countries.

Air pollution is monitored worldwide, as is the asparagus harvest near Berlin, air traffic in Barcelona, Mediterranean water quality or concentrations of chlorophyll in a chosen region.

Satellite images are accompanied by various tables of information and commentary by specialists.

Some indicators go back to 2014, and are to be updated through the end of this year, according to Yves-Louis Desnos, head of the ESA's Earth Observation Science and Applications Department.

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