

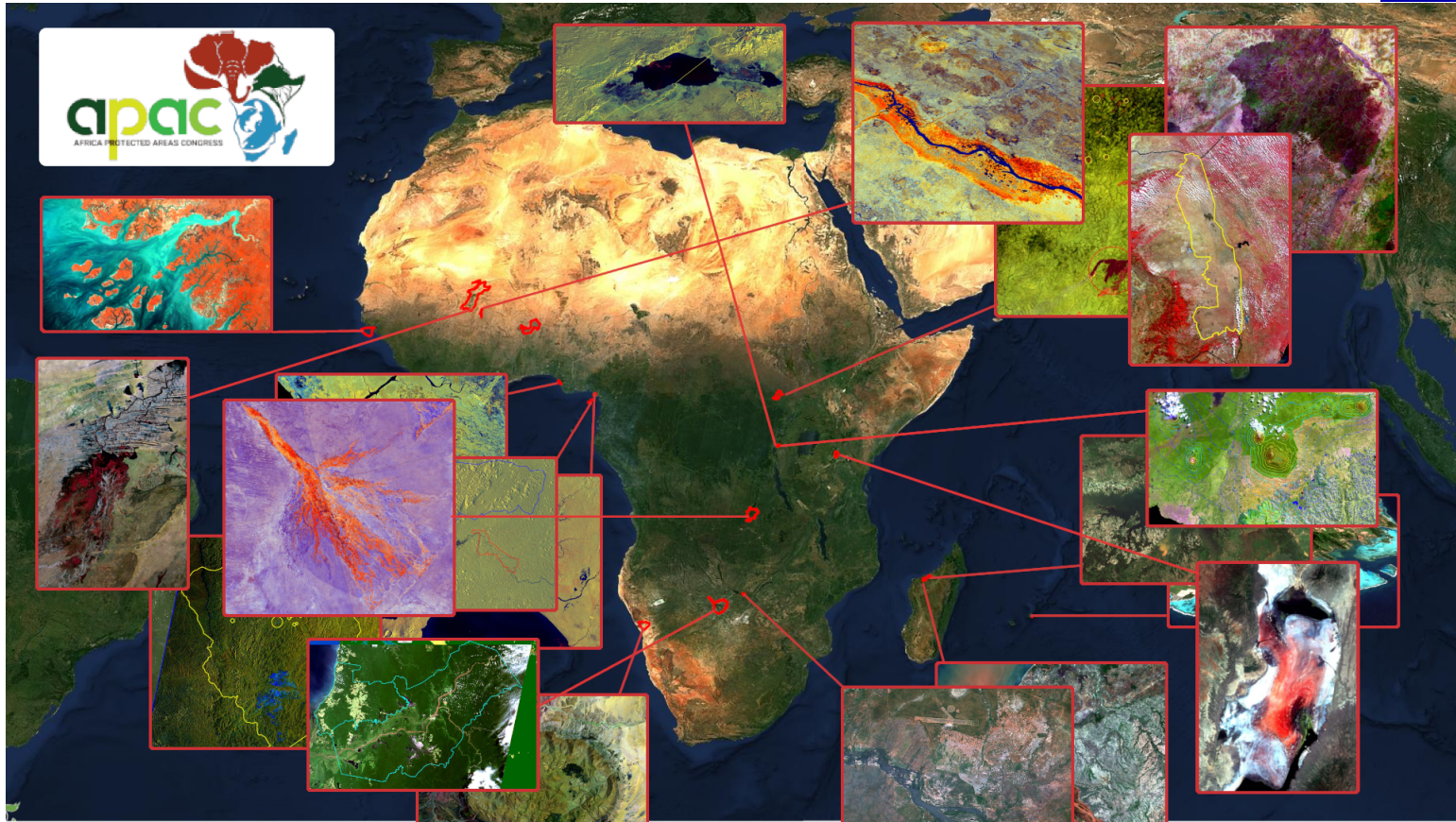
African Protected Areas highlighted for the APAC congress

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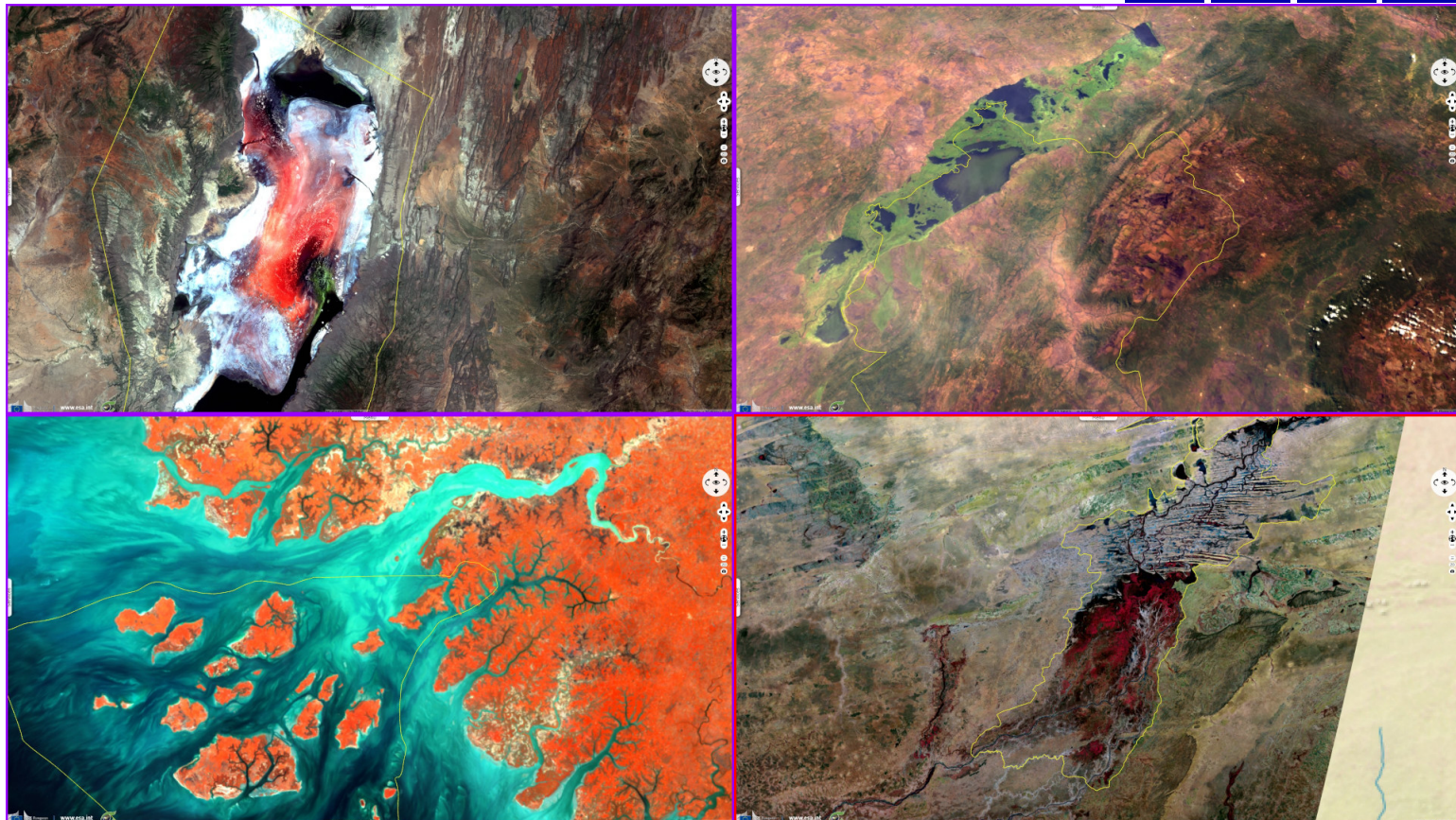
Keyword(s): Land, coastal, national park, reserve, forestry, rainforest, mangrove, savannah, coral reef, biodiversity, UNESCO World Heritage

[2D Layerstack](#)

[2D view](#)



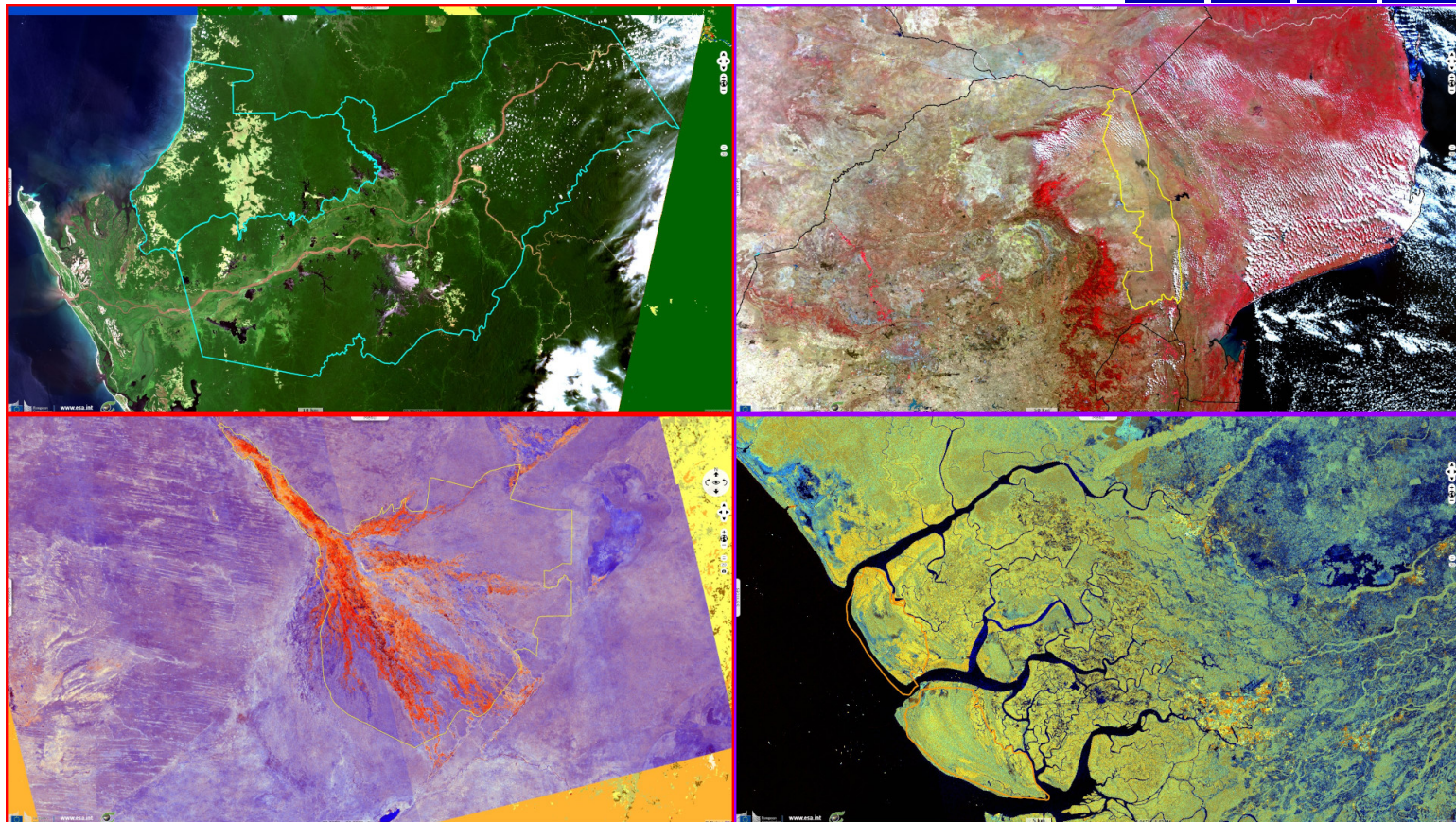
The inaugural Africa Protected Areas Congress is being held in Kigali from 18 to 23 July 2022. The overarching objective of the IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) is to position Africa protected and conserved areas within the broader goals of economic development and community well-being and to increase the understanding of vital role parks play in conserving biodiversity and delivering the ecosystem services that underpin human welfare and livelihoods. This story honours the contribution of African protected and conservation sties to the global biodiversity by compiling elements of past stories dedicated to these areas.



- top left: SED-013 - S2 (20.12.2016) - The red salt crust of lake Natron, a conservation area at the northern border of Tanzania.
- top right: SED-060 - S3 OLCI (09.06.2017) - Upemba National Park in the southeastern Democratic Republic of Congo.
- bottom left: SED-061 - S3 (06.05.2017) - Archipel Bolama-Bijagós, a protected area at the mouth of Rio Geba in Guine-Bissau.
- bottom right: EVT-079 - S3 OLCI (04.01.2017) - Lake Niger in Mali, shallow or sediment rich water shows in blue, deeper water in black, plant-topped land in red.

As it is [reminded](#) in the briefing document of the event: *"Africa is immensely rich in biodiversity which comprise a quarter of all global biodiversity. The continent supports the earth's largest assemblages of large mammals. Africa's ecosystems extend from mangroves to deserts, from Mediterranean to tropical forests, from temperate to sub-tropical and montane grasslands and savannahs, and to ice-capped mountains. As environmental issues have become more globalised, African governments have adopted many regional and global agreements on the environment, biodiversity and sustainable development."*

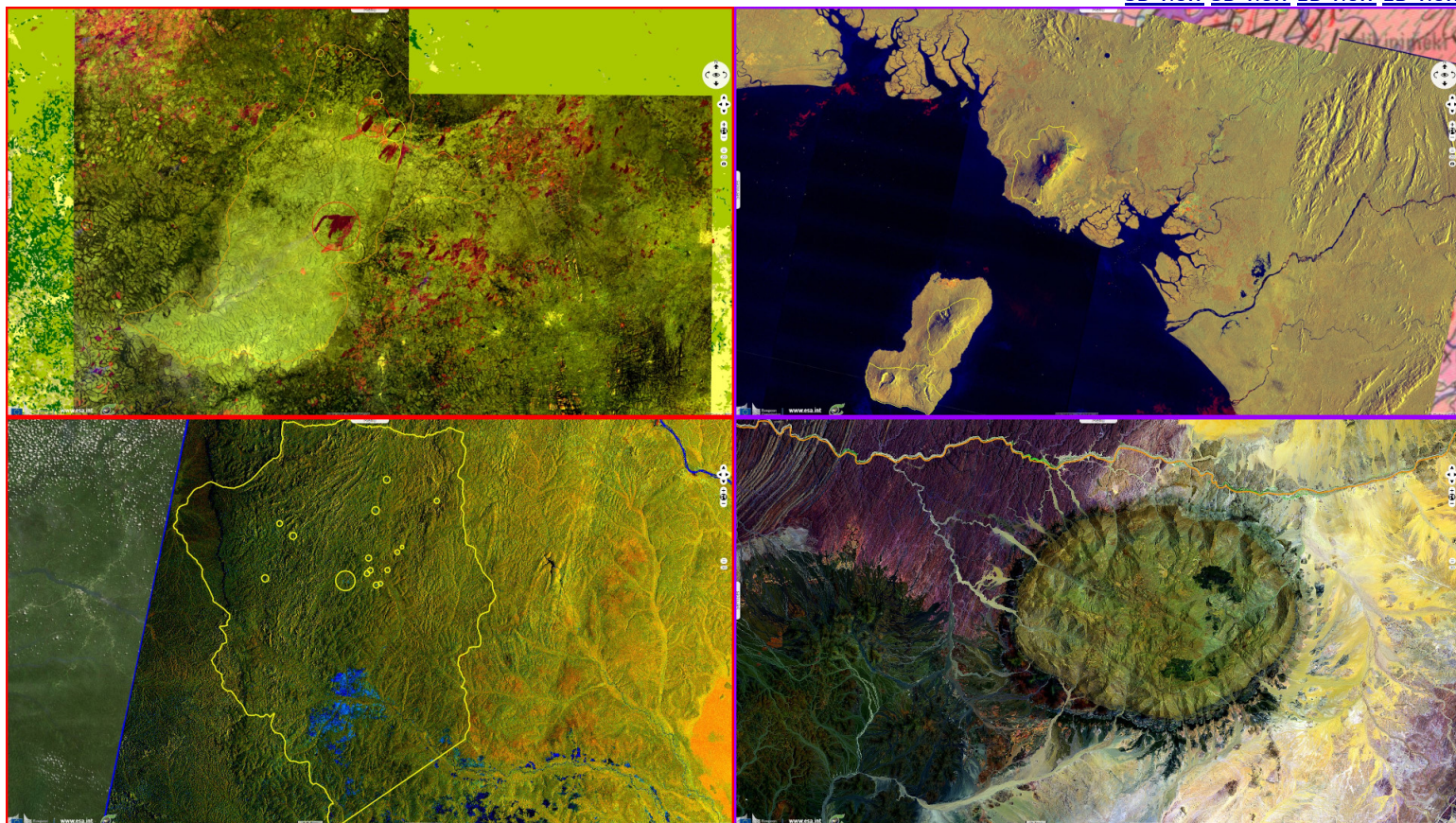
"Across all these commitments, success will be contingent on halting and reversing biodiversity loss at national and local levels, for which protected and conserved areas represent a prime mechanism supporting multiple interventions. With new decadal targets on biodiversity and climate to be set by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity [CBD] and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change [FCCC] Conferences of the Parties in late 2021, APAC can integrate key commitments in its deliberations, agreements and action plans."



- top left: EVT-087 - S2 (02.04.2017) - East of Port-Gentil, Bas Ogooue & Wonga-Wongué Ramsar sites in Gabon.
- top right: SED-098 - S3 OLCI (23.08.2017) - Location of Kruger National Park in South Africa where Wayne Lotter started as a ranger.
- bottom left: EVT-111 - S1 (28.04 & 05.05.2017) - Strong vv backscatter of small vegetation as flood season starts in the Okavango delta, Botswana.
- bottom right: SED-114 - S1 (22.02.2017) - Olague and Uremure Yokri protected areas in S-E Nigeria, mangroves show in pale yellow, other forests in green.

"The overarching objective of APAC is to stress implementation of actions agreed to halt biodiversity loss and land degradation, address climate change and support delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) using protected and conserved areas as one implementation mechanism. Critically, the underlying drivers of biodiversity loss need to be understood and addressed in practical ways, and the global post-COVID-19 economy needs to reflect the reality that our lives and economies depend on nature."

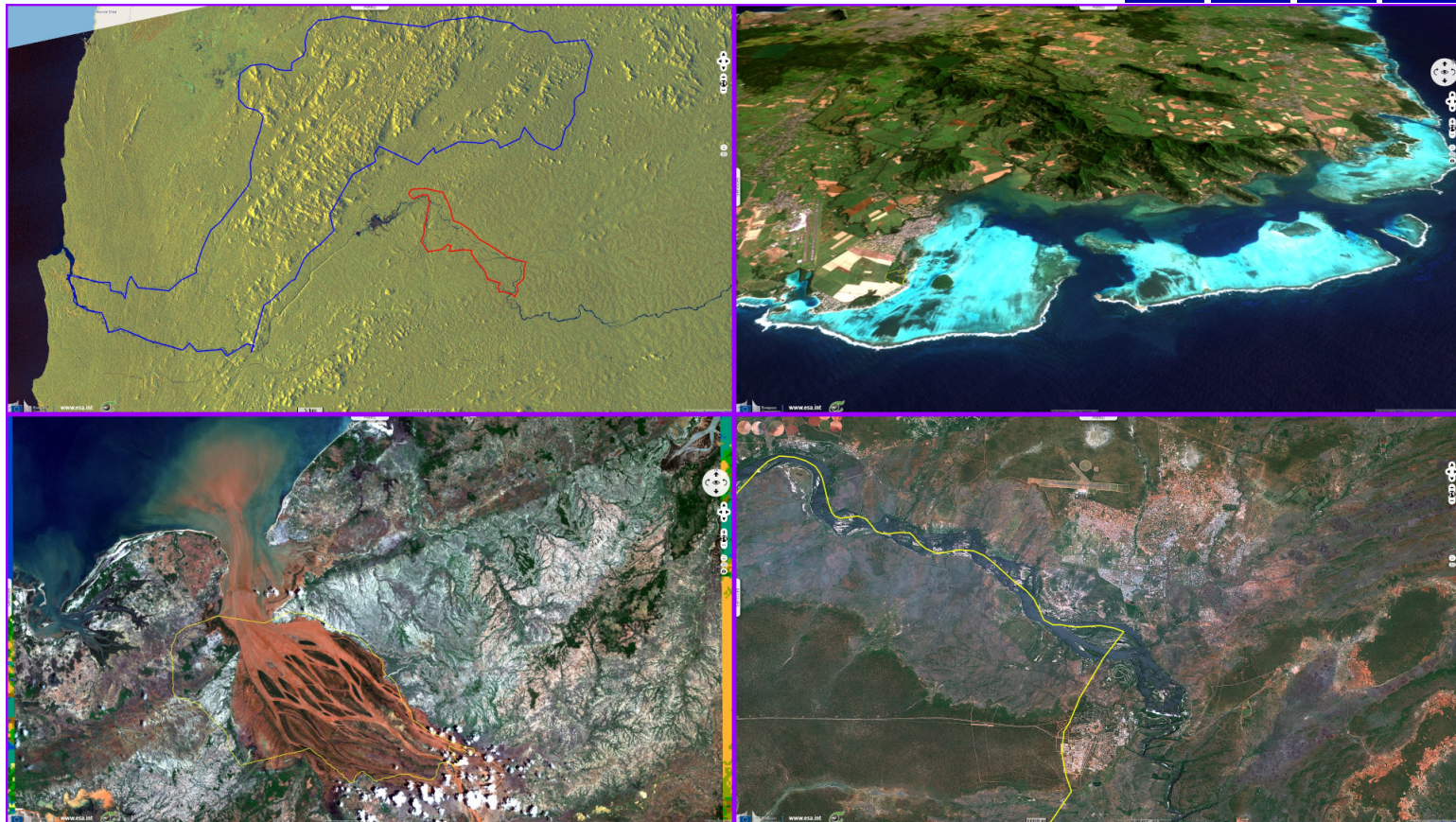
"Climate change-related interventions such as low carbon and net zero emissions, on their own, are not sufficient for a sustainable and resilient post-pandemic economy. The effective and sustainable management of protected and conserved areas should remain the backbone to ensuring resilience against shocks."



- top left: EVT-131 - S2 (2016.12.22 & 2016.12.29) - Evidences of recent or active wildfires in Garamba National Park, DRC.
- top right: SED-132 - S1 (17 & 22.10.2017) - Several protected areas of Cameroon and Sao Tome: Estuary of Rio Del Rey, Douala Edéa, Mont Cameroun, Pico de Basilé, Caldera de Luba.
- bottom left: EVT-163 - S1 (13.12.2017) - The clearings (circled) of Odzala Kakoua National Park (Congo Republic) show in light blue.
- bottom right: SED-174 - S2 (31.12.2017) - Brandberg Mountain, a granite intrusion and Namibia's highest mountain is a biodiversity hotspot in this arid area.

The objectives of APAC are to:

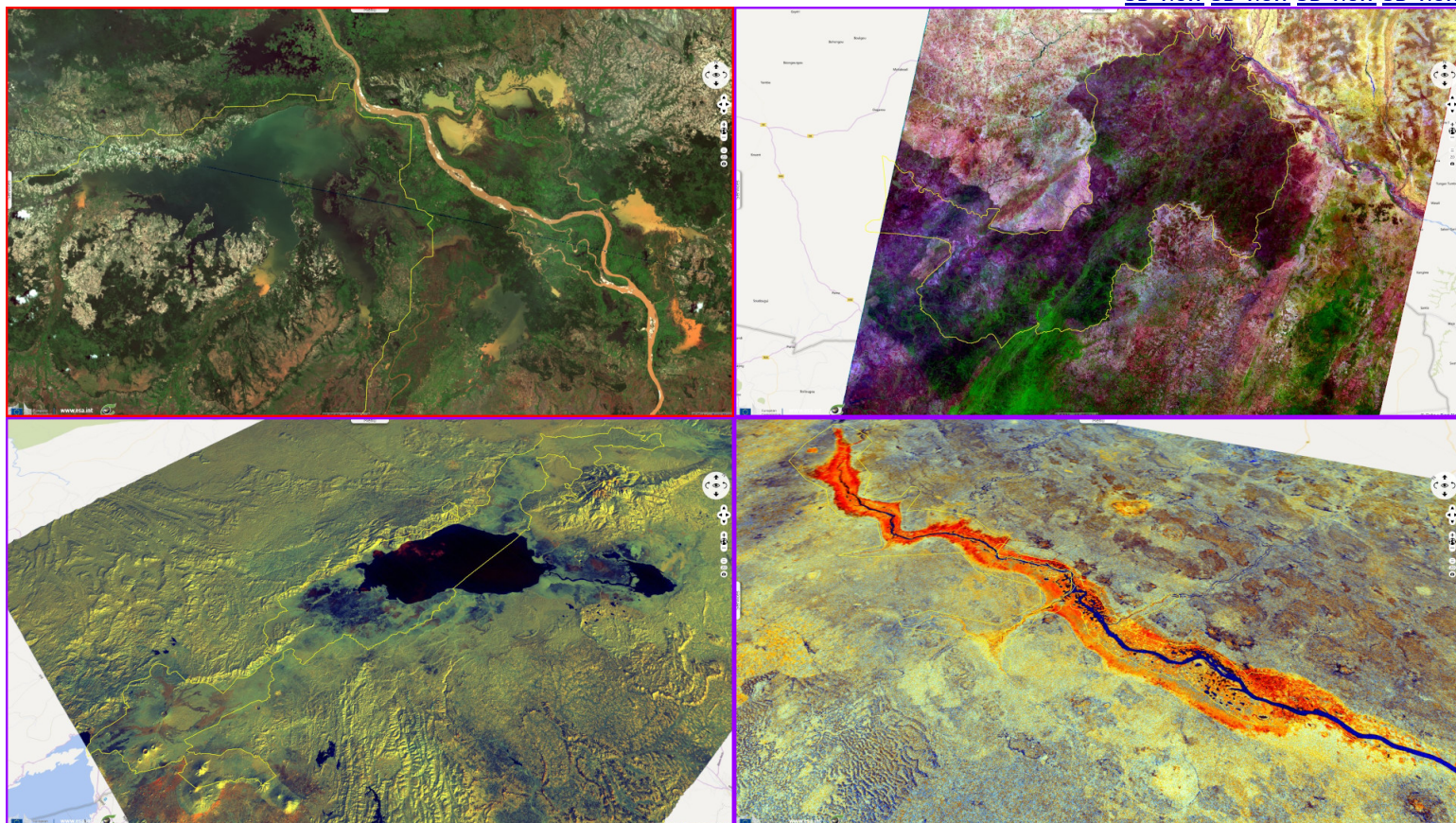
- *"Make a strong case for African leadership and commitment to implement a development vision prioritizing nature and societal aspirations for sustainable and resilient outcomes.*
- *Agree on practical actions to promote the value and role of protected and conserved areas to enhance resilience, support sustainable development, human welfare and well-being.*
- *Agree on the underlying drivers of biodiversity loss and seek commitments from African and developed country governments to comprehensively address these.*
- *Agree on practical measures to enhance effective governance and management of protected and conserved areas to achieve their biodiversity and social outcomes, and ensure social and environmental sustainability.*
- *Agree on practical measures to recognize, elevate, and uphold the rights, responsibilities and roles of indigenous people, local communities and young people in conserving nature.*
- *Agree on key messages and effective platforms to advocate for protected and conserved areas to be high on the agendas of Governments, society, local communities, the private sector, and partners as part of post pandemic nature-positive recovery efforts.*
- *Launch effective Pan African networks, partnerships and cooperation mechanisms to support the effective management of protected and conserved areas and ensure their long-term sustainability including a Cooperation Agreement, a Directors' Platform, and a Conservation Trust."*



- top left: SED-182 - S1 (14.01.2018) - The tropical rainforest of Campo-Ma'an National Park (blue) and dense forest of Ma'an (red), Cameroon.
- top right: SED 202 - S2 (18.07.2017) - The eastern coast of Mauritius includes two Ramsar wetlands: Pointe d'Esny & Blue Bay marine park.
- bottom left: SED-210 - S2 (15.12.2016) - Red sediment plumes of Bombetoka Bay backs the saying that Madagascar soil "bleeds into the ocean".
- bottom right: SED-224 - S2 (08.01.2018) - Between Zimbabwe and Zambia, famed Victoria Falls separate a long calm segment of Zambezi from its most turbulent downstream section.

The Congress will focus on 3 key themes. The first is protected areas and conserved areas. It *"Includes looking at the current status and level of effectiveness of all models of management of Protected and Conservation Areas (P&CAs), policy challenges and solutions, conservation representativity and connectivity through area networks that secure biodiversity and ecosystems; showcase best practices and call all Africa's sectors of society—State, civil society, communities, and the private sectors - to confront together the different challenges with respect to P&CAs."*













Another important topic is people: *"Mutually beneficial relationships between people and nature can be strengthened in and around P&CAs, highlighting the deep social, cultural, spiritual, and economic relationships that people across the continent have in their landscapes and seascapes; showcase the contributions of people, including IPLCs, women and youth, to the governance and management of P&CAs; provide a space for dialogue on existing conflicts, as well as historical legacies of exclusionary forms of conservation, and explore potential solutions."*



- top left: EVT-251 - S2 (18.02.2018) - Zoom on lake Kinkony, a Ramsar site and nearby lakes near the mouth of Mahavavy river.
- top right: SED-280 - S2 (19.05.2018) - W-Arly-Pendjari Complex is a transnational park between Benin, Niger & Burkina Faso.
- bottom left: SED-286 - S1 (30.07.2018) - Virunga National Park, DRC, where 6 rangers were killed by "Mai Mai" militia while defending gorillas in 2018.
- bottom right: SED-386 - S1 (11.10.2018) - Usually a tributary of the Black Volta, Sourou river becomes a distributary at the end of the rain season. It lies between the Mali and the Burkina Faso.

Finally, the last key thematic is biodiversity: *"Build on our understanding of the status of biodiversity, community governance and knowledge, and identify how conservation is integral to multi-scale development strategies through national regional and global sources; outline how the COVID-19 pandemic and other zoonotic diseases have changed perceptions about and influenced the need to value biodiversity and promote a debate on the sustainable use of biodiversity, in particular amongst regions and areas where livelihoods, jobs and human wellbeing are so dependent on sustainable use and how it contributes to its safeguarding."*

*The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Space Agency or the European Union.
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