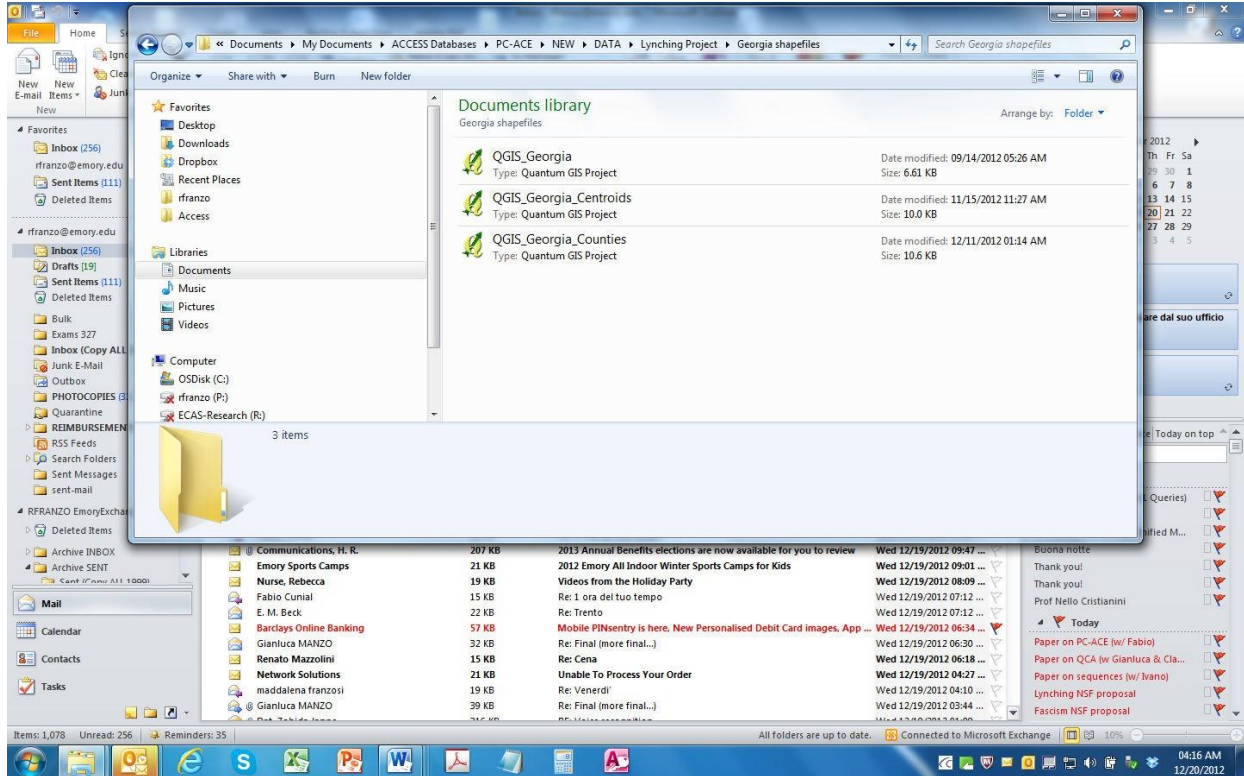


Project Files

The first thing that QGIS will ask you is to select a project file (see figure below for three examples of what a QGIS project file looks like).



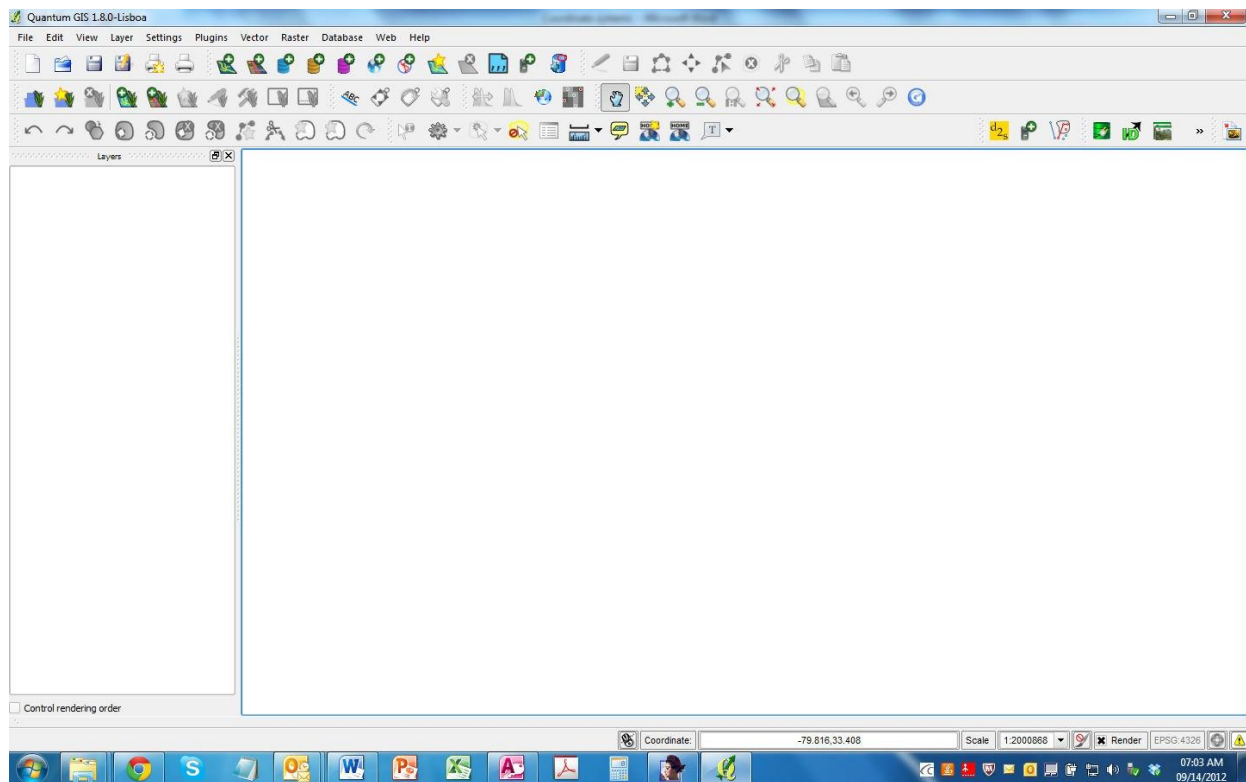
How do you build a project file?

Importing basemap shapefiles

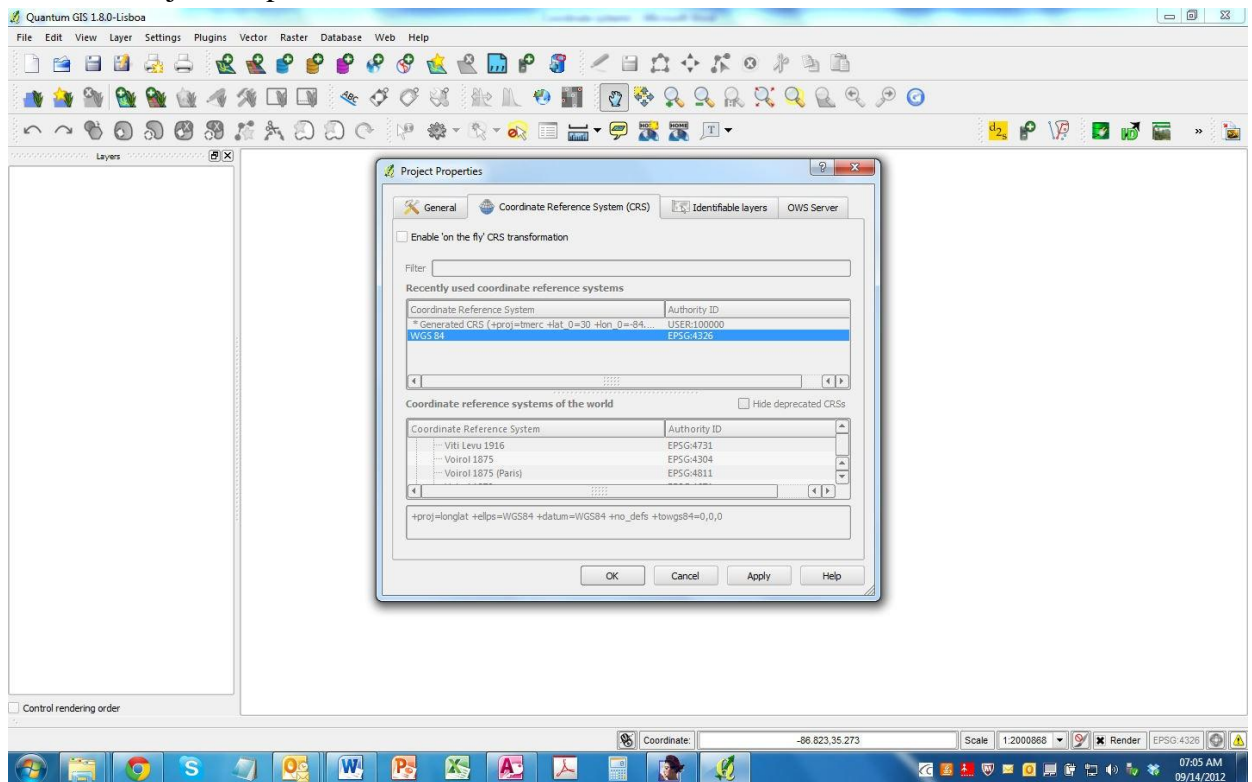
The first step is to import a country's basemap shapefiles (or state, region, etc. depending upon your project).

Where do you get the shapefiles? The statistical offices of any country provide on their websites the country's shapefiles for free download. Many GIS organizations also provide free shapefiles. Search on the web for a country's shapefiles and download.

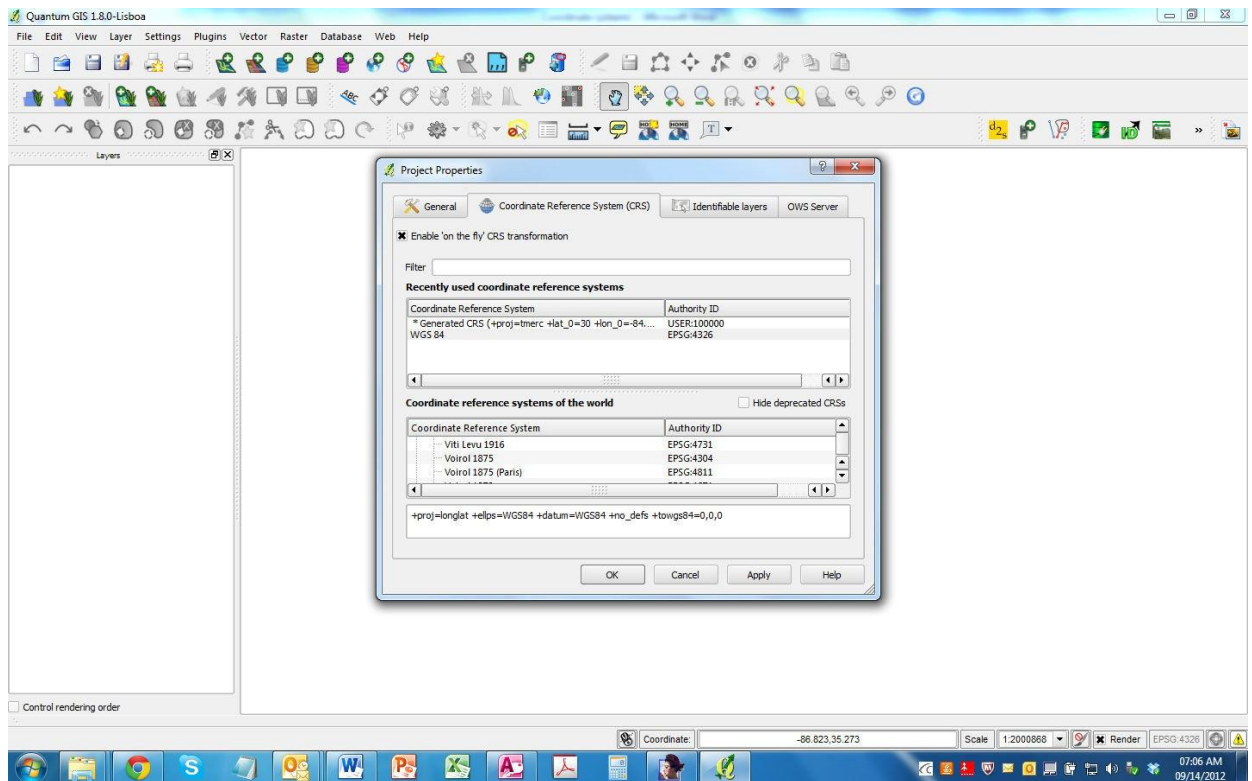
Warning! Shapefiles are based on specific coordinate systems. Unfortunately... there are different coordinate systems. Google Earth (and KML files) uses the **WGS84** system. **Before importing into QGIS your basemap shapefile**, define the properties of the project as WGS84 and enable on the fly projection. How do you do that?



1. Click on Settings
2. Click on Project Properties



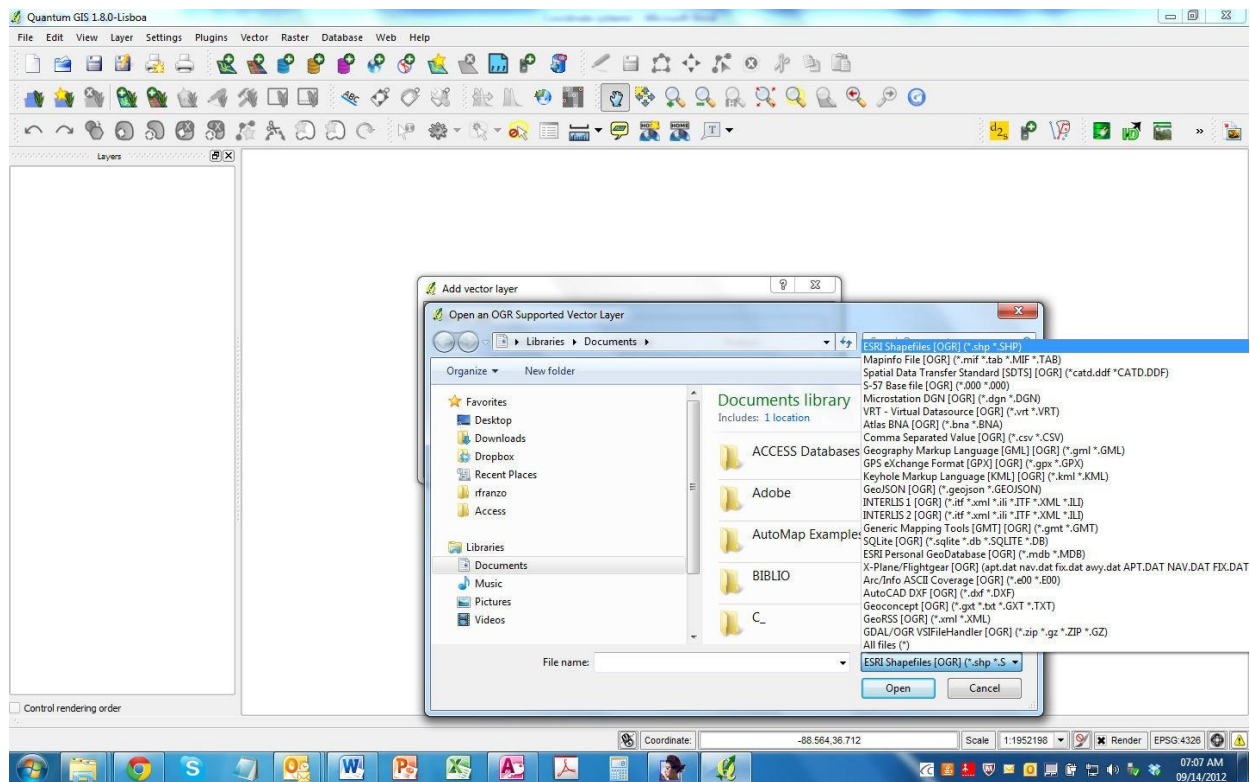
3. Click on the on the check box “Enable on the fly CRS transformation” (the whole form will then be enabled)



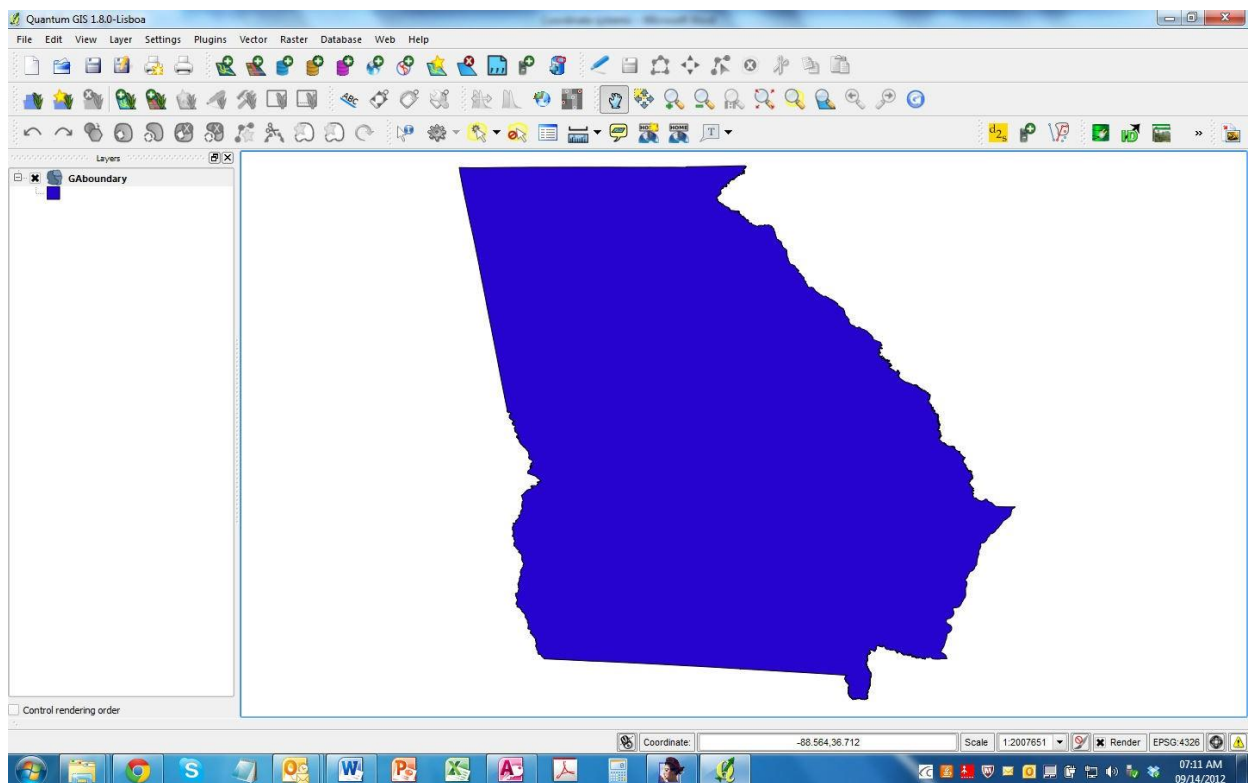
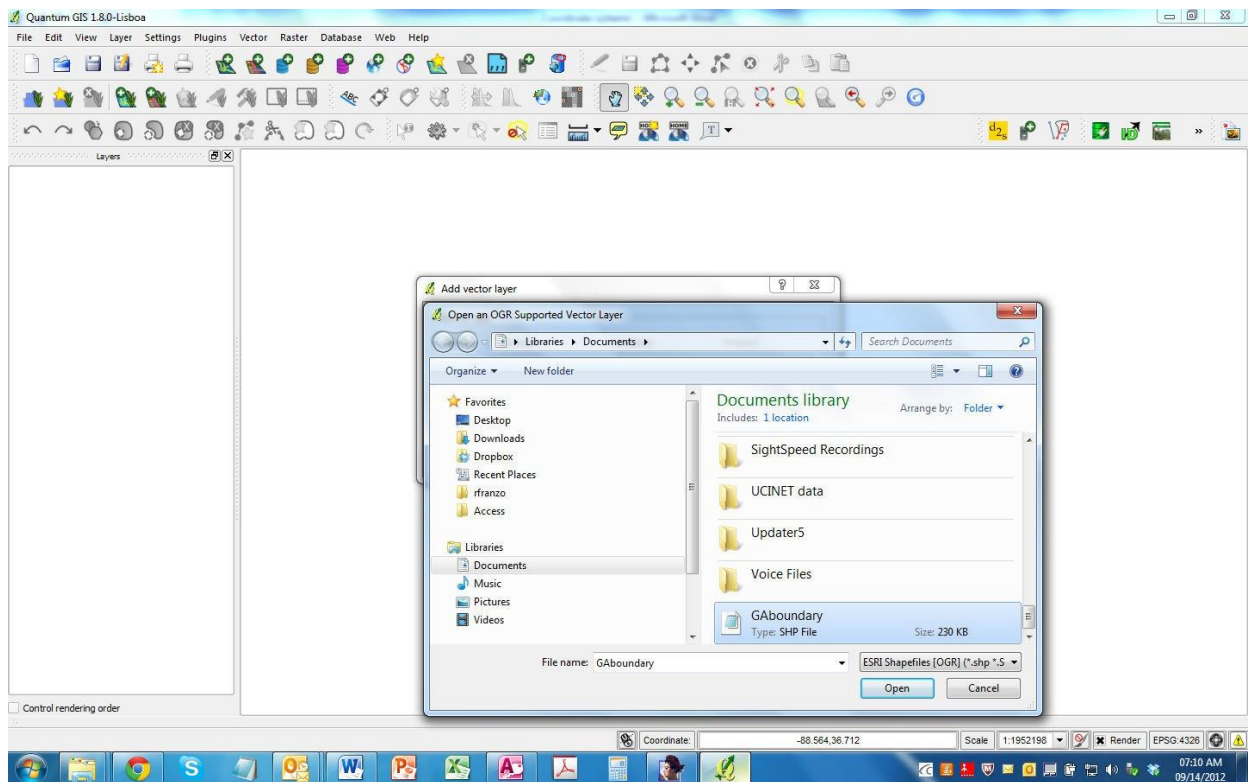
4. Select the WGS 84 coordinate system
5. Click on apply
6. Click OK

You now need to add the shapefile vector layer

1. Click on Add Vector Layer and in Browse select the file name (make sure you set the file type to .shp)



2. Select the appropriate .shp file



3. Save as a Project
 - a. Click on File

- b. Save Project as
- c. Save in the Documents folder with an appropriate name:

