

## Habitat maps, soil maps and data management system in Saint Helena

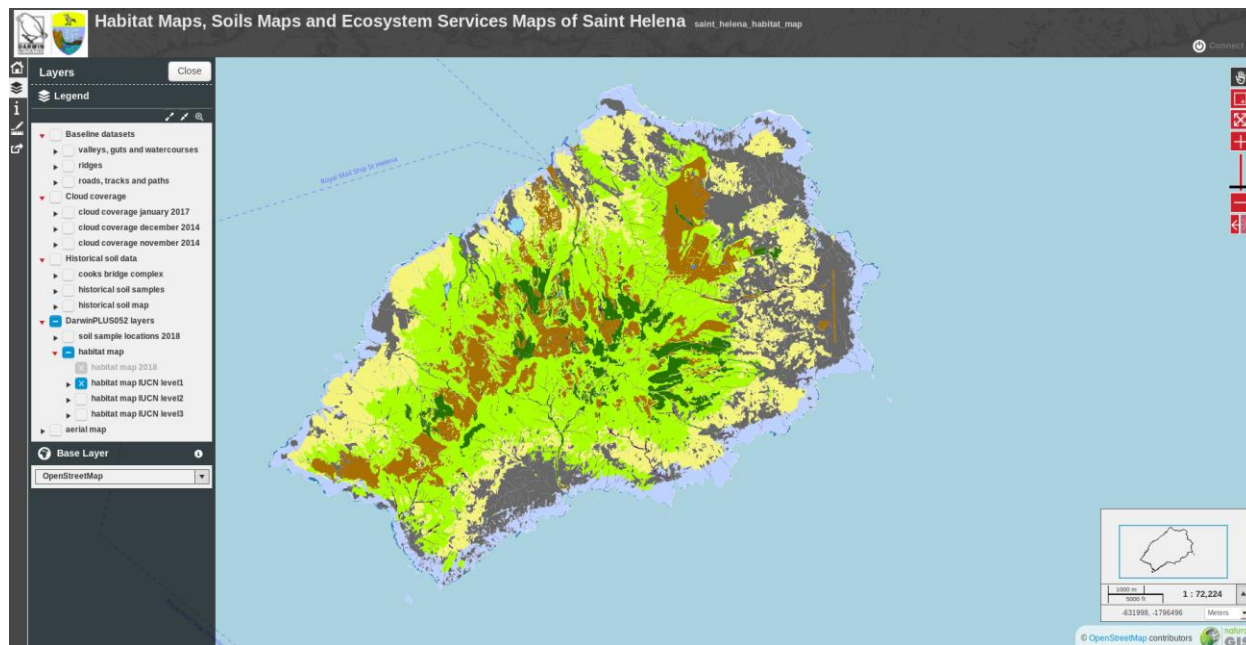
By iLaria Marengo and Samantha Cherrett

First published 12<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Between the 26<sup>th</sup> of May and the 10<sup>th</sup> of June the Data Manager of the IMS-GIS data centre visited Saint Helena to contribute to the completion of the Darwin Plus 052 project "Mapping St Helena's Biodiversity and Natural Environment" led by Samantha Cherrett.

The main aim of the trip was to design the webGIS project which would display to the wider public the results of the DPLUS052 project, and namely a series of high-detail island-wide maps and datasets, showing a baseline of habitat types, soils and other associated environmental information. An important component of the DPLUS052 project is to keep the map alive through updates made by the local stakeholders. Training and explanation on how the habitat maps should be checked and kept up-to-date has been provided and also documented online.

<http://www.sainthelena.gov.sh/dplus052-mapping-st-helenas-biodiversity-and-natural-environment/>



# SAERI NEWS

The webGIS is the simplest of many available tools for enabling any organisation involved in decision making to do with land and species management to access the data. The webGIS is available at this page [https://data.saeri.org/saeri\\_webgis/lizmap/www/index.php/view/map/?repository=01sh&project=saint\\_helena\\_web](https://data.saeri.org/saeri_webgis/lizmap/www/index.php/view/map/?repository=01sh&project=saint_helena_web)

The visit to Saint Helena was also the opportunity to work closely with the GIS team, led by Devlin Yon, and Samantha Cherrett to review the local data management system and ensure its long term future. Back in May 2014, two-years funding for the Saint Helena Government came from the Foreign Commonwealth Office via the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, for developing data management. The South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI) took the leadership of the project in the Falkland Islands, while in Saint Helena an Environmental Data & GIS Manager (Samantha Cherrett) was appointed at the Environmental Management Division (EMD). The initial focus was to develop a metadata catalogue online in order to provide the data users with the necessary information for discovering and accessing available data. The second objective was to ensure that clean copies of the data collected within the SAUKOTs were stored locally on a secure server. Finally, the data centre was developed to facilitate the use of GIS, spatial databases, data harmonisation, integration and sharing by supporting open source programs and promoting open access data.

After the first two years, the lack of further direct financial support in Saint Helena slowed down the process of growth of the local data centre. This visit aimed at starting again from what it was left in 2016 and move towards the future. Thanks to the full support of the IT Corporate team, Derek Henry (EMD Director) and the DPLUS052 project funding, the new data storage server was set up with Linux Operating System and PostgreSQL/PostGIS database engines. The server was also made accessible to users in the government departments, located not only in the Environment and Natural Resources Directorate (ENRD) in Jamestown but also in the more peripheral location of Scotland, where part of ENRD is housed.



# SAERI NEWS

In parallel, a GIS training course for beginner and intermediate level was delivered with an outstanding presence of 23 people. Further training in QGIS, PostgreSQL and PostGIS and Linux is required but the start and the enthusiasm showed by government officers across various departments and other Darwin Plus projects, staff at the National Trust is certainly promising. The GIS team is now supervising the Linux server and its managing both the storage of the data and their ingestion into the shared spatial database. Metadata (using the ISO19115) harvesting is again in place and followed up by the GIS team too (photo below with Samantha Cherrett).



All in all the visit in Saint Helena, despite the hard work, turned out to be extremely positive. Open source is the way forward in remote countries with small budgets such as Saint Helena and SAERI will continue to play the role of facilitator and it will promote more data management innovation and support and knowledge exchange/training courses.