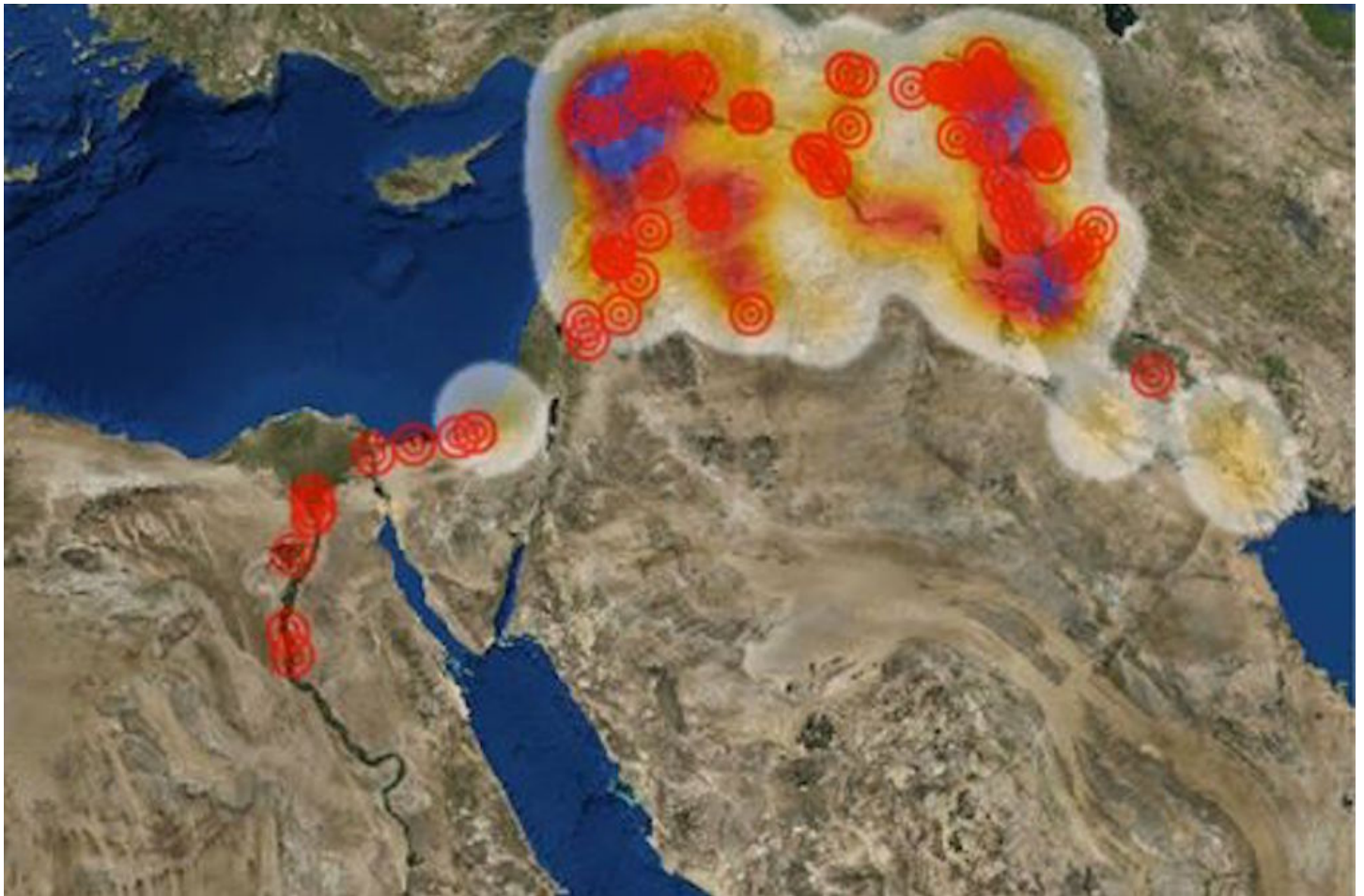


An Interactive Map Serves To Protect Cultural Sites



How data can be utilized to possibly prevent future attacks on historical landmarks

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Terrorist groups are largely to blame for the destruction of a number of cultural sites in the past few years. In response, an organization called the [Antiquities Coalition](#) is attempting to stop future attacks through the creation of an interactive map. This group's mission is to stop "cultural racketeering: the illicit trade in antiquities by organized criminals and terrorist organizations." This map, called the Incident Analyzer, shows exactly how different groups have caused a large scale of destruction.

The [map](#) contains every reported incident, dates, suspected responsible groups, the description of the attack and any related photos. The Antiquities Coalition believes that this collection of data is a tool for advocacy and information that can potentially stop any future attacks. The map reveals any patterns and the significance of what has been lost in an easy, interactive manner. It also speaks volumes as to how much damage has been inflicted in various regions and what is now lost.

Cultural racketeering leads to terror groups selling illegal artifacts from these sites and in turn, receiving a great amount of money to fund their terrorist activities. The organization reports that with a \$1 million antiquity, 11,667 AK-47's and 2.5 Million Bullets can be bought in the black market in Iraq and Syria.

Cultural racketeering is not the only problem. Eradicating these cultural sites is an act of cultural cleansing. The UN recognizes these acts also are a risk factor that may result in "[impending genocide, crimes against](#)

[humanity, and war crimes.](#)” Historically, attacking areas of cultural and historical significance has been used as a scare tactic and a way to erase the physical evidence of a group. This robs a group of some of its significant cultural and historical identity.



The Antiquities Coalition wants to raise awareness and combat this issue because this is a problem that needs global participation to be resolved. In addition, the awareness of these activities helps stop black market activity and illegal profits obtained by terrorist groups, such as ISIS.

The organization’s creation of an interactive map is just one of the many ways that can help end the looting and destruction of irreplaceable historical sites that harm identity groups already suffering from warfare.

[The Antiquities Coalition](#)