

Interactive comment on “Uncertainties in land use data” by G. Castilla and G. J. Hay

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Received and published: 29 August 2007

This paper is very important since it bridges technical the domains of remote sensing, image processing and Geoinformatics with landscape level applications. Secondly, it heavily criticizes the common conventional method used to assess categorical uncertainty, the confusion matrix (Story and Congalton 1986). If one knows that the accuracy assessment of landscape maps generated from remote-sensed data is typically practiced using techniques which basically stem from the 1970ies then this critique may not be surprising. On the other hand it is fearless to condemn a so well established method. It is well known that mapping errors can be generated in several ways; error in thematic classification, both by omission and by misclassification (commission) (Story and Congalton 1986), as well as error in cartographic delineation (location error).

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I strongly believe that this paper contributes significantly to the scientific foundation of many future applications by overcoming the somewhat flawed view that the number of land use classes incorrectly depicted divided by the number of correctly depicted land use classes (confirmed by field verification).

Most interestingly, the paper ends with an outlook to future research needs. The authors point at the fact the International Metadata Standard for Geographic Information ISO 19115 defines more than 300 metadata elements structured into 14 packages, most of which can be applied optionally. Metadata are usually stored in XML format, which can be accessed with standard text editors. If for a given map the package related to Data Quality Information is not empty, then the user may have information on the accuracy of the map.

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 3, 3439, 2006.

HESSD

3, S2019–S2020, 2007

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