

# Thousands of Iraqis hospitalized by repeated Shamal-powered dust storms

Sentinel-5P TROPOMI AER\_AI acquired on 07 April 2022 at 09:44:47 UTC

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Sentinel-5P TROPOMI AER\_AI acquired on 05 May 2022 at 09:21:57 UTC

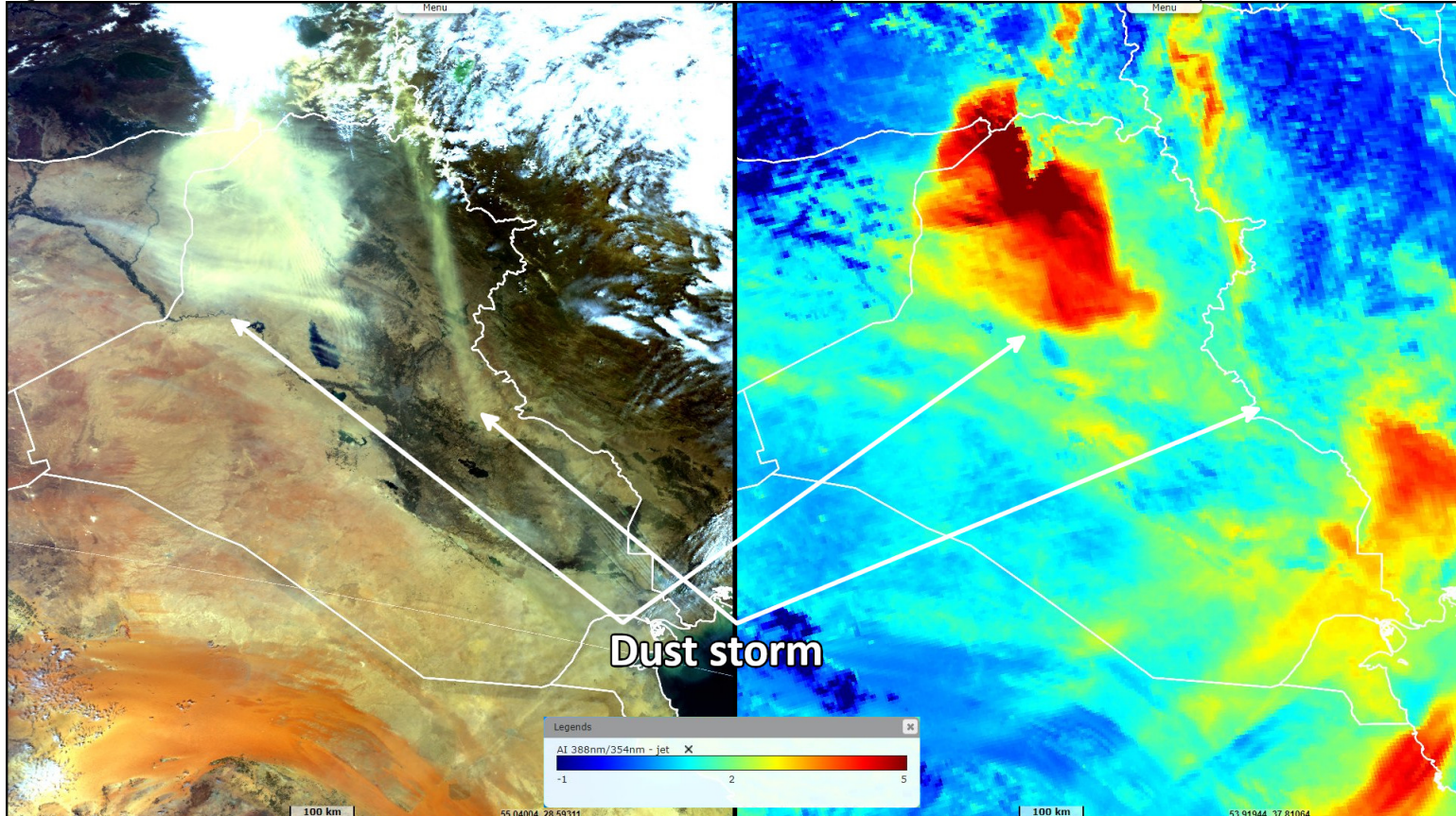
Sentinel-3 OLCI FR acquired on 23 May 2022 from 07:18:32 to 07:21:32 UTC

Sentinel-5P TROPOMI AER\_AI acquired on 23 May 2022 from 09:13:09 to 10:58:09 UTC

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Keyword(s): Atmosphere, climate, drought, desertification, dust storm, sand storm, Iraq

Fig. 1 - S3 OLCI & S5P TROPOMI Aerosol Index (07.04.2022) - Around two hours separate Sentinel-3 from Sentinel-5P acquisitions. [2D animation](#)



The skies above many Iraqi cities turned orange several times since April as visibility dropped to a few hundred meters. Several airports were closed during the dust events, and schools were closed nationwide. Government offices were shuttered in seven of the Iraq's 18 provinces, and several governors declared states of emergency. During the seventh episode, one person has died and more than 5000 Iraqis have been admitted to hospitals with breathing problems.

Iraq's water reserves are already 50% lower than last year, and the water resources ministry has warned that vital Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which provide most of the country's surface water, could dry up within 20 years.

Iraq's meteorological office previously told AFP the country is likely to see more and more dust storms due to drought, desertification and declining rainfall. A lack of green areas in and around cities can also contribute to the problem. In 2016, The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) predicted that Iraq could witness 300 dust events in a year by 2026.



Fig. 2 - S3 OLCI & S5P TROPOMI Aerosol Index (05.05.2022) - Multiple dust storms have hit Iraq since early April 2022. [2D animation](#)

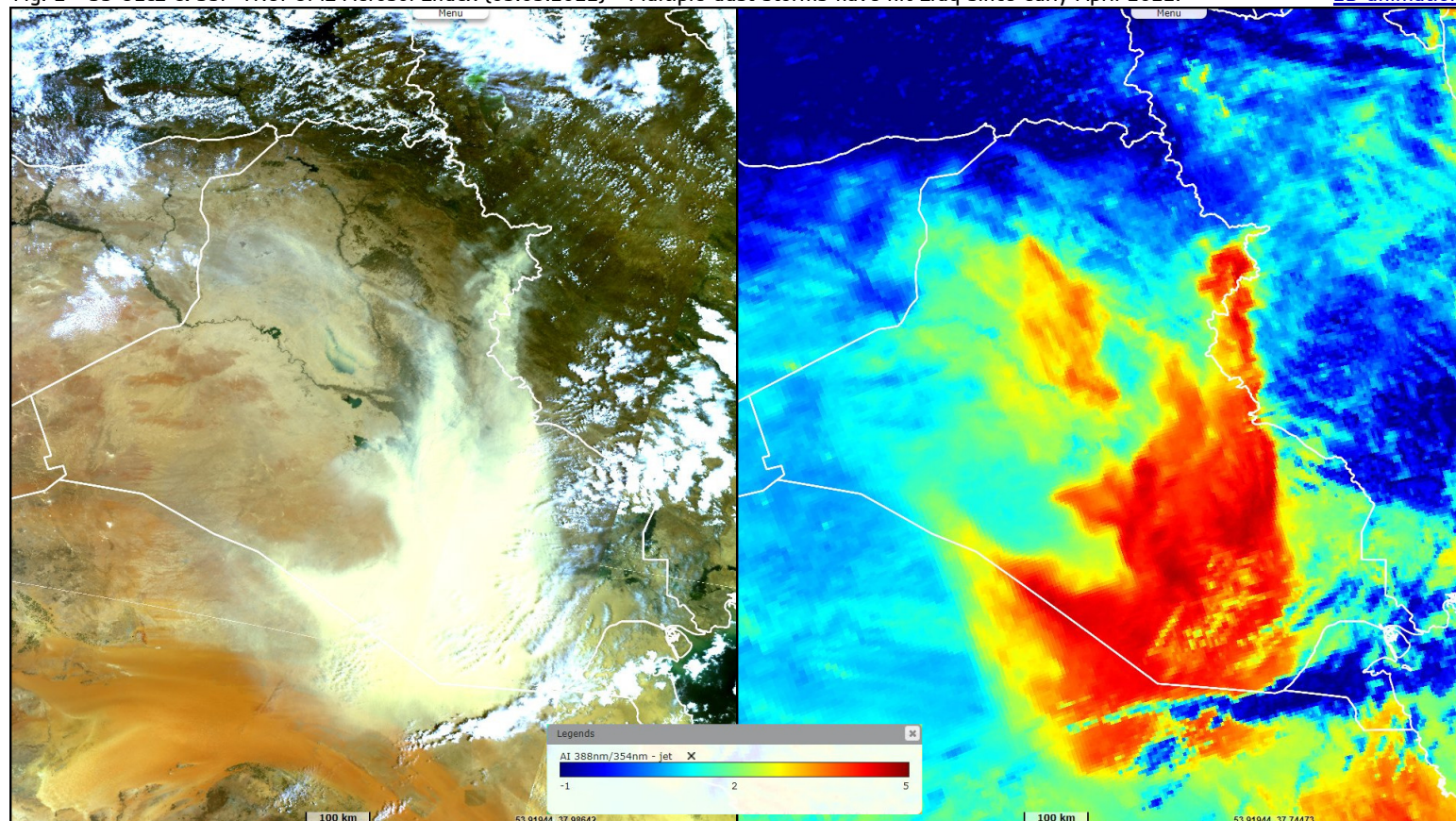
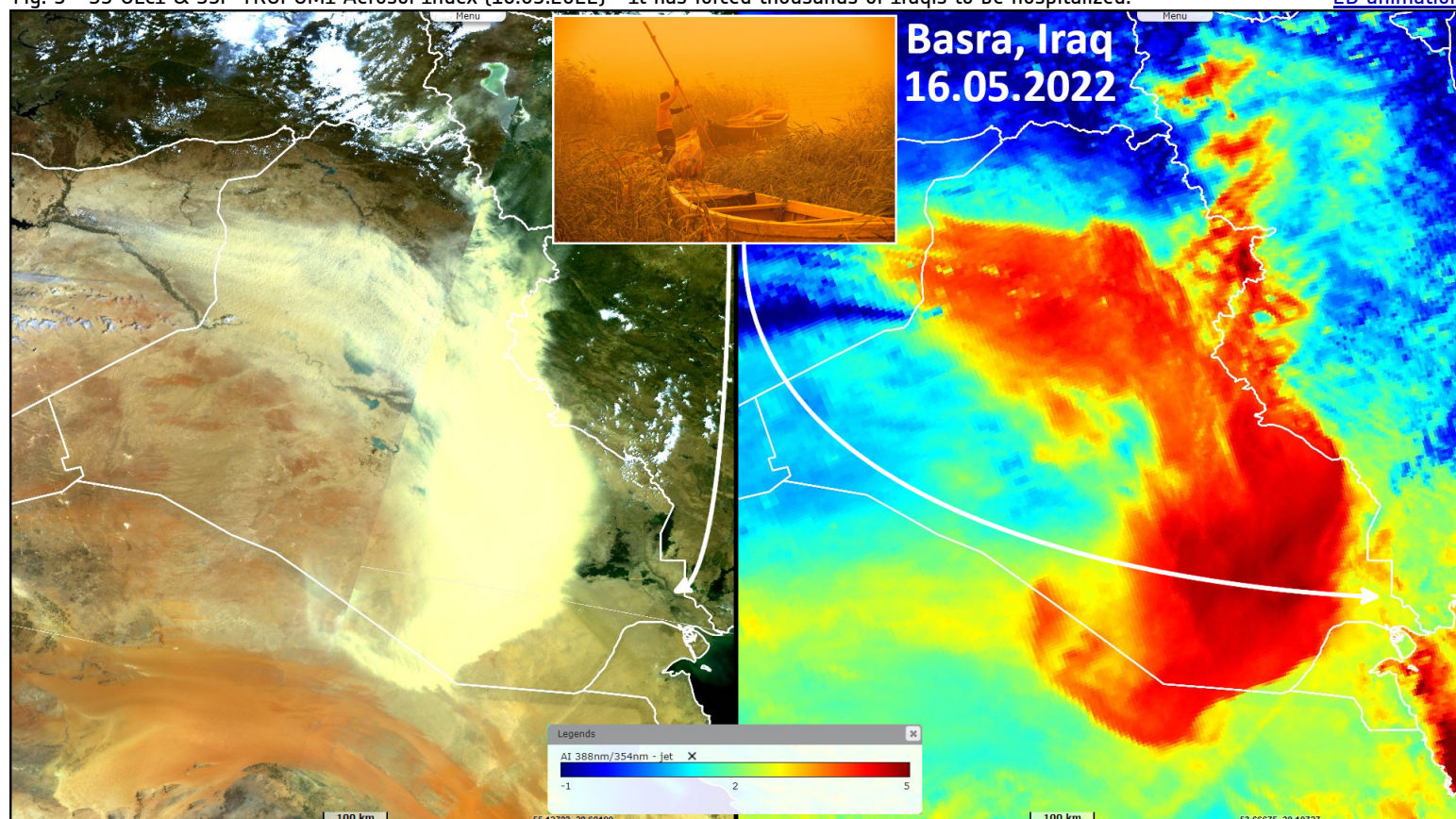


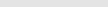











Fig. 3 - S3 OLCI & S5P TROPOMI Aerosol Index (16.05.2022) - It has forced thousands of Iraqis to be hospitalized. [2D animation](#)



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