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Unprecedented reduction in opium production in Afghanistan

New satellite images reveal a staggering 99% reduction of poppy growing in the main opium cultivation areas of Afghanistan.

The Taliban have successfully reduced poppy cultivation by more than 99% in Helmand Province, which previously produced more than 50% of the country's opium. According to new research and analysis by leading geospatial analytics firm Alcis and Afghanistan expert David Mansfield, the scale of the reduction in opium production across Afghanistan is unprecedented, with cultivation in the south of the country down by at least 80% compared with last year, when the Taliban banned the growing of poppies for opium.

Building on 20 years' experience, Alcis have pioneered the use of satellite imagery and machine learning to create a more accurate picture than was previously available.

Lead researcher David Mansfield said "*The scale of the reduction will be unprecedented*"

Former UK Drug Tzar and UN official, Mike Trace said, "*A sustained reduction in poppy cultivation on this scale will have significant long-term impacts on the patterns of heroin trafficking and organised crime around the world, and also on patterns of consumption and addiction in the UK.*"

These new figures from Alcis reveal an unprecedented reduction in the growing of opium poppy, in the country that supplies the vast majority of the world's illegal heroin.

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About Alcis

Alcis provides Geographical Information Services (GIS) that enable better understanding, decisions and outcomes for clients in fragile and conflict states.

About David Mansfield

David Mansfield is an independent consultant, advising bilateral, multilateral and non-government organisations on both policy and operational issues with regard to illicit drugs alternative livelihoods in Afghanistan.

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