

Interactive comment on “Mapping hydrological environments in central Amazonia: ground validation and surface model based on SRTM DEM data corrected for deforestation” by G. M. Moulatlet et al.

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Editors note: As authors and readers know, ESSD often involves graduate students in the review process. They learn the evaluation process, they gain familiarity with open data concepts and they generally provide a skilful and very thorough test of the data themselves, often using the latest freeware access and display tools. Intrigued by this data set, I recruited a terrestrial ecology graduate student to download and examine the data files. I copy below, with only two modifications (experienced colleague) to remove a name, a verbatim assessment from that student:

-We thank the Editor and the graduate student for the comments. The answers for each comment can be found below. The links for the datasets will be updated in the revised version of the Manuscript but can be already found below the author's comments.

"All done with ArcMap 10.1:

The first link (SRTM DEM) opens perfectly, knows its datum and spatial reference, and looks cool even with the default grayscale color map. The second link leads to 3 files (in addition to metadata), a .shp, a .shx, and a .dbf. These three files should be the major components of a shapefile, however, to work, they must have the same name (the number in the name goes from 320 to 322 in the 3 files) Arc failed to open the shapefile until (experienced colleague) pointed this out. Changing the names to make them consistent allowed the shapefile to be opened. However the shapefile lacks spatial reference information: it projects properly using the spatial reference of the raster data, but if one was trying to use the shape alone, one would not know the correct reference?

-We checked the files of the second link and they were, indeed, with different file names. The files were renamed and now all of them have the same name. We asked colleagues to download and open the files and they haven't reported problems since then. The spatial reference was also added to this shapefile as a .prj file. The link for the corrected files is: <http://ppbio.inpa.gov.br/knb/metacat/naman.317.4/ppbio>

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The third link leads to a list of .tif and .tfw files. I am not sure what a .tfw is, but the .tif files work perfectly as with the .tif from the first link.

-The .tfw files were deleted as they were not needed to open the files. The link to access the corrected files is: <http://ppbio.inpa.gov.br/knb/metacat/naman.544.4/ppbio>

The fourth link leads to a csv, which can easily be used to create point features from coordinates. It appears to project properly using the same spatial reference as the raster / .tif data, but if the raster data was not used, the spatial reference would be unknown. If I were trying to use this dataset, I would be able to, although I required a hint from a much more experienced user (regarding renaming the shapefile components: "You would have known that if you used GIS in the '80s like I did" - experienced colleague). I am not exactly a powerful GIS user, having no formal training, using only one program, and using it more as a platform for python scripts than for it's built in features. For a similar level Arc user, the shapefile and points could be better packaged. Although common, Arc (ESRI) products are very expensive, and I cannot comment on using this data with any other GIS program.

-The forth link was modified following the comment above. The download link contains now a .zip file in which the .csv file was transformed into a shapefile. We believe that this format is easier for the end user, since it comes now with the projection file and all the information already included in the .csv file. The link for the corrected files is: <http://ppbio.inpa.gov.br/knb/metacat/naman.654.2/ppbio>

I think it is possible that properly understanding and using the metadata (called .eml but really .xml) would clear up all of these issues, but while I can add the metadata to the dataset after importing it into arc, I do not see how to use it to guide in importing. If i were the end user, packaging the shapefile files (including a .prj which defines projection) together in a zip (easily done from Arc) would make the data easier to use. The points could also be packaged in a similar way. However, these packaged files might be less universal (more specific to arc). At a minimum, the shapefile names

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should be corrected to match."

-The metadata available include a description of the data and how they were generated. There is no need for downloading, once metadata of all the files are also available as text on the link page. We modified the metadata according to the updating of the files. Files were packed in .zip files, as suggested above and the shapefile names were corrected too.

Interactive comment on Earth Syst. Sci. Data Discuss., 7, 441, 2014.

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