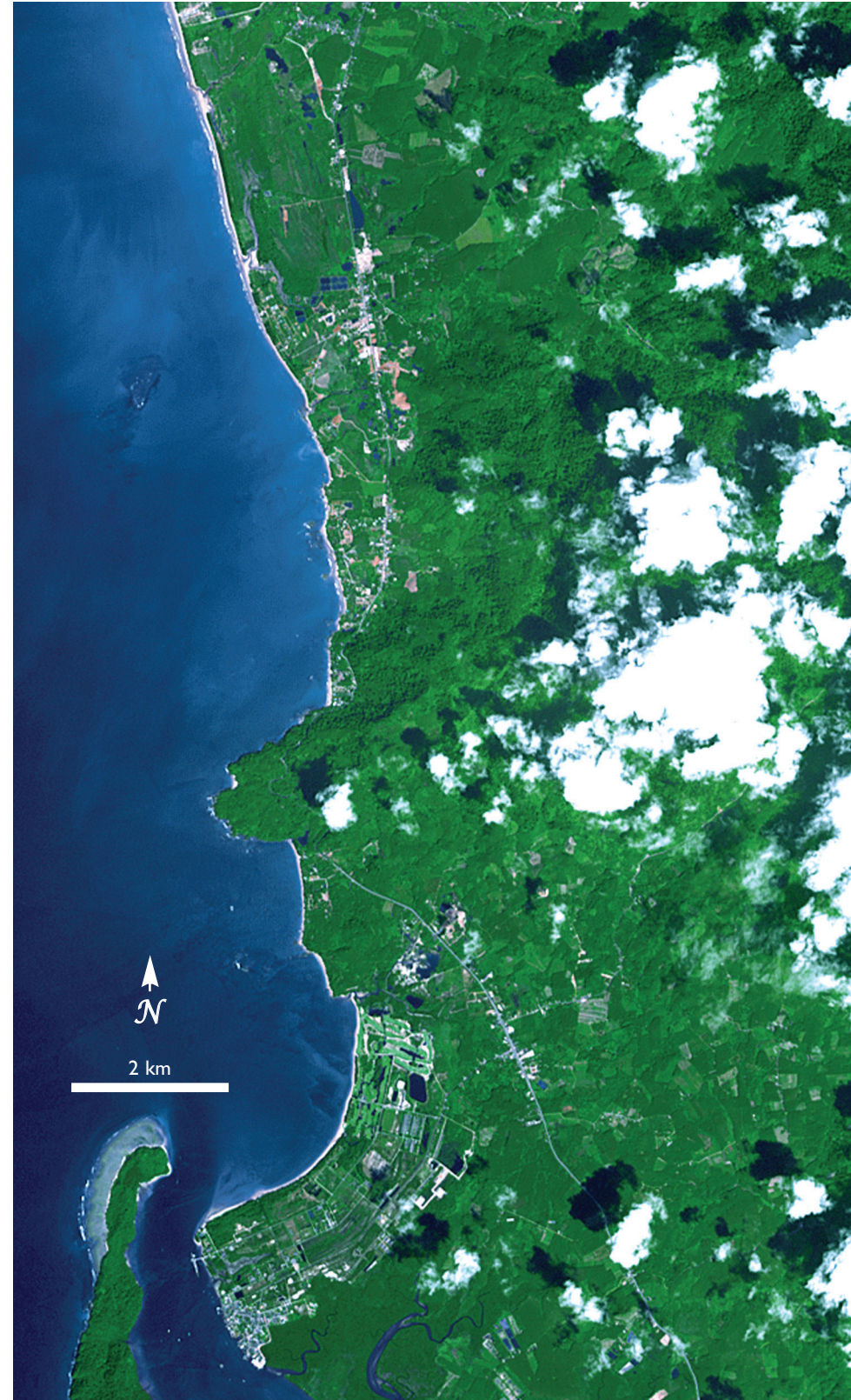


This pair of images shows a stretch of the coastline of Thailand north of the island of Phuket. The Andaman Sea coast is a very popular tourist destination, studded with resorts and parks. The image on the left is a composite of 2 images taken on November 15, 2002, and February 28, 2003. The image on the right was taken on December 31, 2004, 5 days after the Indian Ocean Tsunami struck the area. Lush green low-lying areas with elevations less than 10 m have all been covered in a blanket of sand. The bowl-shape of the beach at the bottom of the image may have focused the energy of the tsunami wave and increased the run-up. The shallow beaches also contribute to larger waves. While rocky outcrop diffracts and breaks up the tsunami waves, a gentle sloping sea floor creates larger waves and longer run-out. (Data from the ASTER instrument on the Terra satellite.)

Composite Image from November 15, 2002 and February 28, 2003



December 31, 2004

