

How is GIS applied to the scientific method?

Kyle Bocinsky

FORS350 / GPHY488
(Forestry) Applications of GIS

University of Montana
WA Franke College of Forestry & Conservation

Game plan

The Scientific Method

The Geographic Approach

Geographic Representation

**How do we know things
about the world?**

How do we know things about the world?

Some ways of knowing:

- Personal experiences
- Cultural traditions
 - Education
 - Accumulation of historical and philosophical insights
- The Scientific Method
 - exploration
 - observation
 - experimentation
 - analysis

What is the scientific method?



What is the scientific method?

The modern scientific method is based on the work of René Descartes, one of the founders of contemporary Western science and philosophy.

Four rules of Cartesian inquiry:

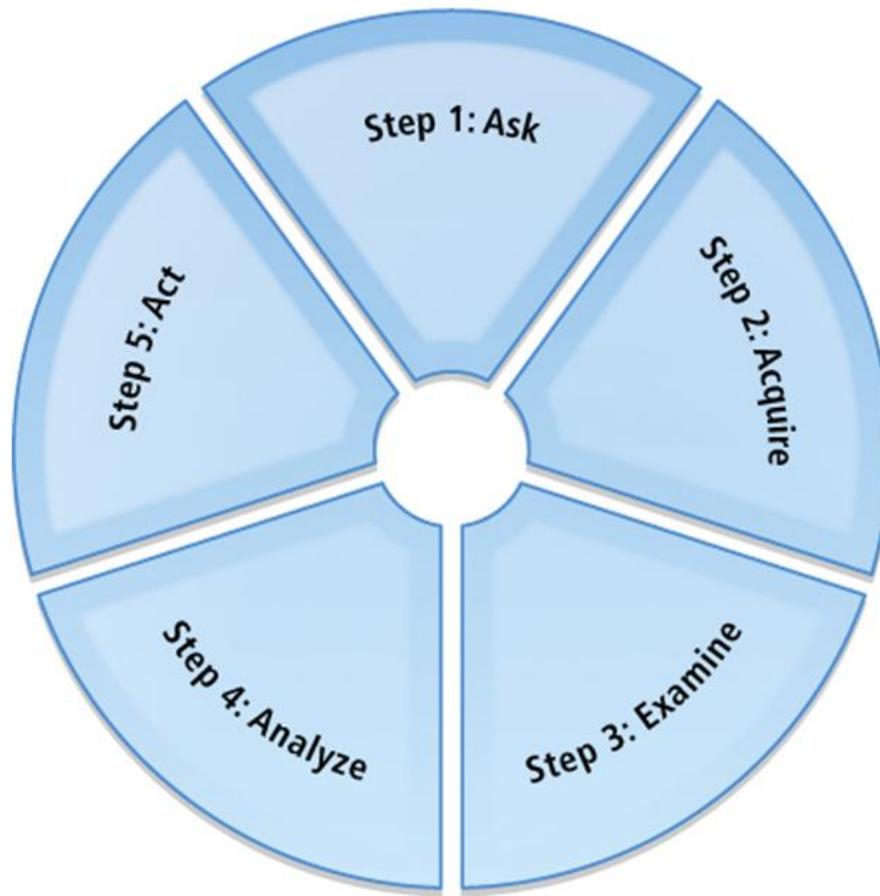
1. Accept nothing as true that is not self-evident
2. Divide each problem into as many parts as possible
3. Proceed from the simplest to the most complex
4. Review everything to avoid errors

What is the scientific method?



What is the geographic approach?

Five Steps of The Geographic Approach



What is the geographic approach?

Step 1: Ask

- What is the problem?

Step 2: Acquire

- What data are needed to complete the analysis?

Step 3: Examine

- How are they organized (schema)?
- How do they relate to other data (topology)?
- Where are they from (metadata)?

Step 4: Analyze

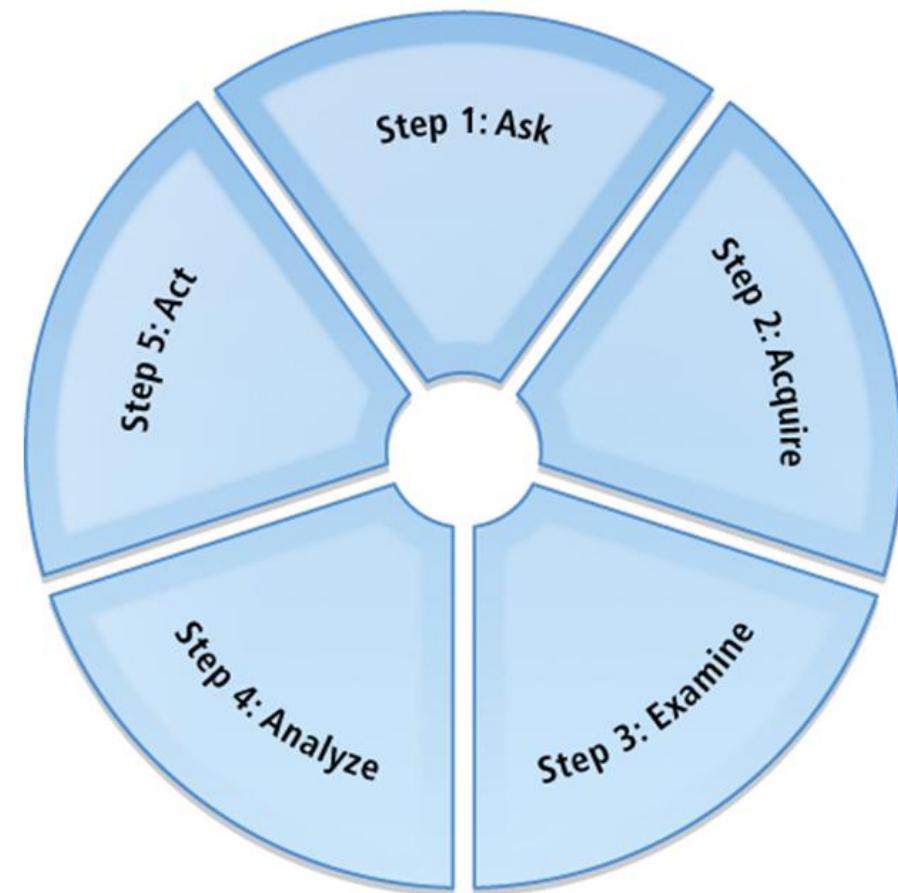
- Process and analyze data to achieve desired results.

Step 5: Act

- Present results as part of the decision-making process.

Data → Information → Knowledge!

Five Steps of The Geographic Approach



How do we form **spatial** hypotheses?

It starts with an observation, which then leads to a question about what was seen.

- While most things have a spatial component, it is worth asking if your observation has nothing to do with location.
- Once you believe your question has a spatial component, you can convert it to a hypothesis to be tested with GIS.

The Geographic Approach can be thought to be nested within the hypothesis/experiment/analysis phase of the Scientific Method.

How do we form a spatial hypotheses?

1. OBSERVATION

Trees at the top of the slope are dying.

2. QUESTION

Does elevation have anything to do with tree health?

3. HYPOTHESES

More trees die at higher elevations than at lower elevations.

4. EXPERIMENT

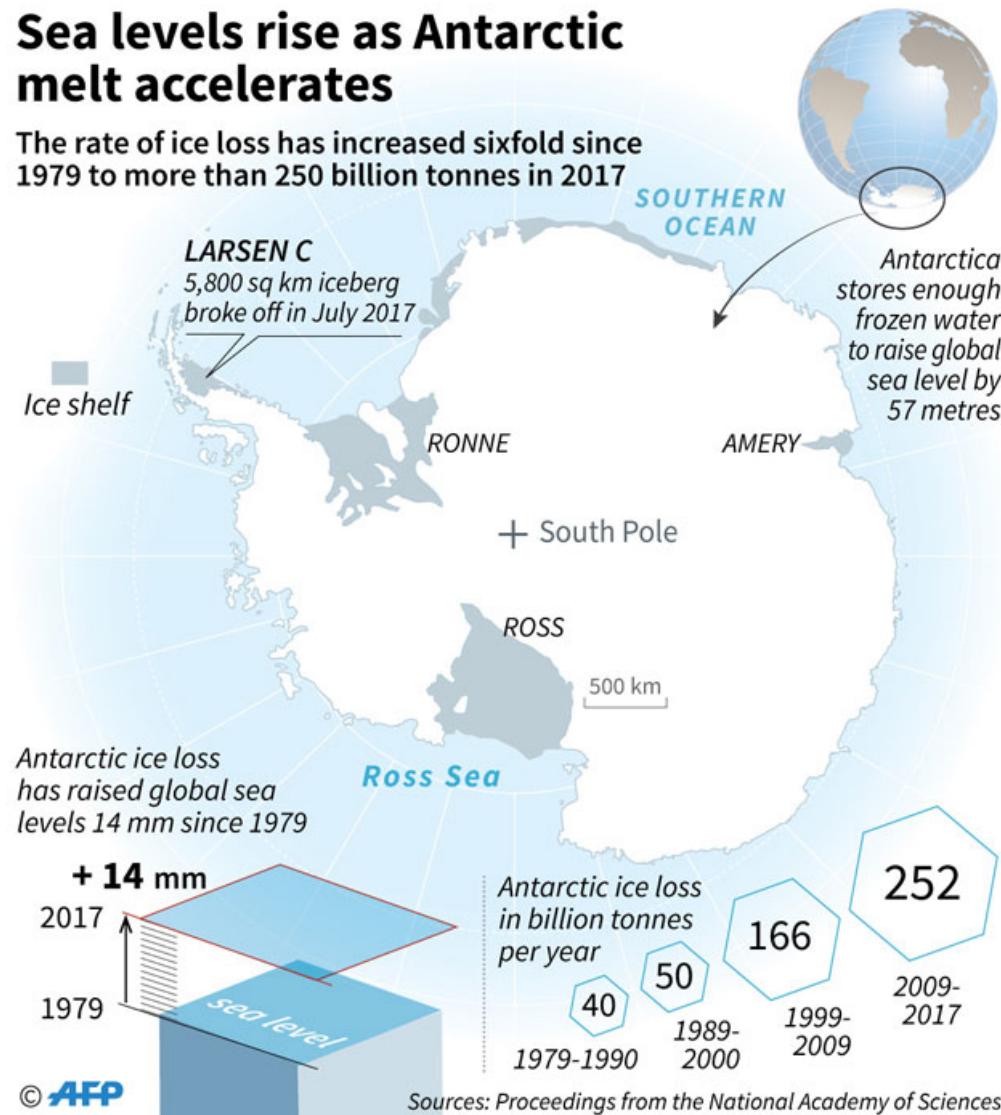
Randomly sample trees at different elevations to see if significantly more are dying on higher slopes.

Applications of GIS

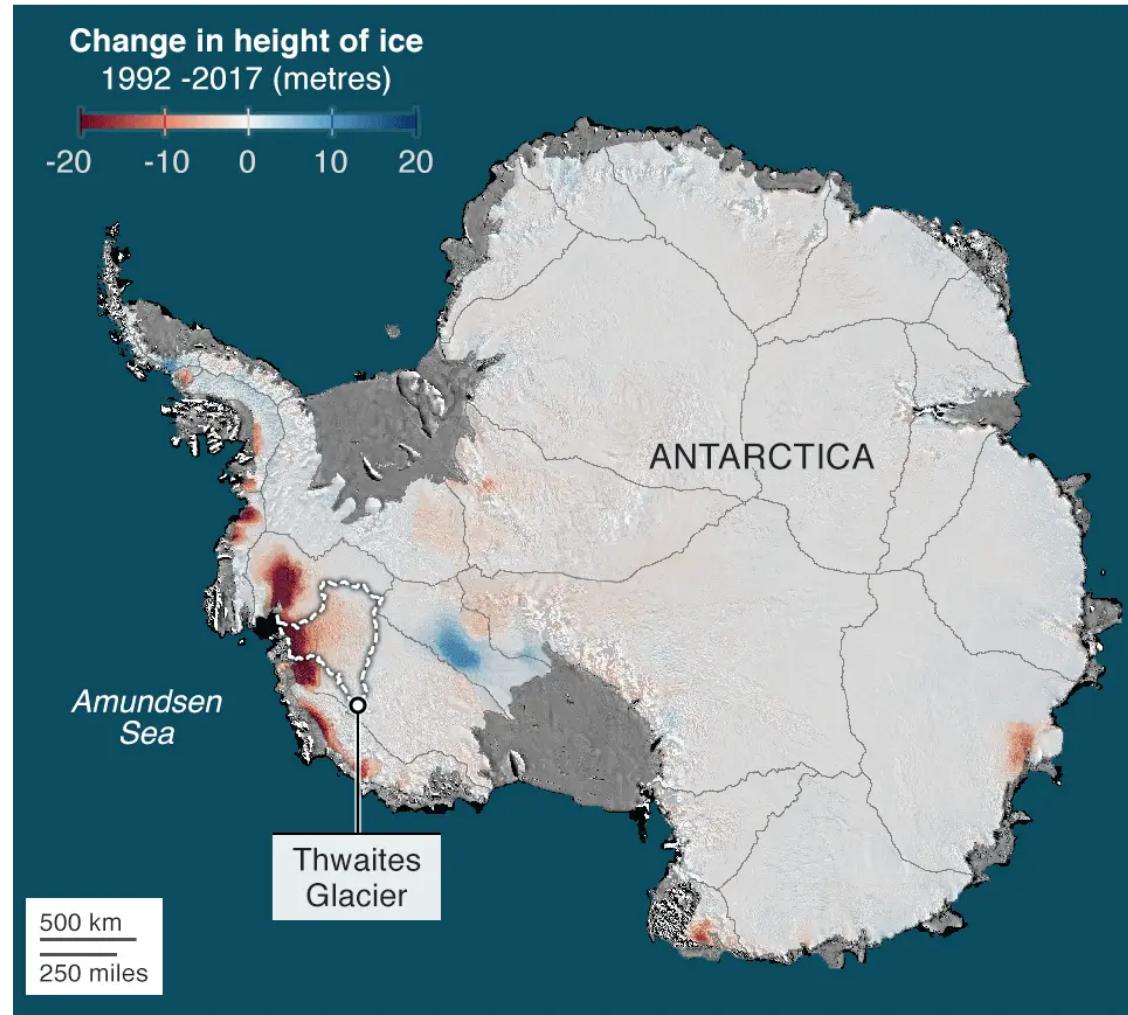
What kinds of spatial problems can you use a geographic information system to answer?

Sea levels rise as Antarctic melt accelerates

The rate of ice loss has increased sixfold since 1979 to more than 250 billion tonnes in 2017

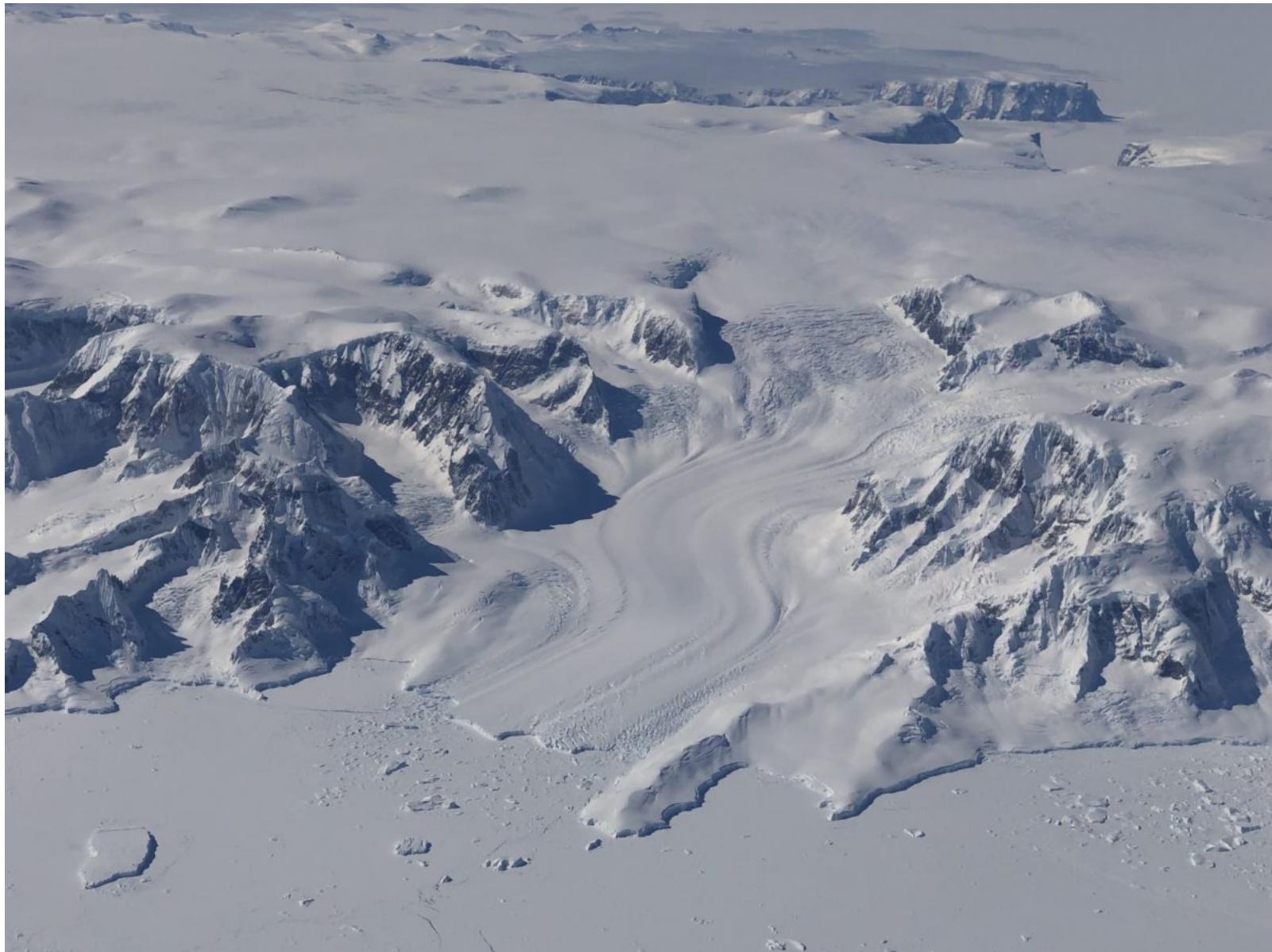


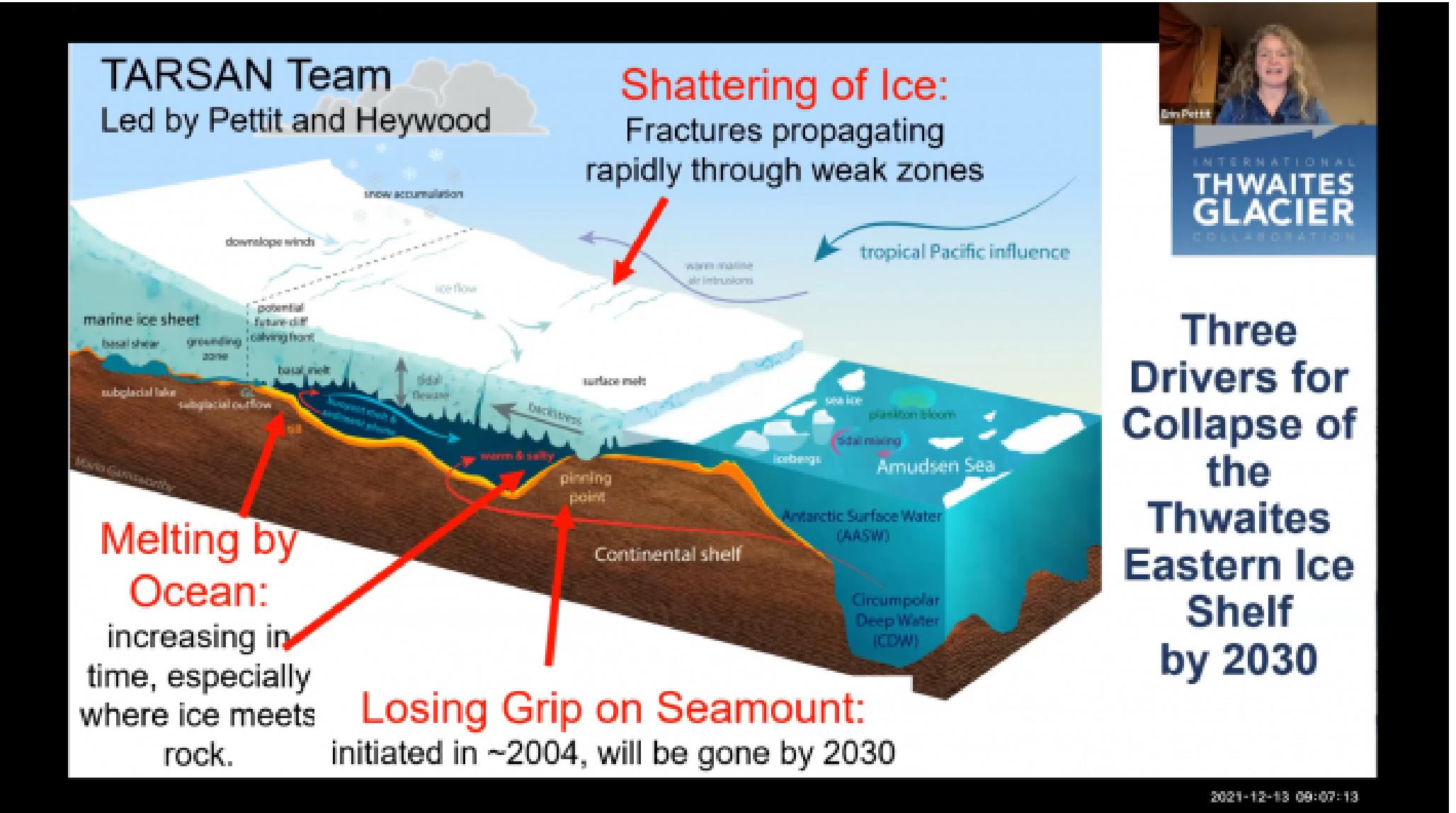
Ice sheets in West Antarctica have thinned the most



Source: Tom Slater, CPOM

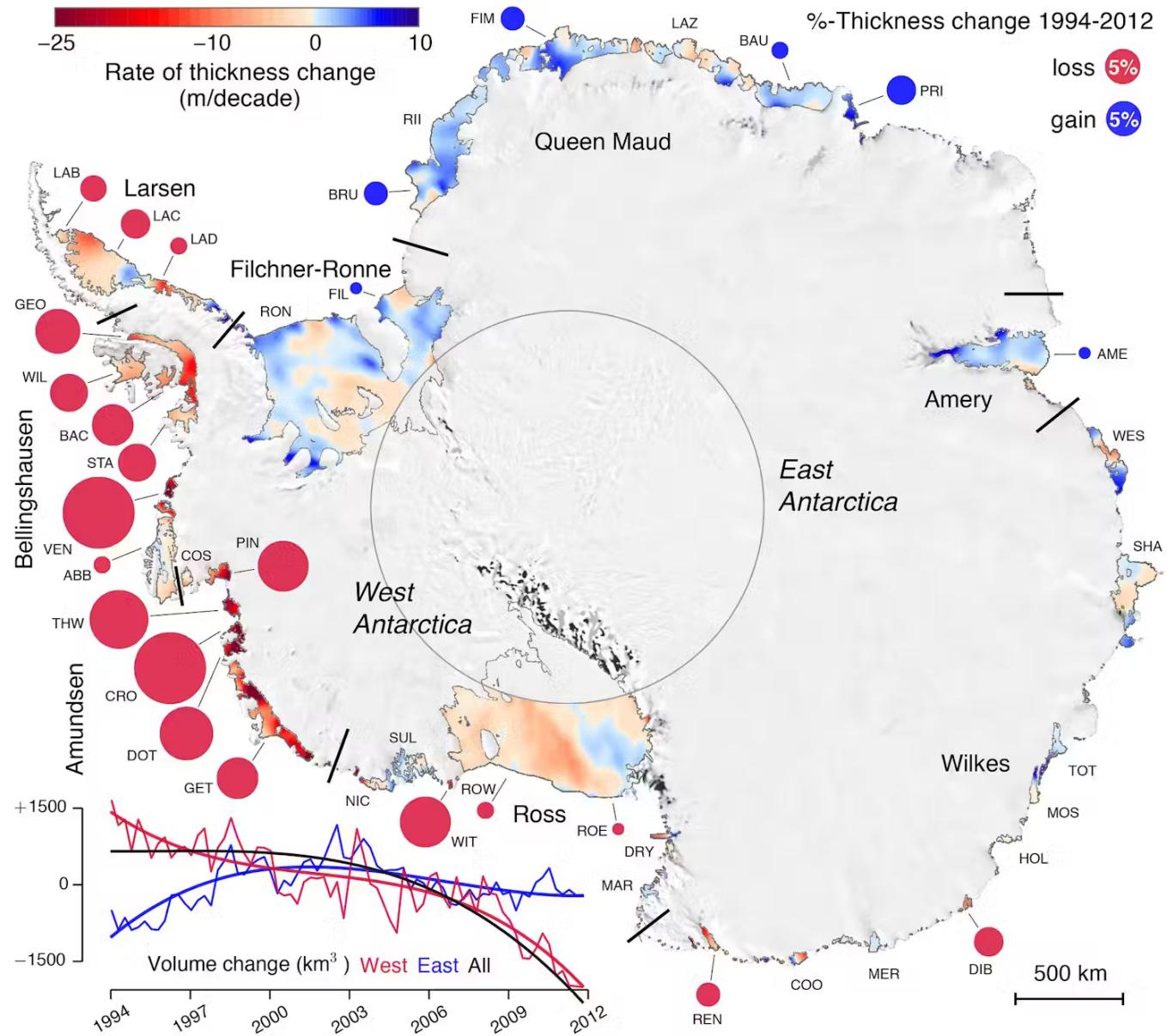
BBC





INTERNATIONAL
THWAITES
GLACIER
COLLABORATION

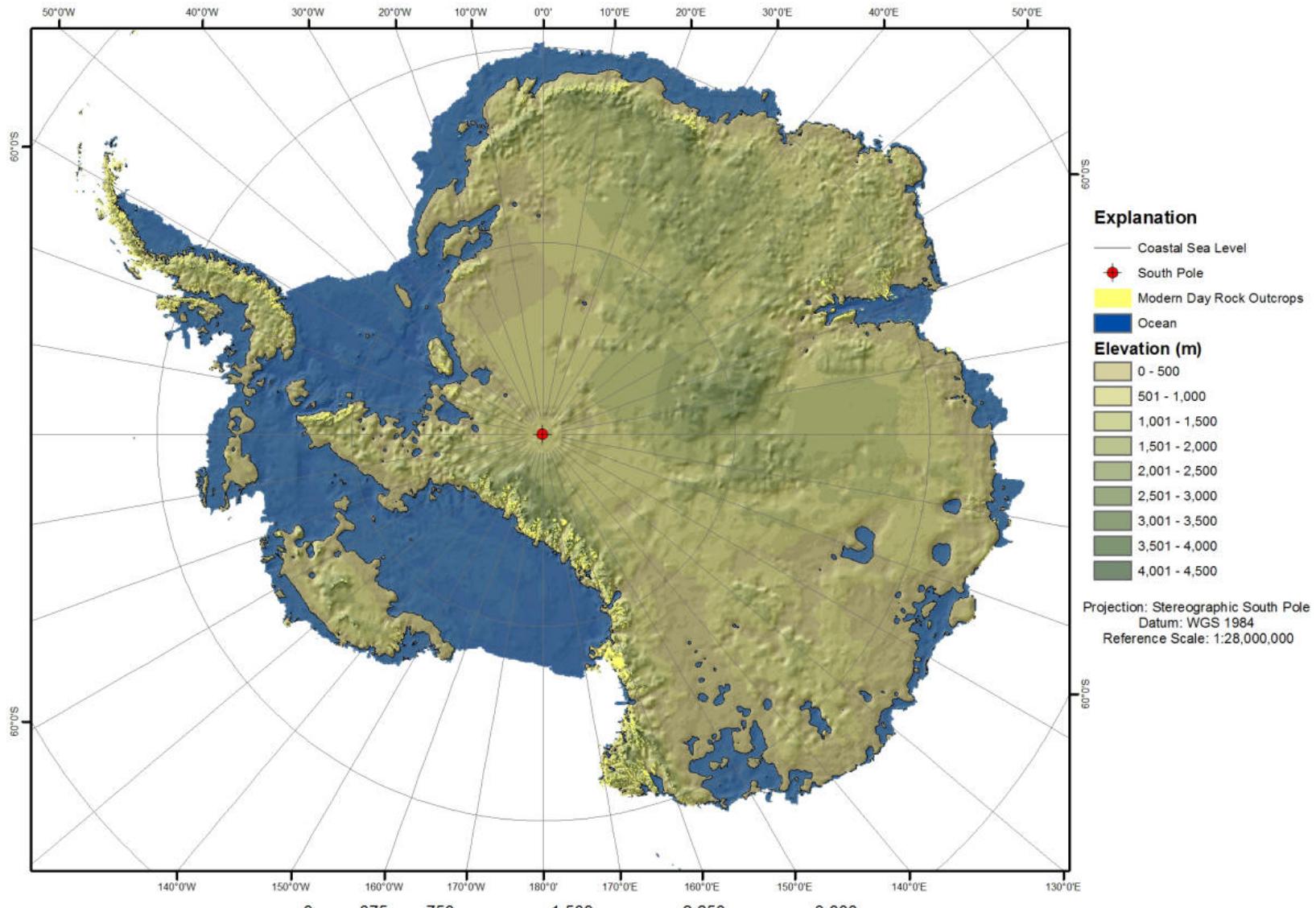
2021-12-13 09:07:13



"Greenhouse Antarctica"

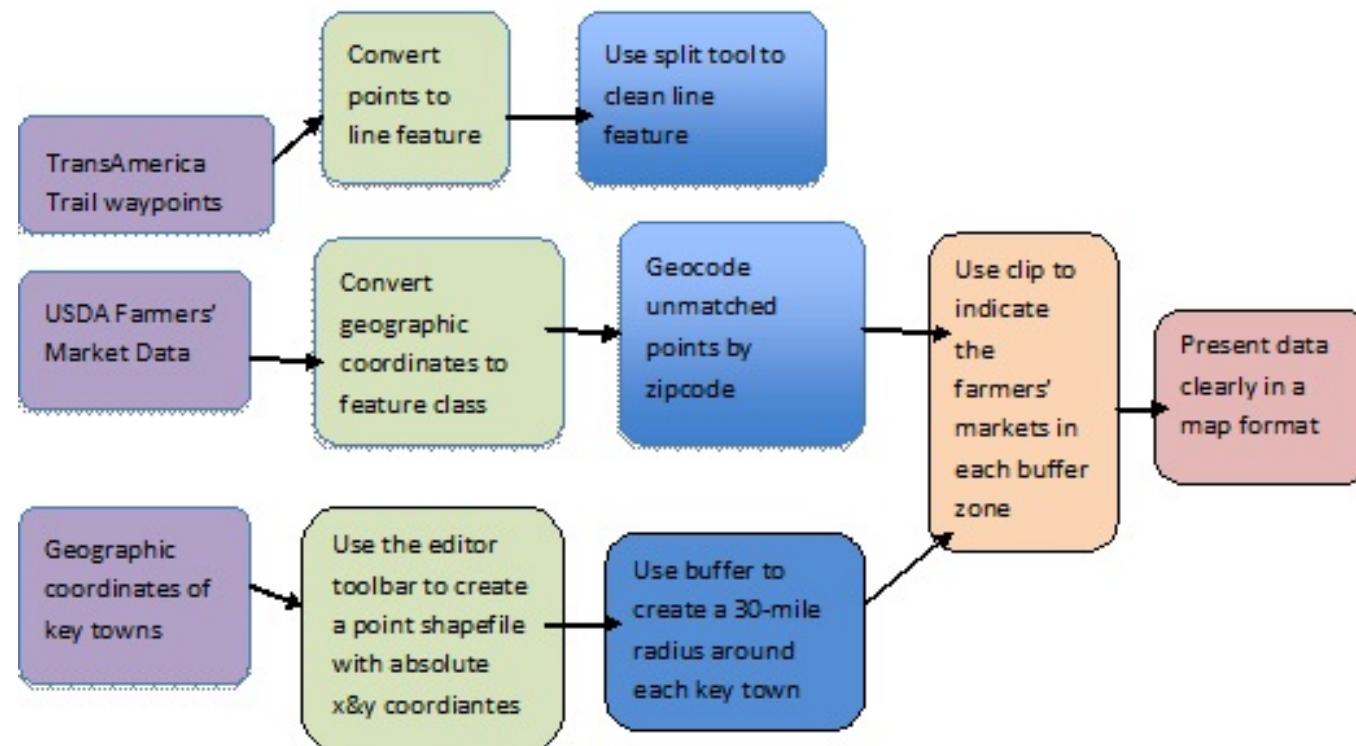
Antarctica After Isostatic Rebound & 80.5 Meter Sea Level Rise

Jacob Makis
3/25/14



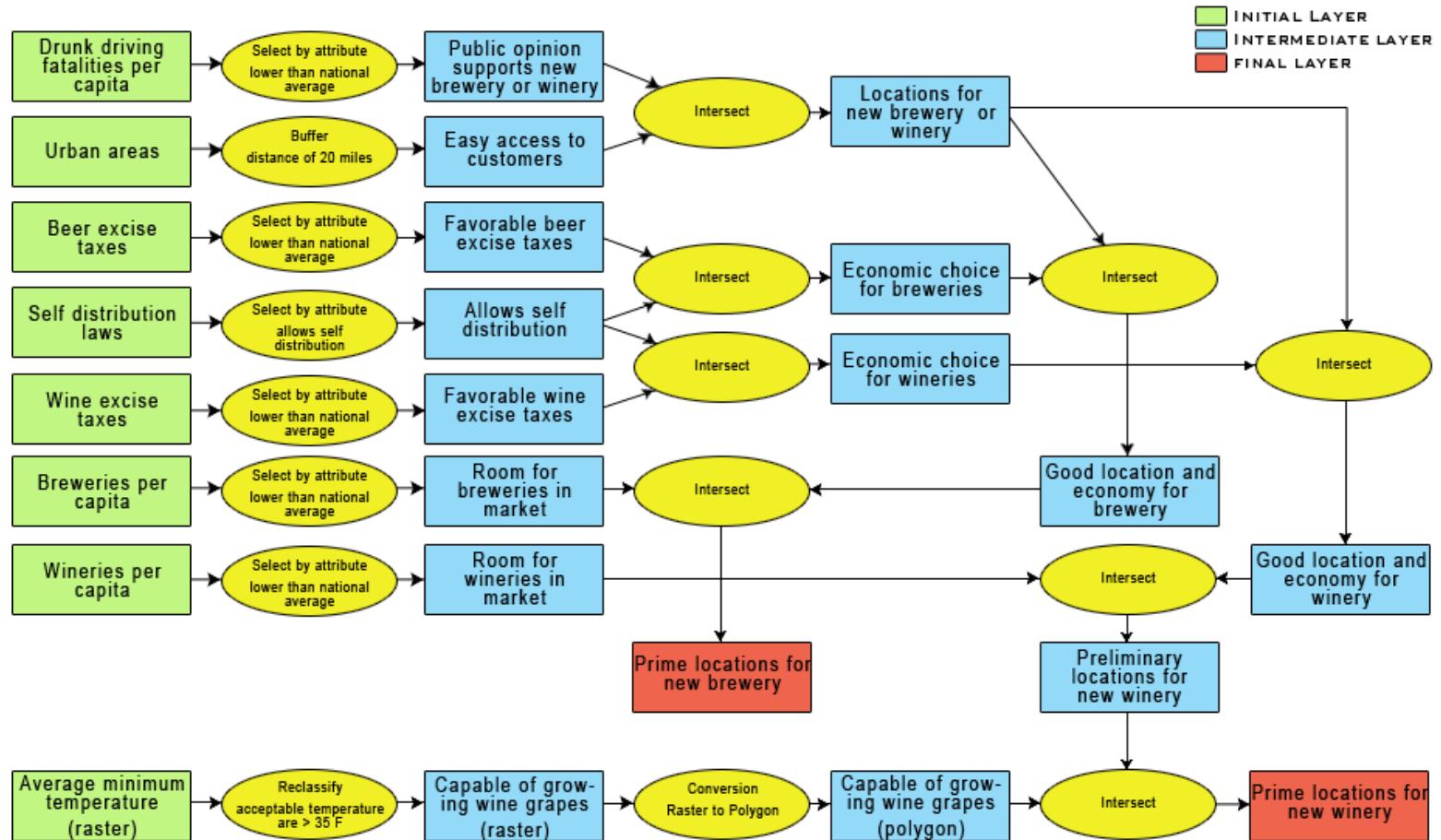
How is the Scientific Method applied with GIS ?

What farmers markets are within 30 miles of the Trans America Trail?



How is the Scientific Method applied with GIS ?

U.S. Areas With Best Conditions for Opening a New Brewery or Winery



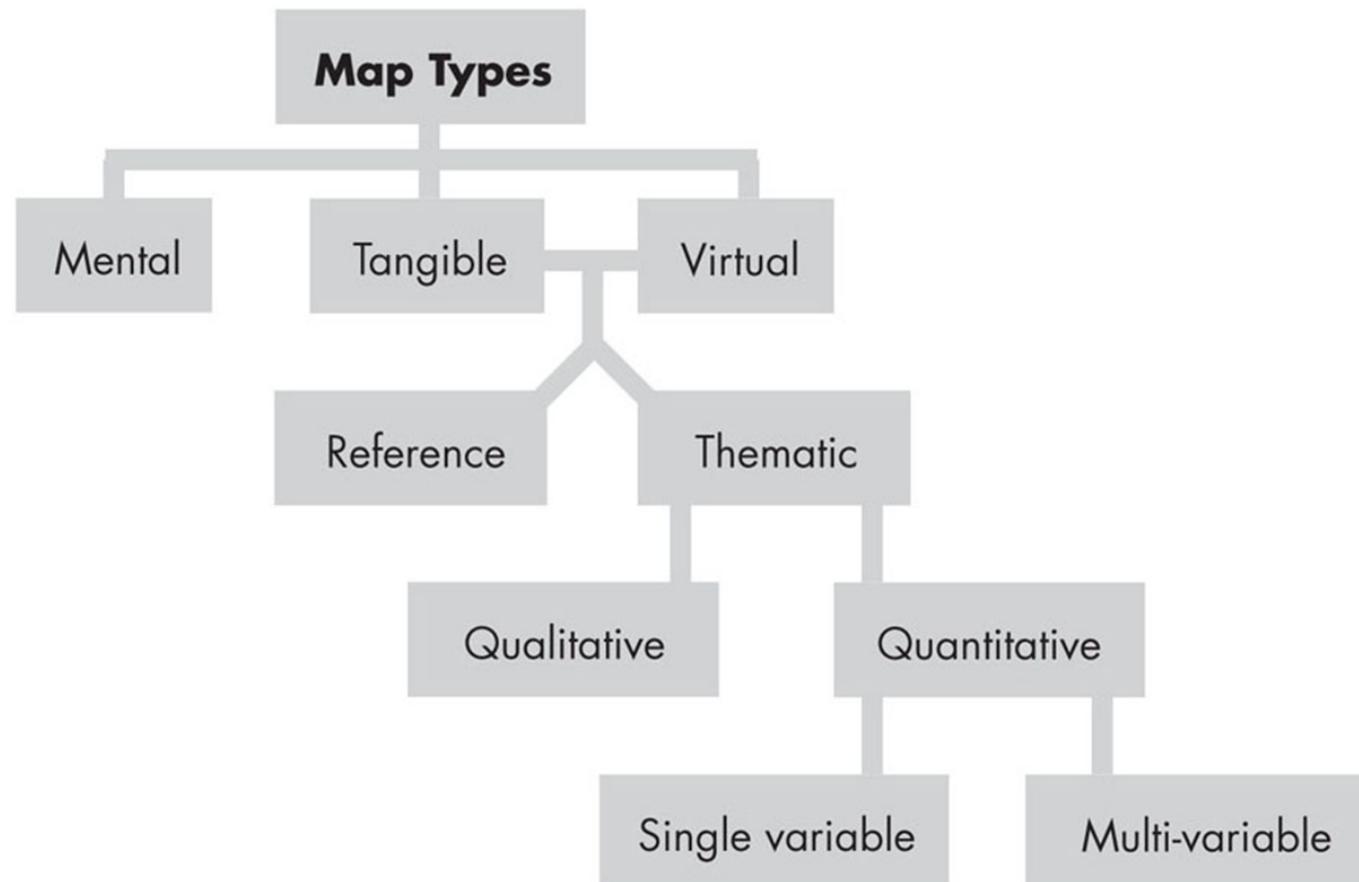
Can Missoula meet its electricity needs with roof-top solar?

The earth at sea level receives about 1,000 Watts per square meter.

How can we use GIS to answer this question? What data do we need?

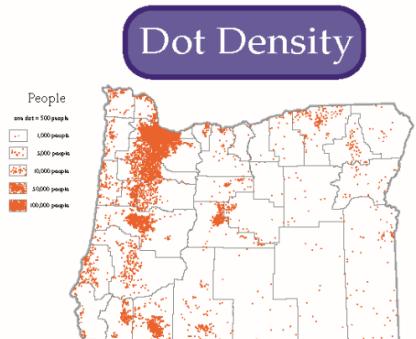
What is Thematic Cartography?

Copyright © The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. Permission required for reproduction or display.

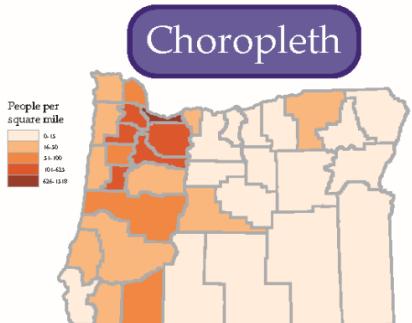


Types of Thematic Maps

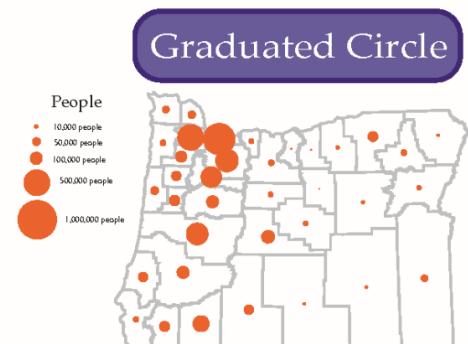
All five thematic maps show where people live in Oregon, but each map uses a different way to show that distribution.



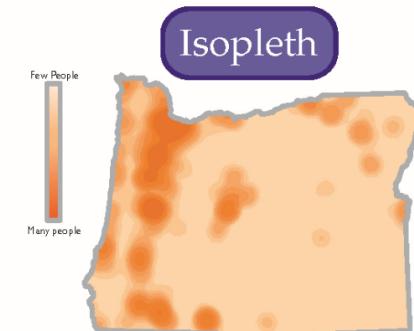
- One dot equals a certain number of people
- If dots are close together, lots of people live in one area
- If dots are spread out, not very many people live in one area



- Each county is shaded a color to show density or number of people per square mile
- The symbol covers an entire county, but it does not mean that people live everywhere inside the county



- One circle represents how many people live in that county
- The size of the circle is proportional to the number of people that live in a county - the more people that live in a county, the larger the circle



- This map shows a continuous distribution of population
- Because we do not know how many people live in every single place in Oregon, we take an average of two cities in an area to estimate the number of people in that area



- This map draws boundaries around different groups of people (for example, urban residents and rural residents)
- The map does not show how many people are in each group, just where each group is located

The Point... is to turn this:

Attributes of Places Final Index											
FID	Shape *	OBJECTID	NAME	ST	DISTANCE	INDEX_	POP2000	X_COOR	Y_COOR	FINAL_INDEX	POS
185	Point	18460	Barlow	OR	59.988426	-35	140	-1285.462617	720.661807	-1133.23	7339080
55	Point	2261	Muir Beach	CA	2.606149	-40	295	-1420.835027	225.495873	-1449.41	7338760
300	Point	23622	Custer	WA	0.940329	-40	299	-1212.000738	961.410374	-1496.38	7338710
186	Point	18475	Butteville	OR	54.454017	-35	293	-1290.716408	722.460785	-1995.89	7338210
190	Point	18511	Donald	OR	54.615992	-35	608	-1291.518863	720.240573	-3887.51	7336520
78	Point	2540	Stinson Beach	CA	0.559769	-40	751	-1423.265452	228.999046	-4164.9502	7336050
197	Point	18577	Johnson City	OR	66.471662	-35	634	-1275.873906	728.623598	-4162.0698	7336050
184	Point	18456	Aurora	OR	58.467762	-35	655	-1287.51291	719.645833	-4208.0298	7336000
199	Point	18607	Maywood Park	OR	67.3765	-35	777	-1272.246319	738.424133	-5029.1099	7335180
7	Point	1704	Bolinas	CA	0.961137	-40	1246	-1425.876018	229.855813	-7138.96	7333070
189	Point	18495	Columbia City	OR	55.500253	-35	1571	-1277.288955	764.461119	-9674.3496	7330540
302	Point	23682	Friday Harbor	WA	1.904217	-40	1989	-1237.388102	941.733429	-11606.4	7328600
310	Point	23697	Ridgefield	WA	60.233845	-35	2147	-1274.299846	757.580641	-13177.7	7327030
303	Point	23685	Geneva	WA	4.266151	-40	2257	-1204.810523	947.391127	-13238	7326970
27	Point	1924	Fairbanks Ranch	CA	4.767205	-25	2244	-1212.532145	-177.67016	-13285	7326930
62	Point	2427	Ross	CA	2.38753	-40	2329	-1417.659585	231.705251	-13651.2	7326560
93	Point	5204	Brussels	IL	1414.09675	10	141	288.55275	109.069075	-15040.2	7325170
191	Point	18514	Dundee	OR	45.997264	-35	2598	-1298.353999	726.101148	-15741.3	7324470
110	Point	6120	Sauget	IL	1432.136511	10	249	312.650316	85.366149	-15888.7	7324340
99	Point	5395	East Carondelet	IL	1427.444402	10	267	308.687665	81.567052	-15929.8	7324280
61	Point	2419	Rollingwood	CA	2.322631	-40	2900	-1405.619249	228.372475	-17076.6	7323130
212	Point	18748	Wood Village	OR	74.224351	-30	2860	-1265.975813	735.424913	-17635.6	7322570
104	Point	5532	Grafton	IL	1422.978676	10	609	297.098654	111.554476	-17937.1	7322270
101	Point	5426	Elijah	IL	1426.401856	10	635	300.952341	110.206355	-18127.4	7322080
92	Point	5198	Brooklyn	IL	1432.729163	10	676	312.215009	89.980211	-18436.6	7321770
20	Point	1892	East Richmond Heights	CA	2.785772	-40	3357	-1405.156128	226.773795	-19823.198	7320390
252	Point	19266	Haysville	PA	1974.303794	5	78	823.180929	279.566113	-20224.4	7319990
253	Point	19288	Hockstown	PA	1958.294985	5	152	806.012252	281.795164	-20508.301	7319700
286	Point	19878	Shippingport	PA	1961.102294	5	237	808.334848	283.964001	-21046.4	7319160
248	Point	19216	Genfield	PA	1975.43521	5	236	824.411909	279.337465	-21183.699	7319030
307	Point	23788	Marietta-Alderwood	WA	2.057488	-40	3594	-1210.570008	952.429767	-21237.9	7318970
238	Point	19089	Eastvale	PA	1967.6651	5	293	812.208697	294.702564	-21448	7318760
244	Point	19148	Fallston	PA	1967.508644	5	307	818.868652	291.698334	-21530.4	7318680
179	Point	17862	Wate Hill	OH	1920.151574	5	446	748.246729	343.956618	-21890.9	7318320
224	Point	18832	Ben Avon Heights	PA	1978.506677	5	392	827.600736	279.295403	-22150.4	7318060
288	Point	23557	Blairn	WA	2.201293	-40	3770	-1214.871754	967.250518	-22295.4	7317910
278	Point	19801	Rosslyn Farms	PA	1977.102314	5	464	827.813375	272.973154	-22568.4	7317640
292	Point	19973	Thornburg	PA	1977.445926	5	468	827.938431	273.851931	-22595.801	7317610
313	Point	24031	Woodland	WA	58.582706	-35	3780	-1273.949733	764.954748	-22959.198	7317250
267	Point	19906	South Heights	PA	1970.444662	5	542	818.491256	282.17202	-22969.801	7317240
268	Point	19685	Osborn	PA	1973.701274	5	566	822.512506	279.733783	-23146.4	7317060
237	Point	19084	East Rochester	PA	1969.598619	5	623	815.400491	298.361105	-23447.301	7316760
283	Point	19855	Sewickley Hills	PA	1976.062678	5	652	824.179518	282.647879	-23686	7316520
269	Point	19682	Patterson Heights	PA	1966.914521	5	670	811.989496	292.667324	-23702.5	7316510
106	Point	5569	Hartford	IL	1438.677929	10	1545	315.535583	102.022453	-23710.1	7316500
109	Point	6094	Roxana	IL	1441.102042	10	1547	317.881286	102.841398	-23746.4	7316460
119	Point	14017	Fairview	NJ	73.354727	-30	3942	1136.559949	331.230368	-24118.9	7316090
228	Point	18864	Bridgewater	PA	1967.986293	5	739	813.850523	297.657452	-24127.199	7316080
272	Point	19695	Pennsbury Village	PA	1976.53993	5	738	827.154352	273.2699	-24206.699	7316000
35	Point	2023	Highlands-Baywood Park	CA	1.324286	-40	4210	-1414.793925	198.947512	-24926.6	7315280
71	Point	2486	Santa Venetia	CA	1.604584	-40	4298	-1413.806567	233.816457	-25457.4	7314750
282	Point	19854	Sewickley Heights	PA	1974.656643	5	981	822.941839	281.833043	-25645.9	7314560
111	Point	6174	South Roxana	IL	1440.244514	10	1888	317.269961	101.48997	-25783.801	7314430
136	Point	15026	Hewlett Bay Park	NY	2311.074539	-10	484	1151.806381	354.070811	-25908.1	7314300
138	Point	15028	Hewlett Neck	NY	2310.902884	-10	504	1151.813153	353.362258	-26026.4	7314180
18	Point	1849	Del Mar	CA	0.113269	-25	4389	-1217.316923	-178.65374	-26108.5	7314100
171	Point	16805	Bratenahl	OH	1908.394084	5	1337	737.711308	338.241636	-27119.301	7313090
257	Point	19392	Leedsdale	PA	1971.531379	5	1232	819.740042	281.709201	-27120.699	7313090
195	Point	18553	Happy Valley	OR	68.723202	-35	4519	-1272.92333	731.011625	-27494.6	7312720
150	Point	15282	North Lyrbrook	NY	2312.254914	-5	742	1152.358885	356.631731	-27507.8	7312700
167	Point	15847	Manhattan	NY	7911.465429	-10	811	1141.444548	343.937731	-277484	7311999

Record:

0

<

>

Show: All Selected

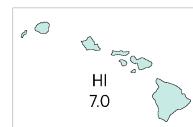
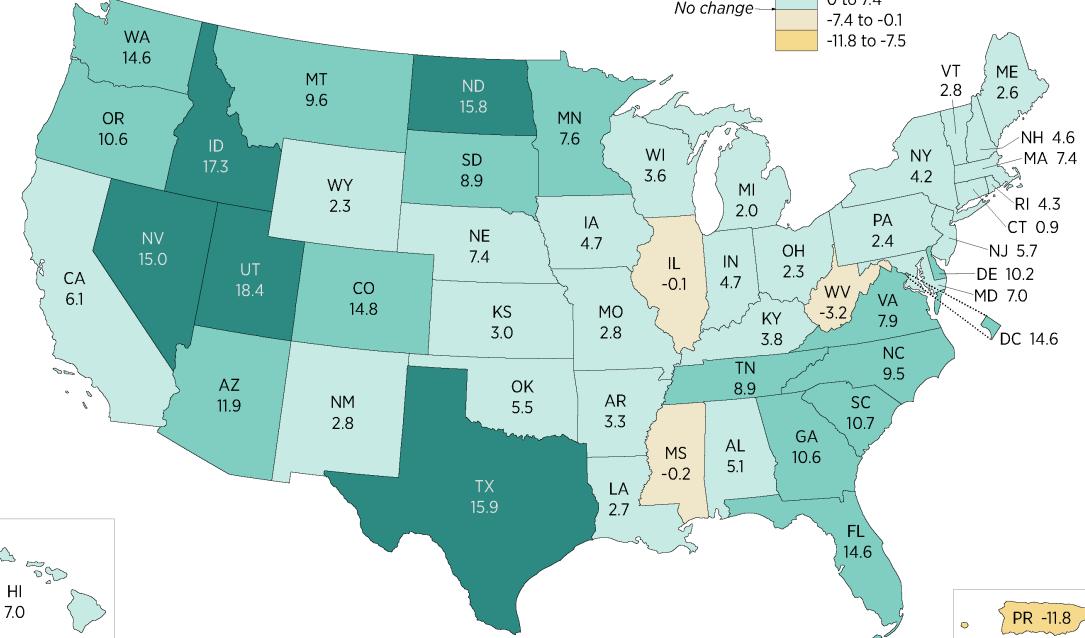
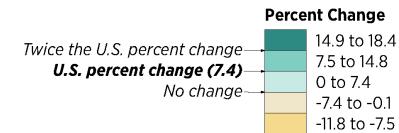
Records (10 out of 314 Selected)

Options ▾

Into This!



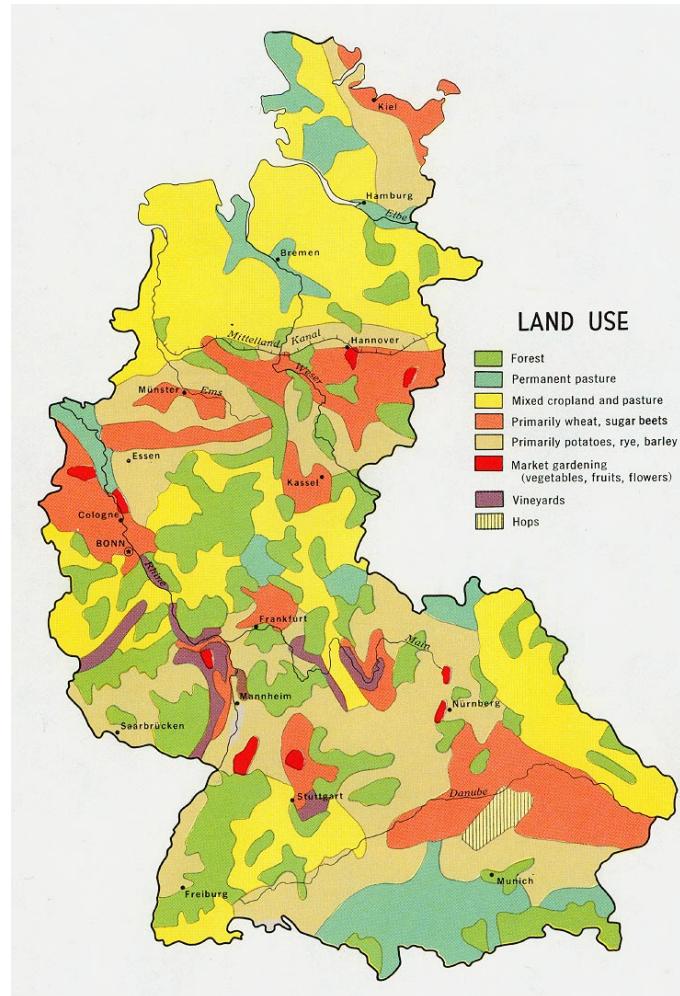
Percent Change in Resident Population for the 50 States,
the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico: 2010 to 2020



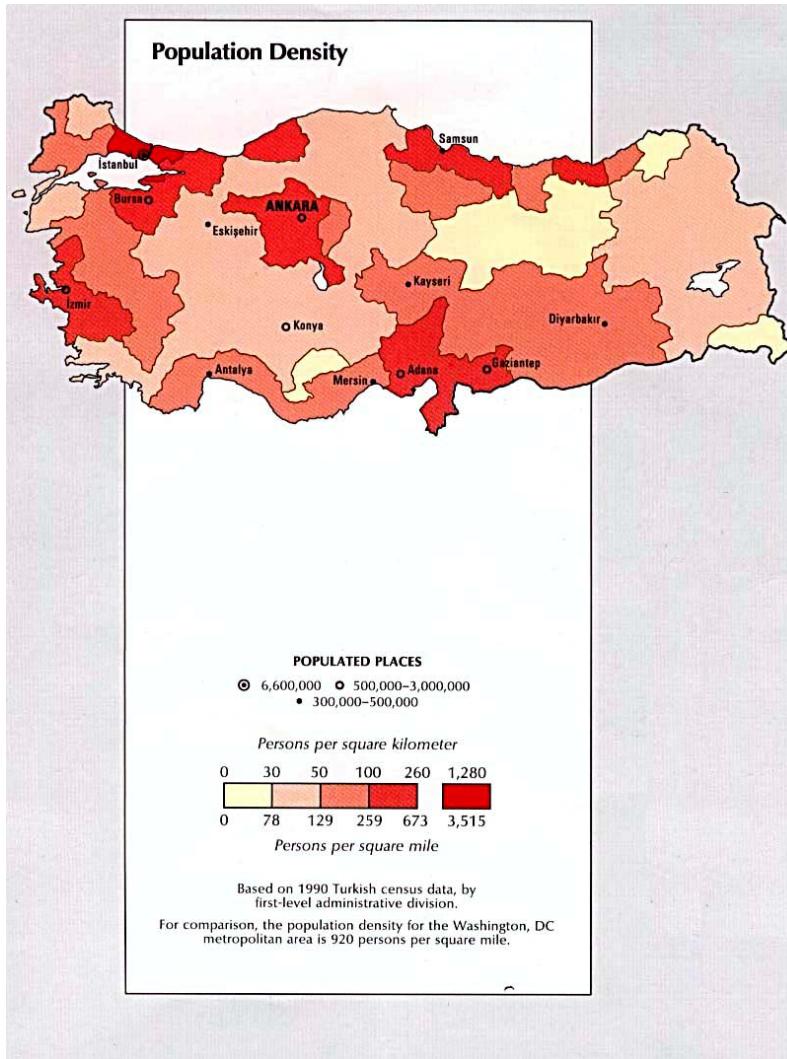
REFERENCE



QUALITATIVE

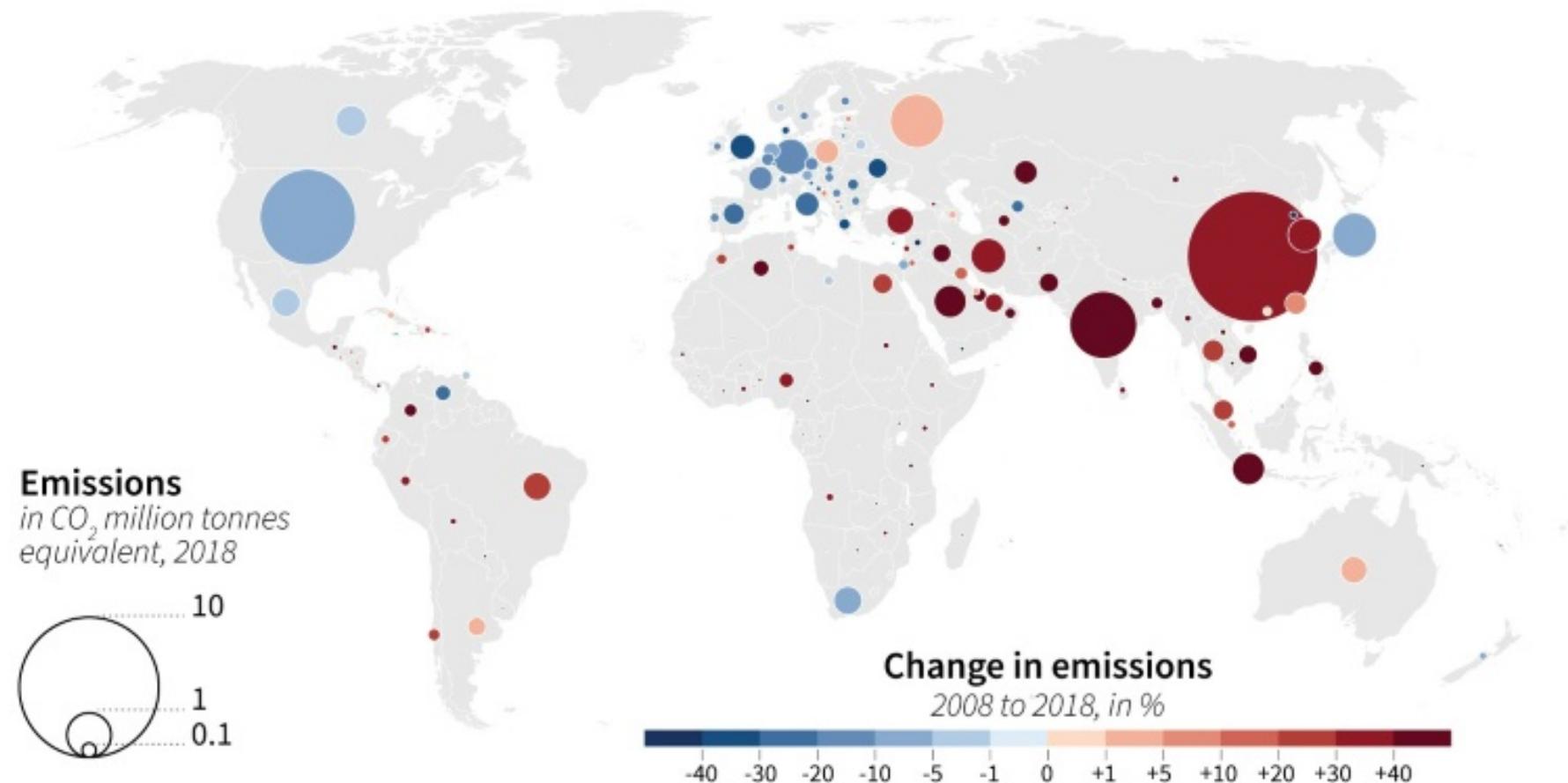


QUANTITATIVE CHOROPLETH



QUANTITATIVE PROPORTIONAL SYMBOL

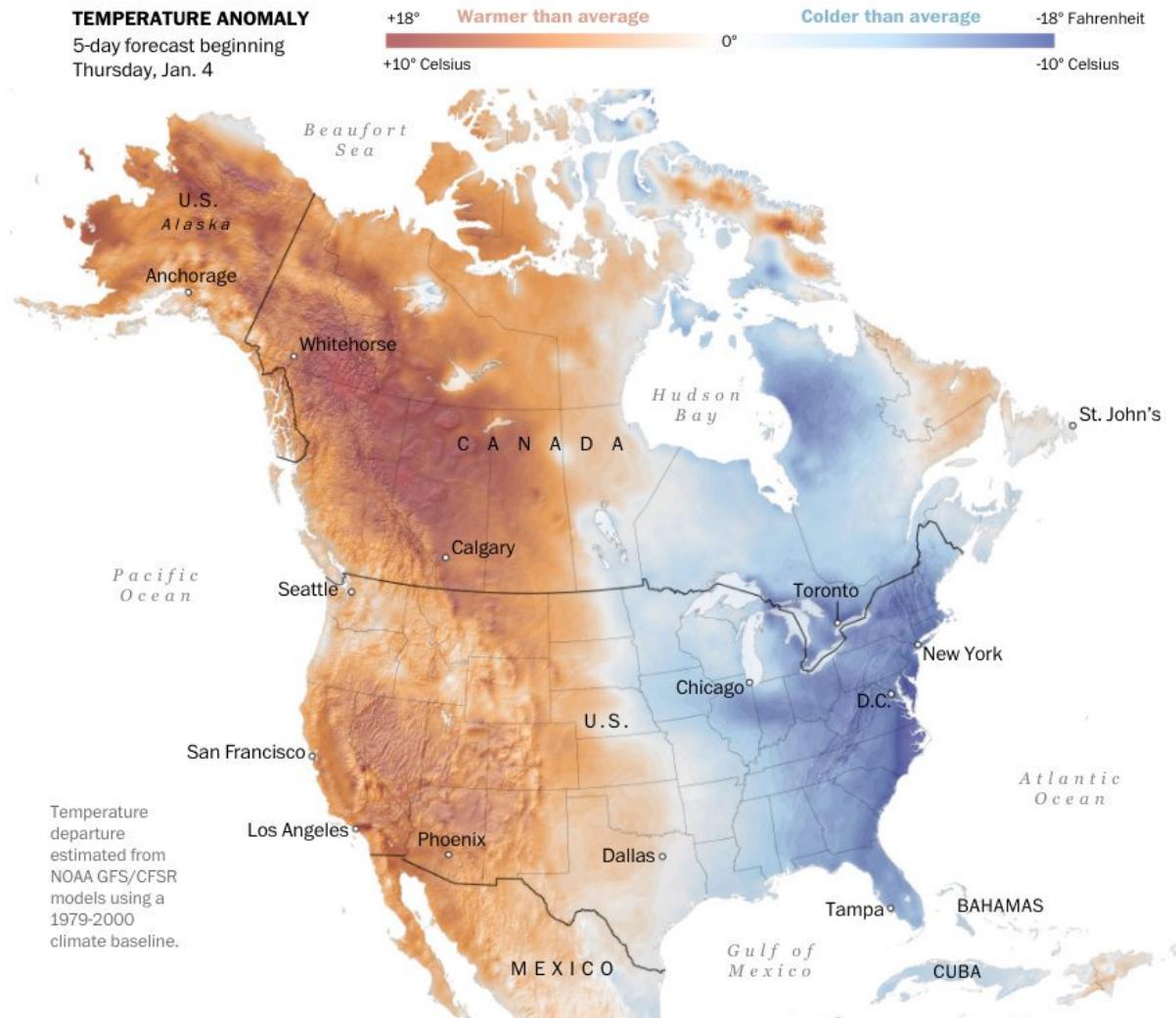
Carbon emissions from fossil fuels



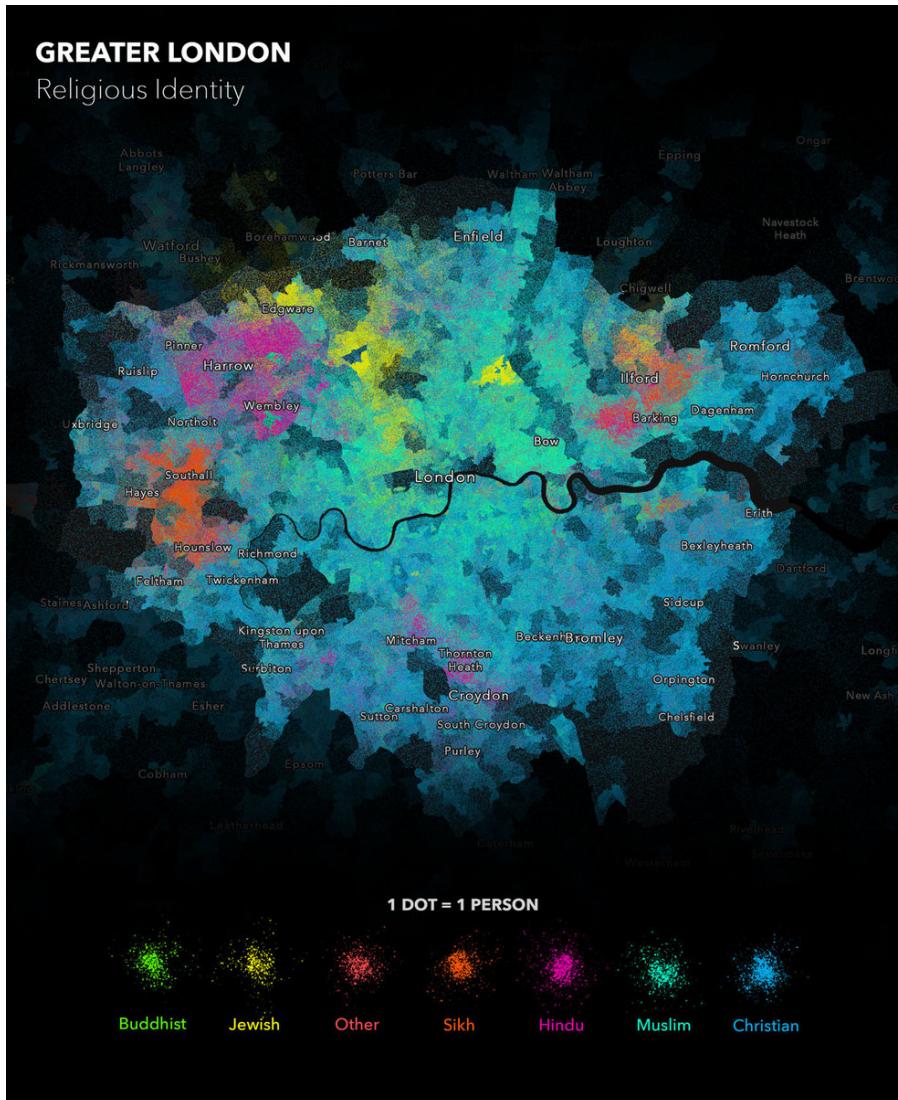
Source: Global Carbon Project

© AFP

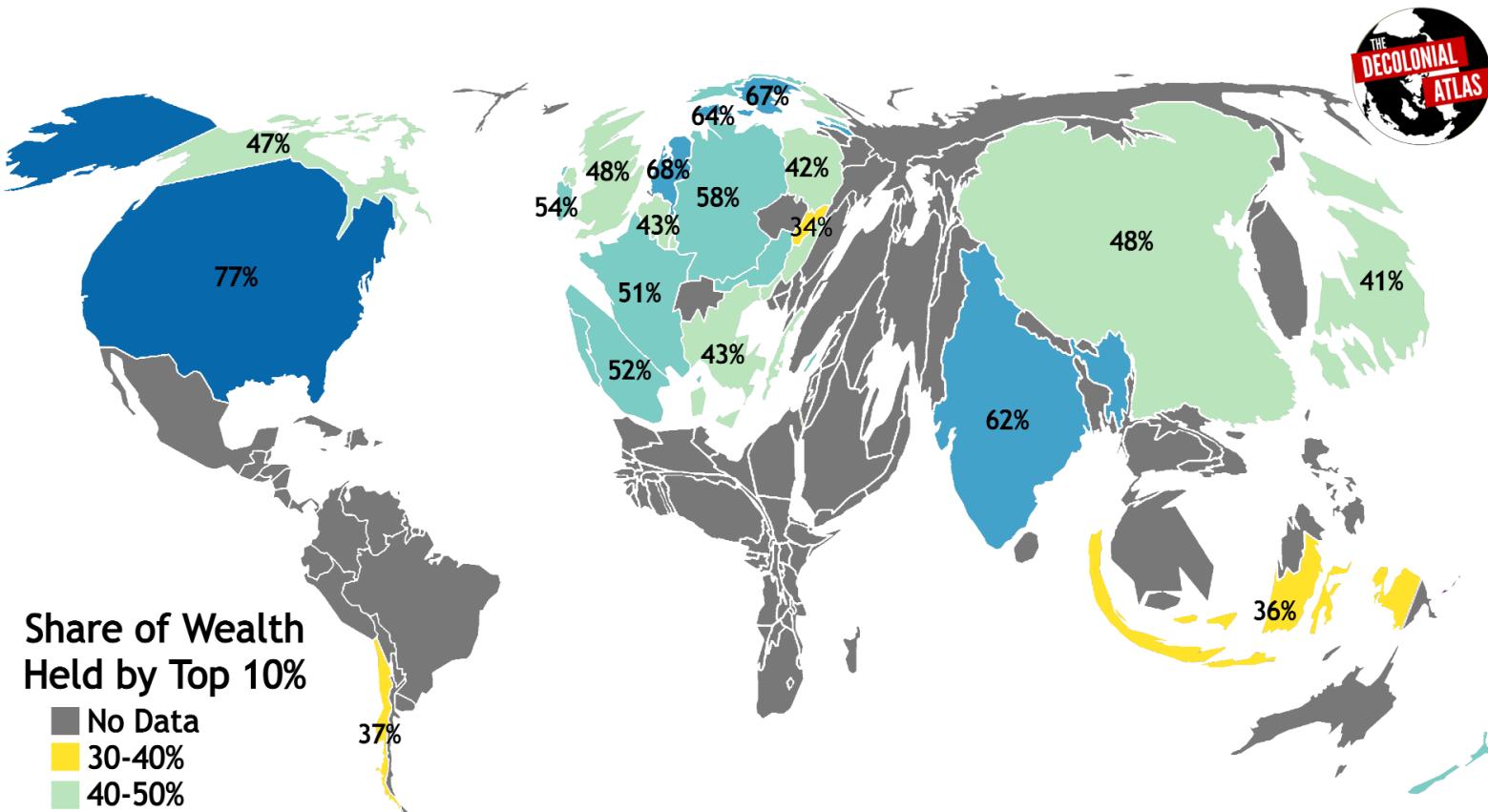
QUANTITATIVE ISARTHMIC



QUANTITATIVE DOT DENSITY

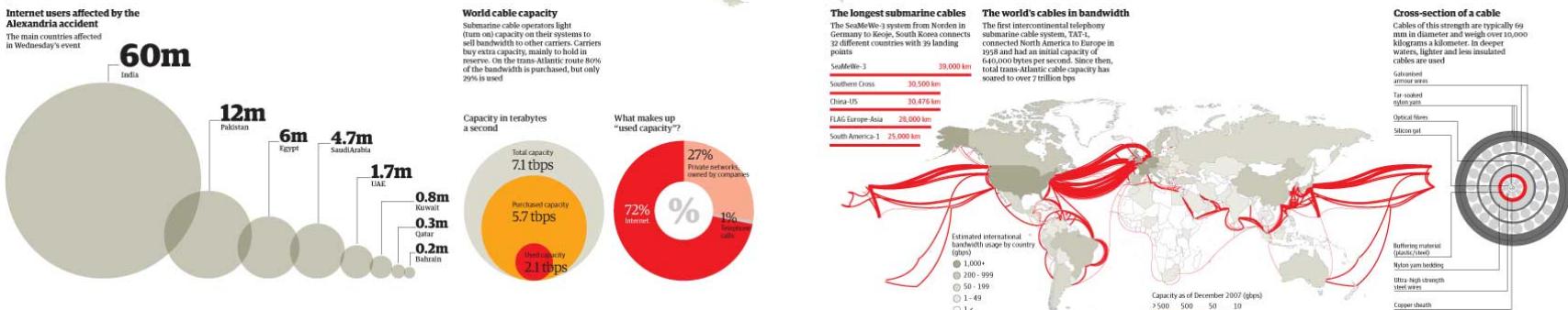
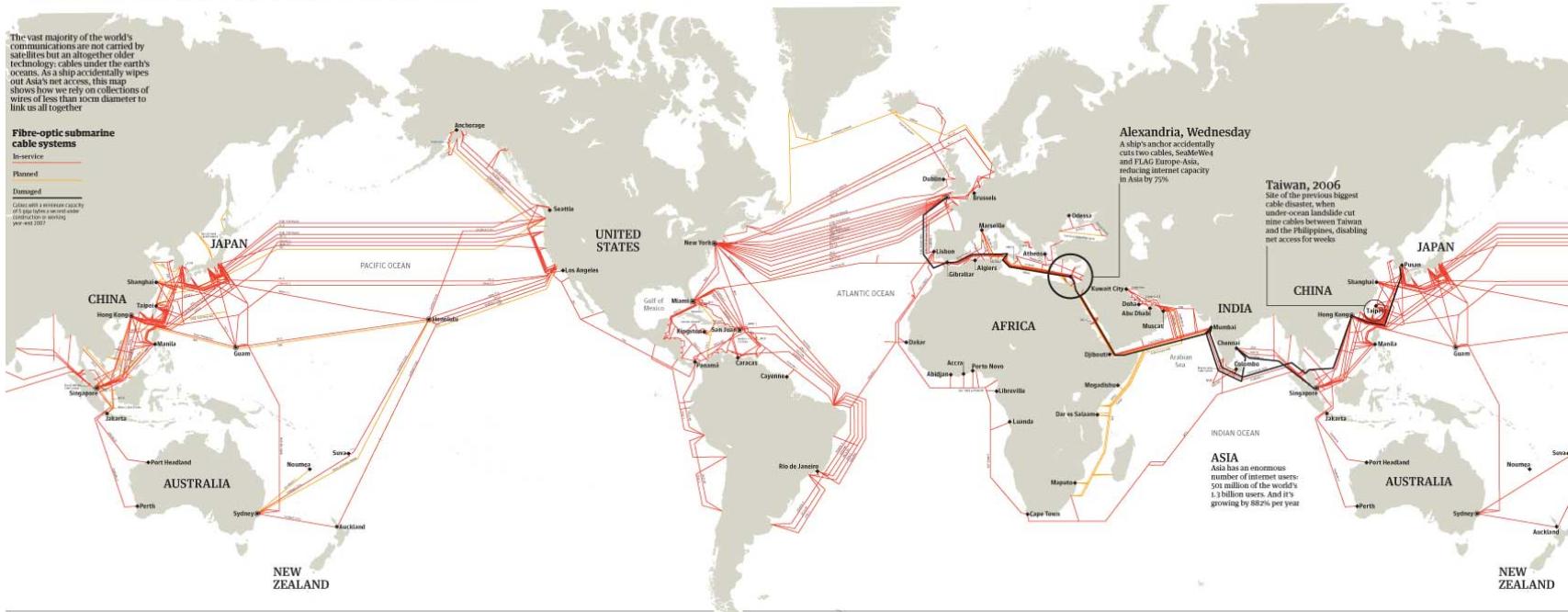


QUANTITATIVE CARTOGRAM



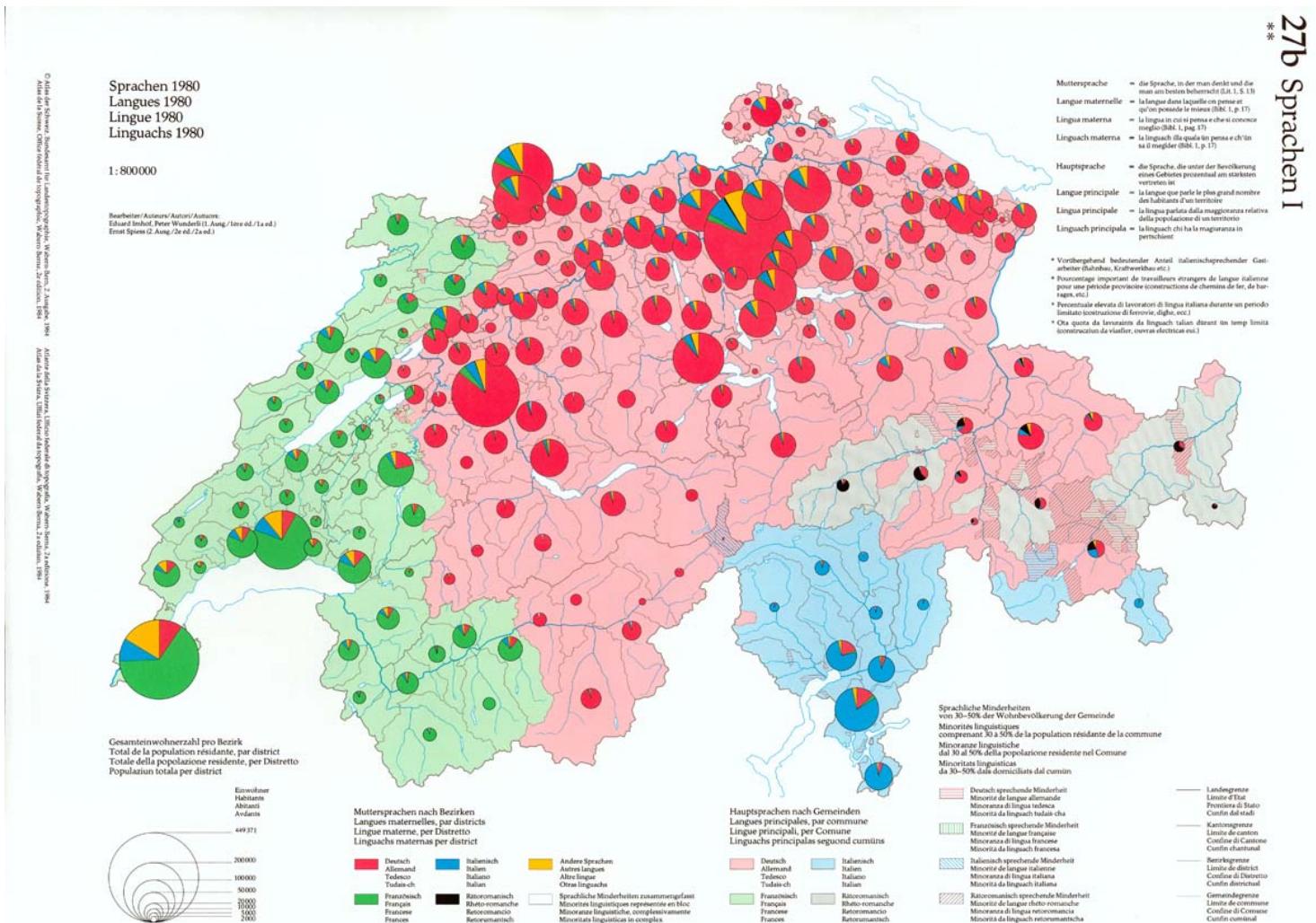
QUANTITATIVE FLOW

The internet's undersea world



SOURCE: TELEGRAPH.COM/SUBMARINE CABLE MAP 2008. INTERNET STATISTICS FROM INTERNETWORLDSTATS.COM

QUANTITATIVE MULTIVARIATE



SO WHAT's IMPORTANT?

Make maps people want to look at!

A good Map gives the user access to the data that is not readily available in the table. GIS answers questions that only spatial analysis can!

(It also should keep their eyes from rolling back in their heads as they drift off to a happy place!)