421

A NEW VEGETATION MAP FOR HEARD ISLAND

J Scott[1], H Brolsma[2], U Ryan[3], B Hull[4]

[1]School of Geography and Environmental Studies, University Of Tasmania, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, [2]Australian Antarctic Data Centre, Australian Antarctic Division, Department of Environment and Heritage, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, [3]Australian Antarctic Data Centre, Australian Antarctic Division, Department of Environment and Heritage, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, [4]Environmental Policy and Protection, Australian Antarctic Division, Department of Environment and Heritage, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

Over the past three years a successful collaboration between a university scientist, the AADC and EPPS has occurred, where old field data from the 1980s has been resurrected using new mapping technologies to produce a detailed vegetation map of Heard Island. In this paper, the mapping methodologies and resulting map will be presented. The map and associated data provide an unparalleled baseline of the extent and nature of the Heard Island vegetation communities circa 1987. Documenting and measuring vegetation change on Heard Island has become a topic of great interest and relevance to subantarctic terrestrial biologists, given the island's unusually sensitive and pristine environment for detecting and measuring the effects of regional climate change. Current and future research in collaboration with the Centre for Spatial Information Science (CenSIS), University of Tasmania, is investigating the use of high-resolution satellite imagery for mapping vegetation communities to build onto field-based mapping methods. Additionally, the focus of future studies will be on change detection techniques applied to satellite imagery to detect and monitor changes in vegetation communities related to regional climate change.