

Background

Since 1980, Iraq has been repeatedly affected by conflicts. One of the major causes of environmental harm has been from attacks on oil infrastructure, such as oil wells, refineries and pipelines. These attacks have caused fires, oil spills and severe contamination.

Worksheet exercise

NASA allow free access to satellite data which can be used to monitor environmental degradation.

Explore the NASA satellite data to see the impact from fires in this region of Iraq.

Step 1. View the satellite data from [22 Oct 2016](#). You will see evidence of an oil fire (black smoke) and from a fire at a sulphur factory (white smoke).

Step 2. Track back in time and view earlier satellite images.

Question 1. When did the fires start and when did they end?

Question 2. What are the health and environmental risks from such fires?

Resources to use and links to find out more

Information about the environmental issues facing Iraq can be found here:

- <https://ceobs.org/country-brief-iraq>
- <https://ceobs.org/iraqi-communities-concerned-over-a-polluted-future-new-pax-research-shows>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b3b63a3e5274a6ff466faa5/Environmental_risks_in_Iraq.pdf

More information about Iraq's wildlife and conservation projects can be found here:

- <http://www.natureiraq.org>
- https://www.ibat-alliance.org/country_profiles/IRQ