

Earth from space: New Zealand's North Island

May 17 2024



Credit: contains modified Copernicus Sentinel data (2024), processed by ESA, [CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO](#) or [ESA Standard Licence](#)

Captured on 7 May 2024, this Copernicus Sentinel-2 image shows part of New Zealand's North Island.

New Zealand lies in the South Pacific Ocean and comprises two major islands—North and South—and a number of smaller islands.

Much of North Island's terrain in this image is dominated by lush vegetation, with darker green areas denoting dense forested zones.

Urban centers appear in gray. Toward the top of the image, the city of Auckland can be seen as a large, gray area adjacent to the Hauraki Gulf to the east and the Manukau Harbor to the west. Auckland is the country's most populous city and its largest port. A [focal point](#) for transportation, the city is also served by New Zealand's leading international airport, which can be spotted in the center of Manukau Harbor.

Moving south, the largest gray area in the middle of the image is Hamilton, one of the country's most important inland centers. It straddles the Waikato River, the longest river in New Zealand, which can be seen as a dark, winding line across the bottom right of the image, bisecting Hamilton into two nearly symmetrical parts.

As it winds its course, the Waikato meanders through a patchwork of agricultural fields that cover the plain between Auckland and Hamilton. The green and brown hues of the fields shift according to the crop type

and their various stages of growth.

Before entering the Tasman Sea, south of Auckland, the Waikato River forms an estuary, which feeds a network of marshes and creates numerous small islands.

On the coast, bright, turquoise colors in the Tasman Sea suggest the presence of sediment being carried into the ocean by river discharge. The swirls in the sea show how the currents transport sediment.

A number of lakes and wetlands can be spotted near the center of the image, including the Whangamarino Wetland, an extensive mosaic of swamps and bogs, visible as a dark brown area east of the Waikato River. The Kopuatai Peat Dome, the largest, unaltered peat bog in New Zealand, is clear to see as the brown, elongated feature just south of the Hauraki Gulf.

Provided by European Space Agency

Citation: Earth from space: New Zealand's North Island (2024, May 17) retrieved 2 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-05-earth-space-zealand-north-island.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.