

Land Formations

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Introduction

You have probably seen the beauty of the Earth when flying over it. Where do those beautiful patterns come from? Land is shaped and re-shaped by many forces. Some forces are natural, like wind and water erosion. The human force is called "anthropogenic".

As you look at these aerial photographs, can you guess which patterns are natural and which are caused by humans? Lift the tab to check your guess!

Conclusion

There is no doubt that humans are capable of shaping the Earth at scales so large as to approximate Mother Nature operating over large regions.

The next time you travel in an airplane, look down to see how nature and humans have shaped the Earth. Try to imagine how those land formations might affect the humans and wildlife who live there.

Anthropogenic!
Puerto de Veracruz,
Veracruz, Mexico

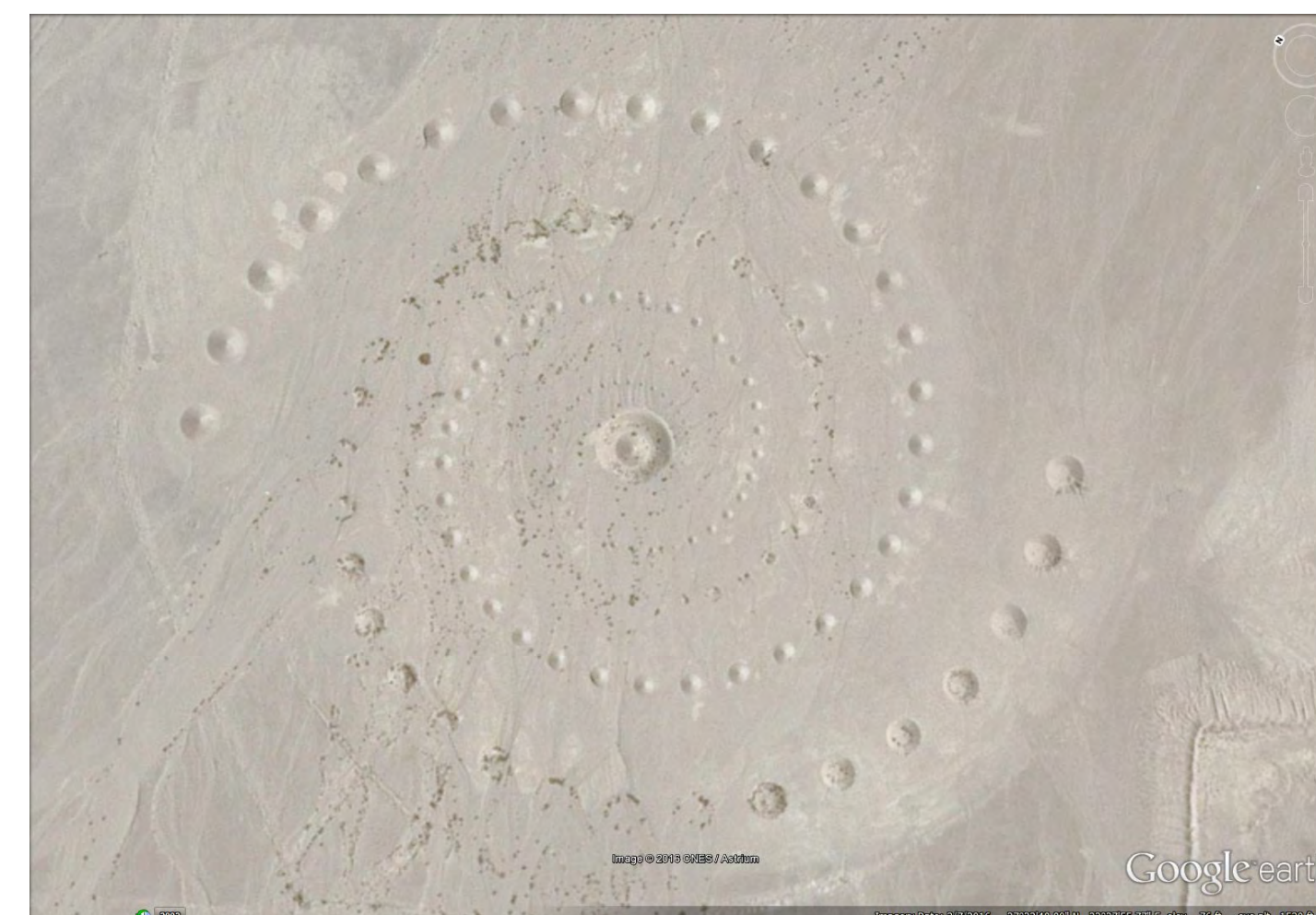
Port storage facility



2,900 ft

Anthropogenic!
Desert Breath, Red Sea
Governorate, Egypt

Art project using sand
mounds and sand pits



1,500 ft

Anthropogenic!
Palm Jumeirah, Palm
Islands, Dubai, UAE

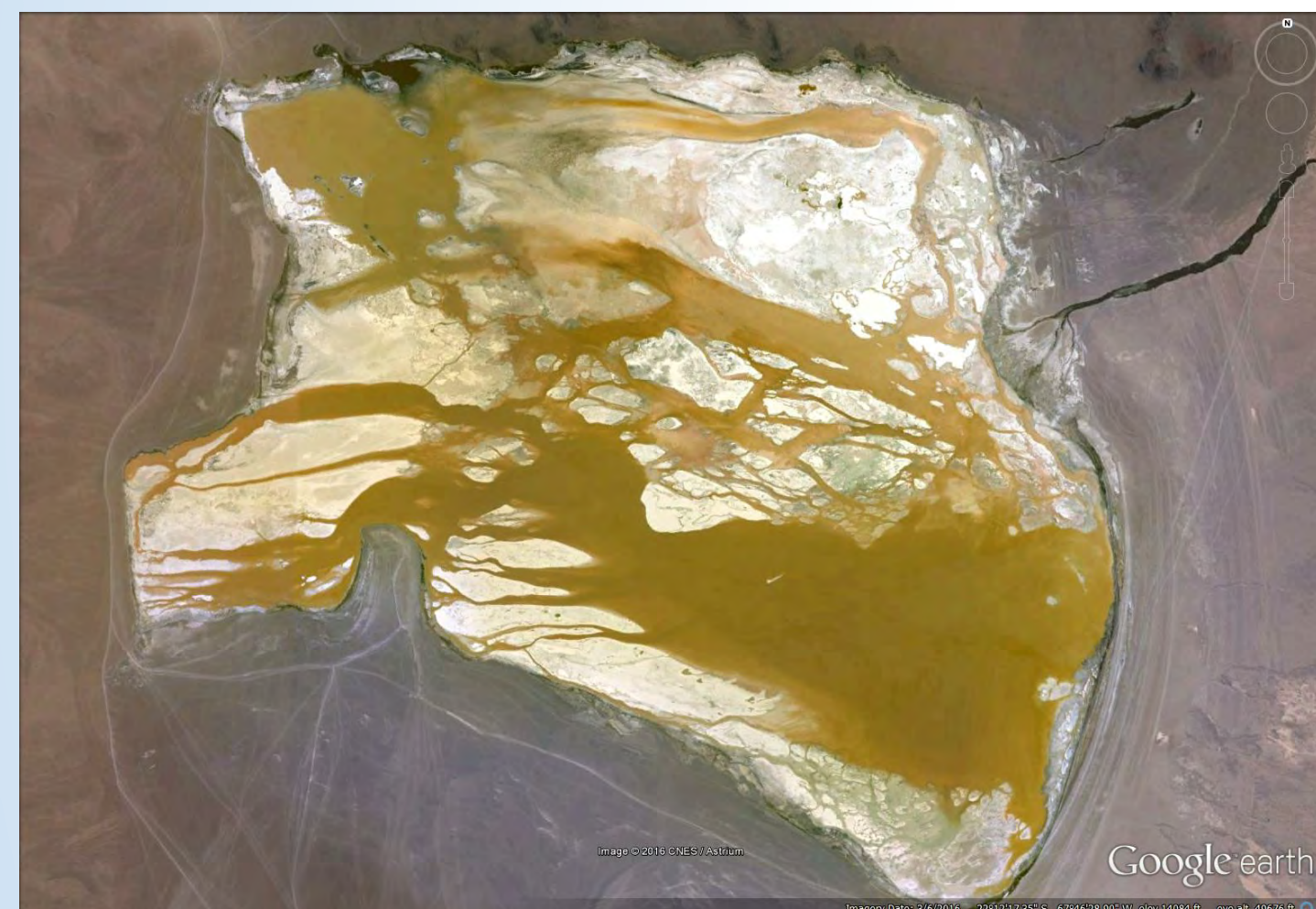
Land reclamation for
development. World's
largest artificial Island



21,000 ft

Natural!
Laguna Colorada,
Potosi, Bolivia

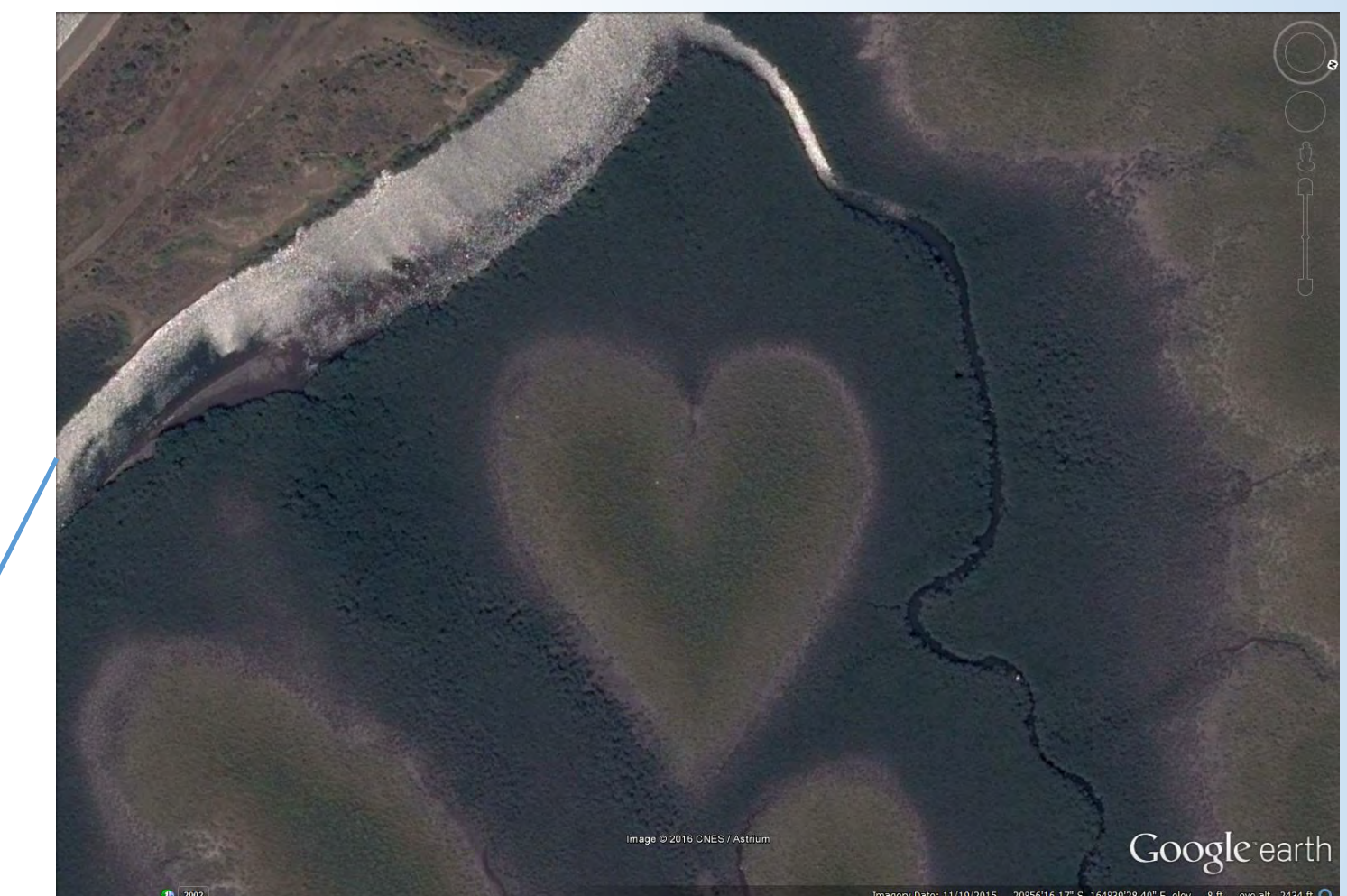
Sediments and algae



49,700 ft

Natural!
Heart of Voh, Voh,
New Caledonia

Mangroves surround
marshland hummock



2,400 ft

Anthropogenic!
Rio Negro, Argentina

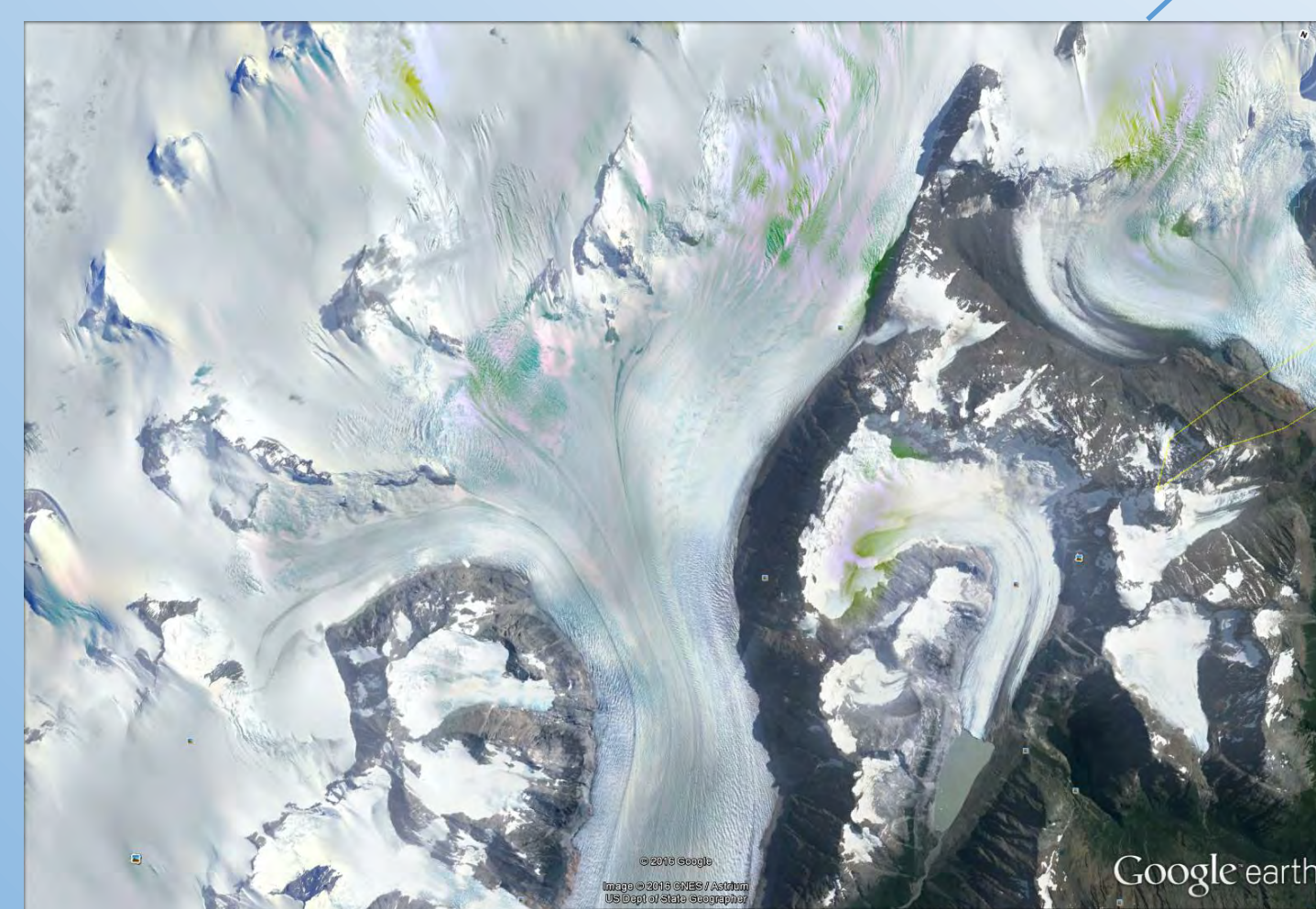
Roads connecting
petroleum wells



35,400 ft

Natural!
Southern Patagonia
Icefields, Chile

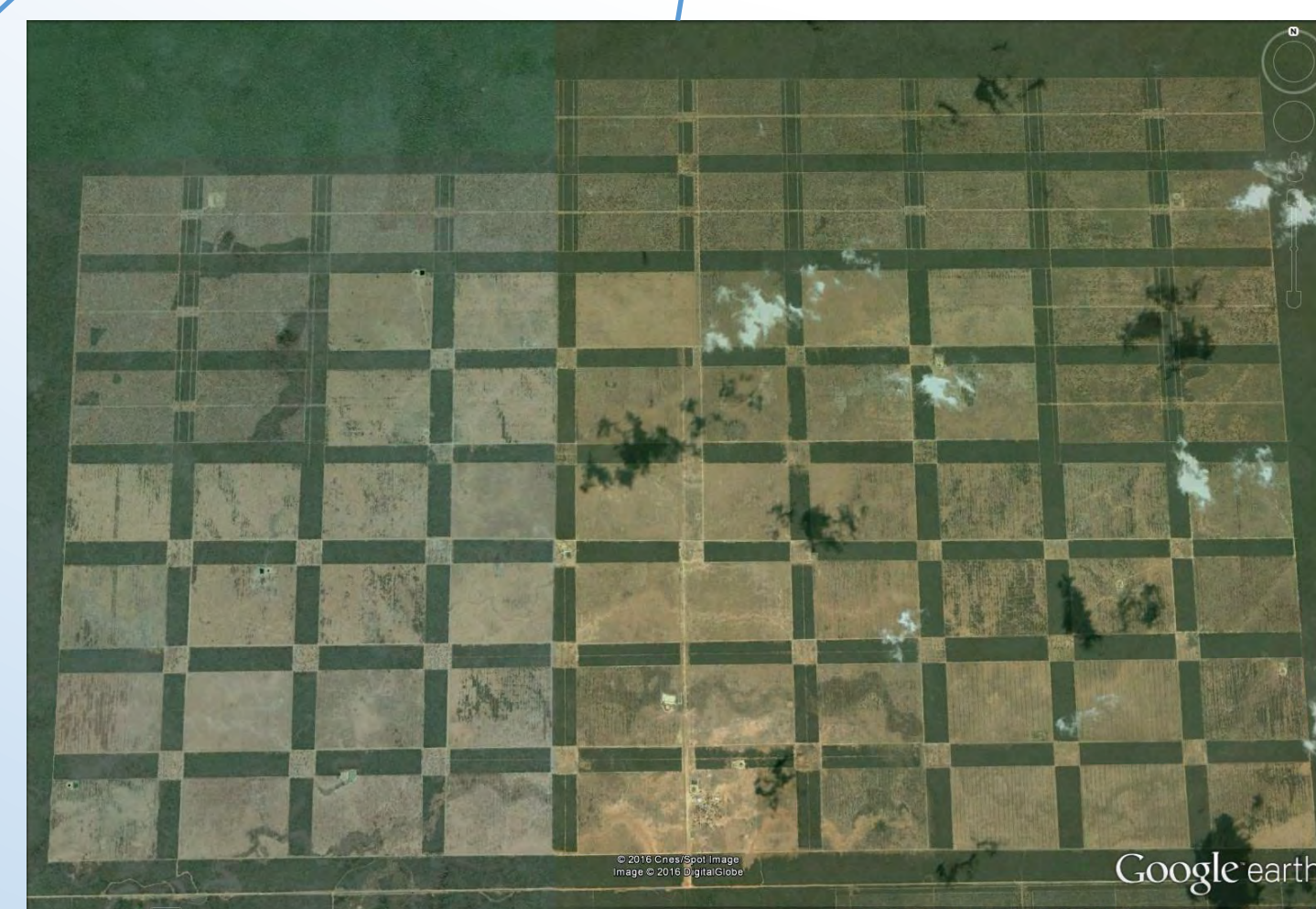
Colored pools of melted
water on glaciers



73,100 ft

Anthropogenic!
Chaco Region, Paraguay

Partial deforestation for
agriculture



36,100 ft

Both!
Western Australia

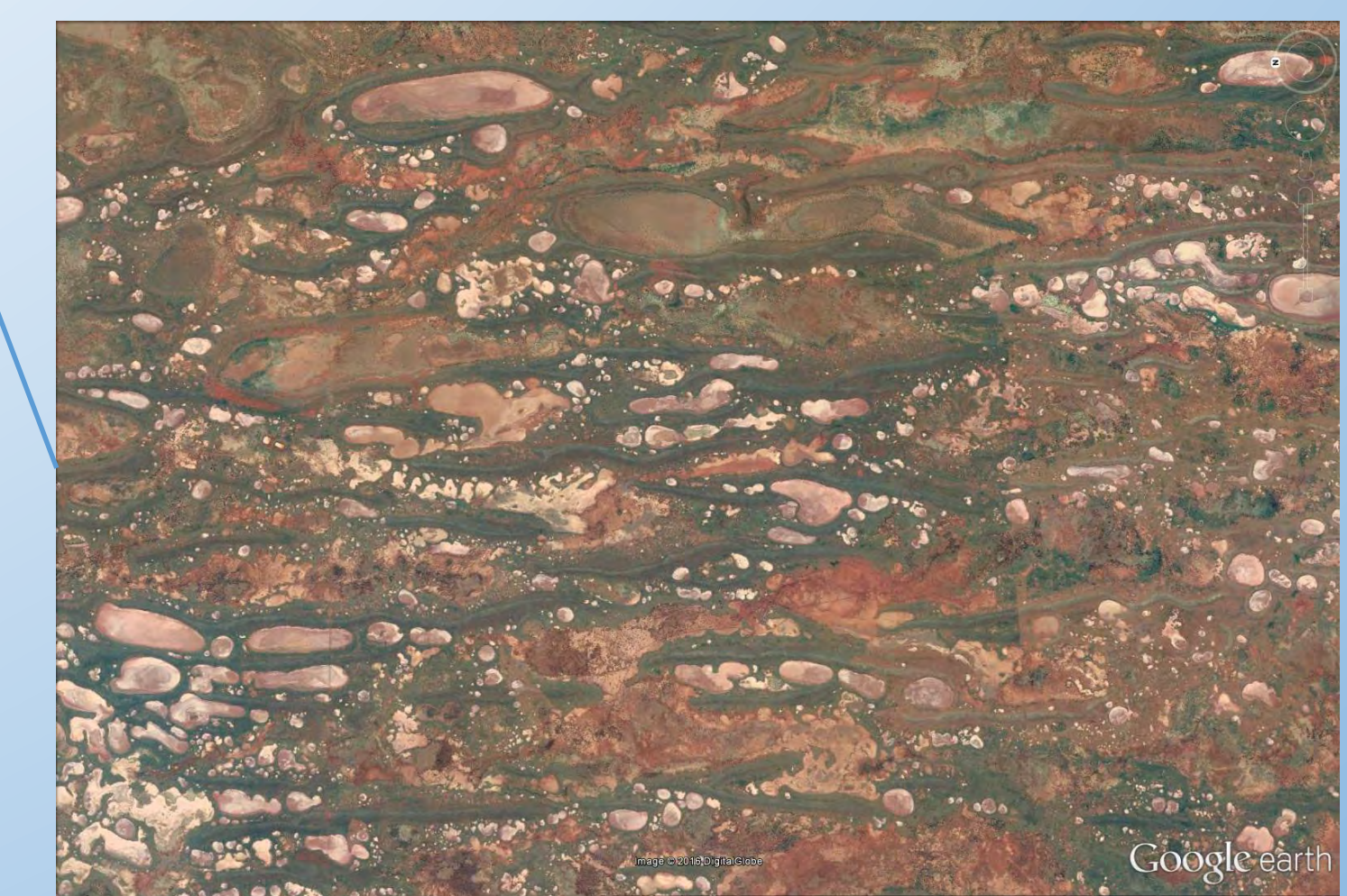
Anthropogenic salt
ponds (square) and
coastal flats



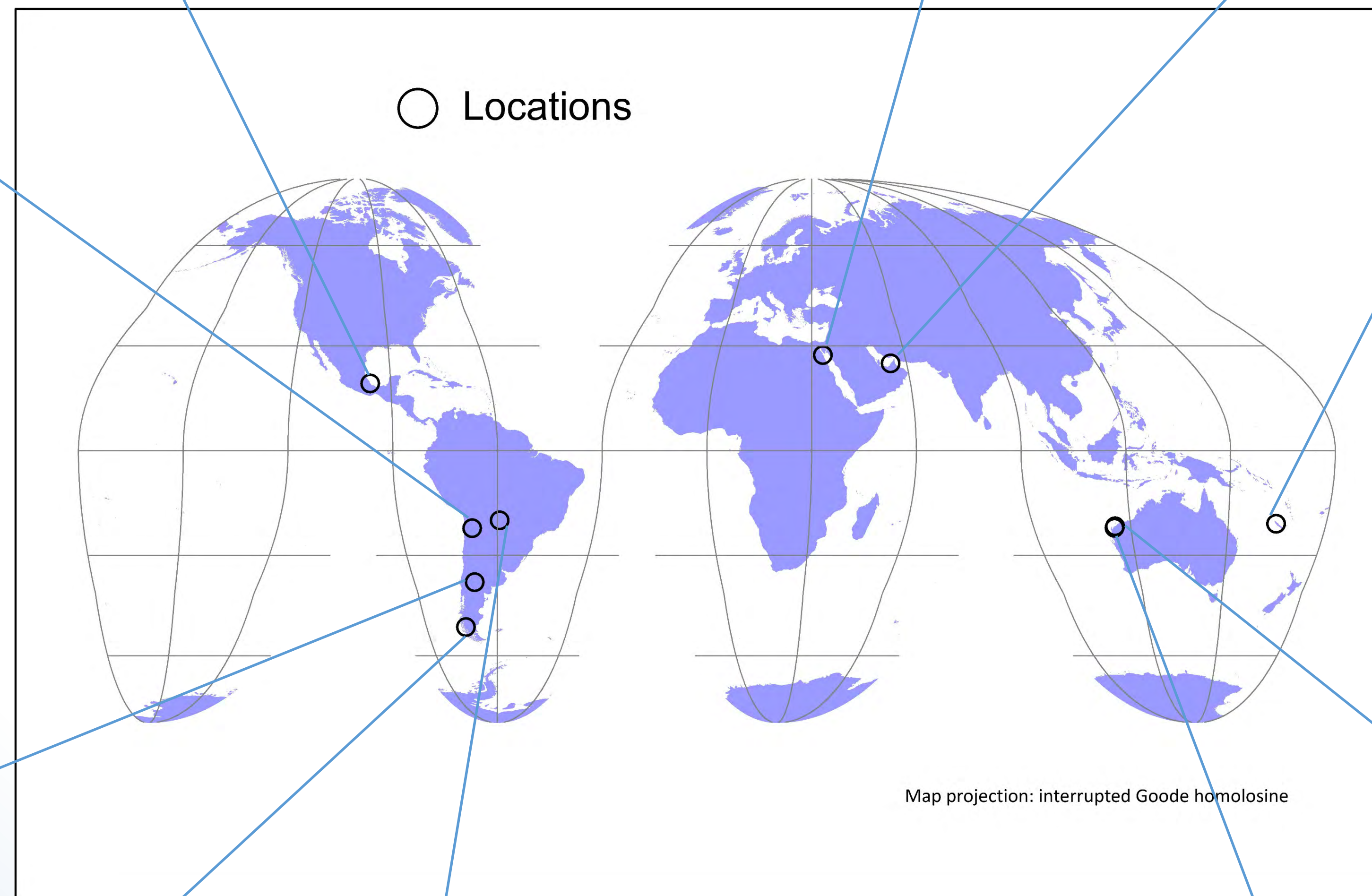
67,800 ft

Natural!
Western Australia

Brown and white lakes
and green shrubland



39,300 ft



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References: Wikipedia; Visitnewcaledonia.com;
treehugger.com; t21.com.mx;
puertodeveracruz.com.mx; myweather2.com
Production support: US Forest Service