

"Red mud" Spreads Along the Rivers: New Satellite Images



Satellite images enable to access the area of contamination with "red mud" in Hungary. Detailed images of Landsat 5 and SPOT 4, received in ScanEx RDC on October 9-10 by the «UniScan» receiving station in Moscow.



Satellite images enable to access the area of contamination with "red mud" in Hungary. Detailed images of Landsat 5 and SPOT 4, received in ScanEx RDC on October 9-10 by the «UniScan» receiving station in Moscow. It can be seen that toxic wastes cover the area of the Devcser settlement, whereas the total length of the spill exceeds 15 km (over 50 m in width).

Toxic wastes from the alumina refinery Ajkai Timfoldgyar Zrt - red mud - got into the river system of Hungary after the explosion on the factory that happened on 4th October and destroyed the protection dike of the reservoir with hazardous substances. On the next day, on 5th October, the Hungarian government declared a state of emergency in three regions, impacted by the toxic wastes spill: Veszprem, Vas and Gyor-Moson-Sopron. Hungarian authorities addressed to the European Committee on October 7 to activate the mechanism of civil protection.

Contamination with "red mud" is clearly seen on satellite images. SPOT 4 image. Acquisition date: October 10, 2010 (SpotImage, SCANEX, 2010).

The river transfer of the "red mud" may have an adverse impact on the ecological situation of Hungary and neighboring countries. The first waterway where the mud got in was the Torna creek, from which the wastes reached the Marcal river. On 7th October the toxic wastes reached the river of Mosoni-Duna, western branch of the Danube river at the border with Austria and Slovakia. The "mud" filled the Raba river waters falling into the Danube river as well.

Satellite imagery of the disaster area will help determining the actual size of the Danube river basin pollution and to control the mud distribution. ScanEx provided the satellite images after reception and processing to the National Center for Crisis Management of the Emercom of Russia and to the UNOSAT and UN-SPIDER international organizations.

Contamination with "red mud" is clearly seen on satellite images. Landsat 5 image. Acquisition date: October 9, 2010. Data received and processed in ScanEx RDC.