Towards a global saltmarsh map

Benefits of Global extent maps

- Benchmark for assessment of change
- Focus conservation and restoration effort
- Calculation of carbon sequestration contribution to global budgets

Current Status

- UNEP-WCMC maintains an **Ocean Data Viewer** for coastal wetland extent (best accessed through google chrome):
- http://data.unep-wcmc.org/
- Current point and polygon extent for coral reefs, mangrove, and seagrass (not saltmarsh at present)

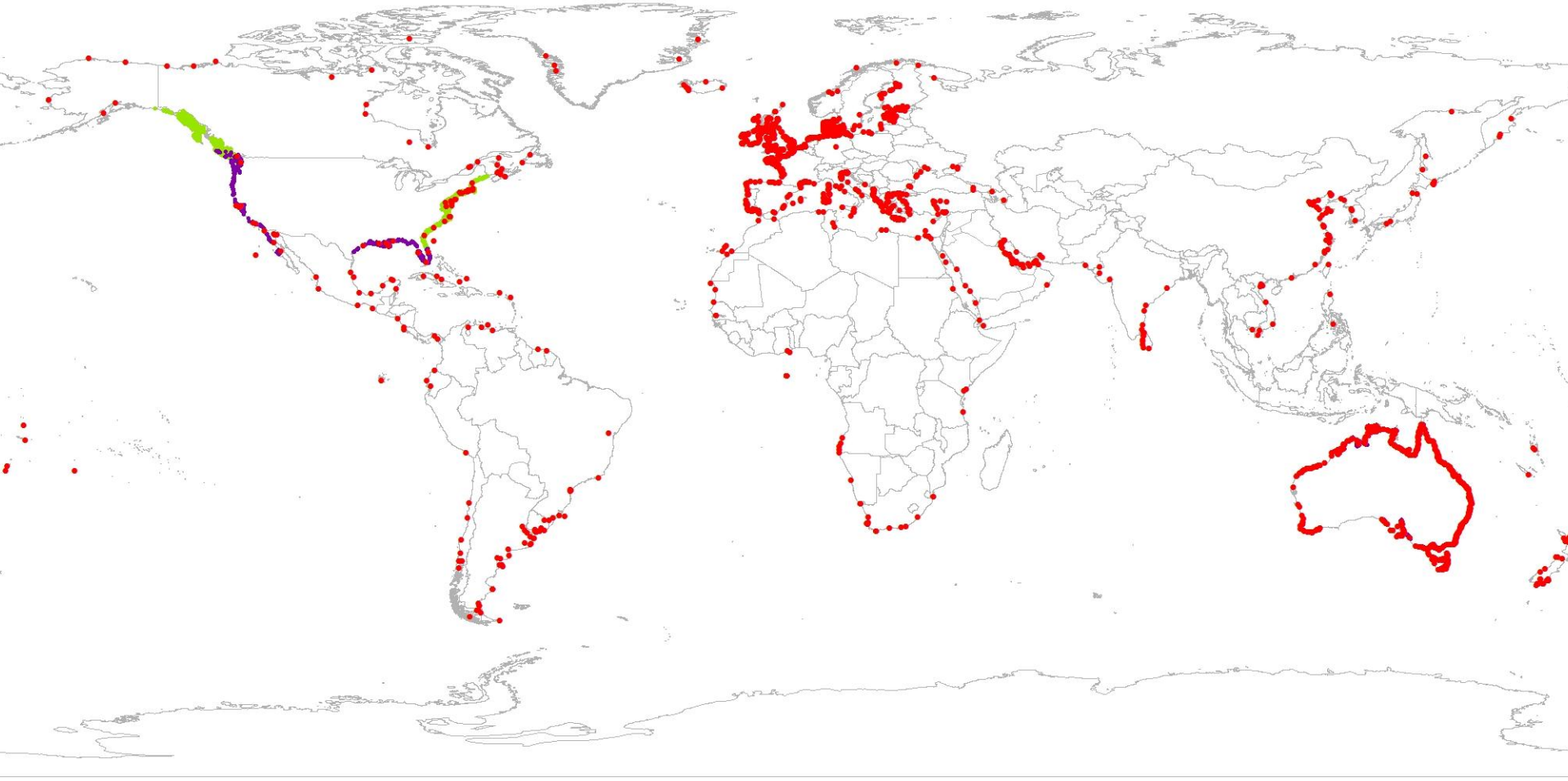
Mangrove layers

- World Mangrove Atlas (1997, updated 2011)
  - This global dataset showing the distribution of mangroves compiled by UNEP-WCMC in collaboration with the International Society for Mangrove Ecosystems (ISME). Published in: Spalding, M.D., Blasco, F. and Field, C.D. (Eds). 1997. "World Mangrove Atlas". The International Society for Mangrove Ecosystems, Okinawa, Japan. 178 pp.
- Global Mangrove extent (USGS, 2011)
  - Global mangrove extent mapped using Landsat archive and Global Land Survey data.
- Regional maps
  - Eg, East Africa (on WCMC data viewer), national inventories

Seagrass layers

- The Global Distribution of Seagrasses as point and polygon data presented on the WCMC Ocean data viewer
- An update of “World Atlas of Seagrasses” (2003), the first global synthesis, compiled by UNEP-WCMC in collaboration with Dr Frederick T. Short, University of New Hampshire, USA

GLOBAL SALTMARSHES



Source: UNEP-WCMC & TNC (Dataset incomplete)

Major Gaps

- Polygon and line data limited to a few regions (USA; though data exist for Australia, UK and parts of Europe and South America)
- Substantial areas of saltmarsh on the Arctic coastline, particularly in the Russian Tundra
- Tropical saltmarshes, particularly SE Asia

Steps Forward

- What is the best approach to completing a global saltmarsh extent map?
- How can we secure resources for the work?
- Who needs to be involved?