

March 2000



"Don't be left in the dark!"

fungus newsletter

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT META DATA PROJECT

A regional natural resource management meta data collection project has been proposed by the Natural Resource Management Board (Wet Tropics) Inc. The NRM Board is a Regional Strategy Group formed under the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) arrangements, with responsibility for delivery of the Trust in the Wet Tropics Region, and representation drawn from a wide range of government agencies and community organisations.

*When published electronically
it may also contribute to the
development of user updated reporting
and monitoring systems.*

This project aims to establish a community accessible regional database of current and completed natural resource management projects in the Wet Tropics Region by building upon data collection already being undertaken by Rainforest CRC. The Department of Communications and Information, Local Government, Planning and Sport have also agreed to participate as partners in the project should the application be successful.

The rationale for the project is that community natural resource management awareness and on ground projects have been steadily increasing over the

last decade of NLP, and particularly over the past 3 years of NHT. Much of the valuable information generated by these projects has been either poorly documented, lost or is stored in formats or locations not easily accessed. As a result of this many natural resource management projects have been, and still are attempting to reinvent the wheel rather than follow on from existing knowledge and practices. Many groups and individuals are also addressing similar issues in parallel, rather than networking to pool knowledge and resources.

The project seeks to address this issue by collecting data and meta data from various archives and databases and by interviews, field surveys and site inspections for collation in to a main database. The long term objectives of the project are to enhance on ground outcomes by allowing groups access to information for planning priority works and to promote improved pooling of knowledge and resources. When published electronically it may also contribute to the development of user updated reporting and monitoring systems.

The project has been developed in response to concerns raised by various groups and organisations involved in on ground works and has broad community support. Any organisations or individuals with an interest in the project are encouraged to participate. To receive a copy or the project application or further information contact the NRM Board Project Officer, Brad Dorrington: 40616477 or e-mail: bradd@znet.net.au

NEW GIS PLAYER

A new player has emerged with an interest in facilitating the establishment of a regional GIS. The Natural Resource Management Board (Wet Tropics) Inc. are a Regional Strategy Group formed under the Natural Heritage Trust arrangements, with responsibility for delivery of the Trust in the wet tropics region. The Board has 17 members drawn from a wide range of government agencies and community groups.

The NRM Board has developed a Regional Strategy for Natural Resource Management, which was endorsed by the Qld Landcare and Catchment Management Council in September 1998. The Strategy identifies the range of NRM issues that need to be addressed. A high priority issue identified is to "investigate the establishment of a regional GIS".

To further this goal the Board has offered the services of their Project Officer to the Data Sharing Cooperative for a short period to develop a business plan and identify funding sources. For further information contact Brad Dorrington: 40616477 or e-mail: bradd@znet.net.au

GIS in Schools

Last year, northern schools did very well in the AURISA schools GIS competition. Grade nine students from Trinity Bay High got first and second in the State competition, and did very well at the National level as well.

Quite an achievement when you consider that they were up against senior students several years older.

A lot of the credit can go to the tireless work of their teacher Jan Carr, who spent much of her own time making the whole thing happen. She spent the year struggling to remain a bit more knowledgeable than her students to help them do projects as diverse as assessing the impact of storm surge on East Trinity, siting a new waste disposal facility and mapping the occurrence of tree kangaroos.

She highlighted that one of the big issues last year was the late start of the competition, and that the teachers could not get up to speed with the concepts of GIS to be able to help their students properly.

FUNGIS is trying to remedy this situation early by starting to promote the competition early this year. Support for training teachers with GIS software is being organised through MapInfo and ESRI, but we still need some FUNGIS members to be able to provide some on-going help to the teachers and students. Suitable projects for the students to do would also be considered.

Anyone wishing to become involved in cultivating the next generation of GISers should contact Robert Crossley (40314877), or simply come along to the April seminar and meet the people involved.

FUNGIS Welcomes Dave Gillieson to Executive committee

An insight into Dave's background follows and it will be obvious to all readers that his enthusiasm and experience will be enormously beneficial towards FUNGIS achieving it's goals. The future of our industry rest with the students of today and Dave is at the shaping edge of the educational system.

I am currently Professor of Geography and Head of the School of Tropical Environment Studies and Geography at James Cook University. I teach undergraduate courses in remote sensing, landscape ecology and GIS. My post-graduate students are working on applied land management problems using GIS and remote sensing in areas as diverse as Thailand, South Australia, Lake Mungo (NSW), and the Great Barrier Reef. I am a member of the IUCN world commission on protected areas and the International Geographical Union Commission on Sustainable Management and Development of Limestone Landscapes.

"I am a caver and have explored and mapped limestone caves over the last thirty years under every continent except South America".

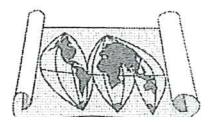
Prior to taking up the JCU position in July 1999 I was Senior Lecturer in Biogeography and Remote Sensing at the Australian Defence Force Academy, which is a college of the University of NSW. I also taught digital image processing techniques to staff from AIDAB and the RAAF. I have also taught at the Australian National University and the University of Queensland. I have carried out research

in the arid zone of Australia, Papua New Guinea, Irian Jaya, Malaysia, Thailand, China and Antarctica! I am a caver and have explored and mapped limestone caves over the last thirty years under every continent except South America (something I plan to rectify next year). My partner Jill Landsberg is a plant ecologist with CSIRO and works on arid zone biodiversity and vegetation management.

My own research interests include the use of remote sensing (radar and high resolution airborne multispectral imagery) for land cover classification and management. I am currently funded to research new techniques for vegetation classification and habitat suitability assessment at the Jenolan Caves, NSW. I have also used radar for coastal land use mapping in Thailand and for limestone (karst) landscapes in Malaysia (Perak State and Sarawak). I am just commencing studies of rainforest dieback assessment on the Atherton Tableland, and of limestone geology at Chillagoe.

When I took up the position at JCU, I had already decided that I would like to become involved in the area of community GIS as I believe that these technologies should be made more widely available to the public. GIS is alive and thriving in north Queensland, and there is a high level of enthusiasm here. I'm therefore pleased to be asked to join the FUNGIS executive, as I think that universities should be more proactive in community extension, and that we can provide significant opportunities for education in GIS and remote sensing through short courses. We can also help with advice about applications of remote sensing and spatial analysis for members of FUNGIS.

Dave Gillieson,
James Cook University



"Data Co-op makes steady progress"

All good things come to those that wait. For those of you eagerly following the progress of the implementation of a "Data Sharing Co-operative" within the Far North as discussed at the last two FUNGIS annual seminars, here's the latest. The Committee continues to meet regularly and is making steady progress. Interest in the "Data Sharing Co-operative" concept continues to strengthen and widen it's horizons.

Recent meetings of the committee have formulated plans to use a post graduate student or a consultant to document a brief summary and business intention statement for the "Co-op". A questionnaire has been completed by committee members to begin the documentation process and will be distributed to members soon to encourage you, the GIS community of Far North Queensland, to have your say. Documentation will allow the development of a shared vision for the "Co-op" and will also assist in the preparation of applications to a range of funding sources to further progress implementation.

The Natural Resource Management Board (Wet Tropics) has also joined us as a potential interested member of the "Co-op". They have identified a priority need for a regional GIS to facilitate community involvement in Natural Resource Management and for education and extension activities. The NRM Board is discussing the possible use of their Project Officer to assist the documentation and funding application activities of the "Co-op" which will provide a needy boost to the committee.

Peter Wilson,
Steering Committee.

Training Opportunities

There are local providers that offer services relevant to FUNGIS members. An insert is included that contains details of two such providers. Executrain provides training in a variety of software applications while CITE is an association of IT professionals.

This information is included for the advice of members.

Is there a "Metadata Officer" out there?

That's right folks, if you think you've got what it takes to be a "Metadata Officer", then check out the Government Gazette 10-March-2000, to find the Job Reference Number or www.goprint.qld.gov.au/r_gazettes

The position is an A06 – one-year contract based in Cairns, representing DCILGPS (Department of Communication and Information, Local Government, Planning and Sport), DNR (Department of Natural Resources) and QSIIC (Queensland Spatial Information Infrastructure Council) in relation to metadata needs and usage.

You will need excellent inter-personal skills, experience in Metadata and GIS, Project Management and Project Organisation skills. This is a middle management position, requiring a confident person willing to negotiate with people at all levels of Government, Private Sector and the Community.

If you are interested, please contact Peter Hofenberg - Coordinator, GIS Coordination Unit (07) 3237 1238.

Good luck to all applicants.

Lisa Rutten,
DCILGPS.

This Newsletter is proudly sponsored by:



brazier motti

surveying | town planning | project management | mapping and GIS
townsville | cairns | mackay | cloncurry | burdekin

Cairns office,
39 Pease St (PO Box 1185)
Cairns, Queensland 4870
Australia

Ph. 61 7 4032 3377

Fax. 61 7 4032 3399

E-mail. cairns@braziermotti.com.au

Web www.braziermotti.com.au

If you'd like further information regarding any of these articles or you would like to make a contribution to the newsletter you can contact Mark Hopp on 4032 3377. e-mail - mark.hopp@braziermotti.com.au

For membership enquiries contact Lesley Davis on 4054 7176. e-mail - ljmdavis@bigpond.com

FUNGIS makes no guarantee as to the accuracy or completeness of information contained within this publication. The spelling mistakes are left in for people who need to correct others to make their life fulfilled.

FUNGIS EDUCATION SEMINAR

The first FUNGIS event for 2000 focuses on introducing GIS into secondary schools.

In the last couple of years two Cairns schools successfully introduced GIS into their curriculum. The students learnt of the concepts of GIS while applying them to real world projects. At the same time they enhanced their computer, graphics, research, data management, presentation and communication skills! The teachers gained a few grey hairs due to the inevitable problems associated with obtaining data, computers crashes etc. but in the end they saw the students doing stuff they hadn't even imagined.

2000 will see more schools taking up the challenge. This seminar aims to assist by giving an overview of GIS, its capabilities, and how to get started. Some of its current uses in FNQ will be on display along with a hands on "GIS for beginners lesson" and some ideas for introducing it into school curriculums. The afternoon will be sure to benefit teachers, students and parents alike. See you there!

Where: *Trinity Bay State High School - GIS Lab (Follow the signs from Main Gate).*

When: *6th April 2000 - 4.00pm to 7.00pm.*

Schedule:

4:00 GIS use in Industry:

Displays showing GIS being used in Far North Queensland.
Includes resource mapping, environmental modelling, land management, and airport noise modelling.

4:15 What is GIS:

An easy to follow introduction to GIS.

4:30 Lets do it !

A hands-on session doing an assignment designed for year 8 students. At the end participants will have done some of the basic GIS functions, and used one of the common GIS software packages.

6:00 Where can a school get started:

This session will focus on benefits, problems, and opportunities for introducing GIS into schools. Some of the same issues faced in the workplace will be addressed.

6:30 Discussion over eats and drinks