Collection of soil data in SOTER format from 14 Danube strategy countries, at scale 1:250 000

EU-JRC Service Contract #936108

Deliverable D.A3

Country terrain unit shapefiles for the EU Danube basin

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1. Introduction

To support the Danube strategy the European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) has proposed soil data collection within the Danube basin (Figure 1) based on SOTER methodologies. The SOTERTM (SOil and TERrain) methodology is a comprehensive framework making soil and terrain data available for end users. The methodology was developed by ISRIC in collaboration with FAO, UNEP, JRC and a range of national partners (Van Engelen 2011; van Engelen and Dijkshoorn 2013) and implemented in a range of countries¹.



Figure 1. Terrain units for the Danube region basin

In short, the project includes preparing 'empty' SOTER database templates and GIS files of terrain units mapped for the participating countries, filling the 'national' SOTER databases with representative soil profiles, standardisation and harmonisation to the World Reference Base for Soil Resources (2015 update), and ultimately exporting data in SOTER format to GML (Geography Markup Language) INSPIRE-compliant format.

This report describes how the country GIS-shapefiles of terrain units for the Danube basin were made. The country shapefiles can be linked to the 'empty' SOTER attribute database for the respective countries through the unique ISOCSUID identifier (e.g. ISO code for country and sequential number of the given SOTER (terrain) unit). The procedure is illustrated in Figure 2 for a 'simplified' SOTER database (see Batjes and Ribeiro 2019a).

¹ <u>https://www.isric.org/projects/soil-and-terrain-soter-database-programme</u>



Figure 2. Schematic representation of a 'simplified' SOTER database with its geographic and attribute data component.

2. Data and materials

2.1 GIS files

The Danube basin covers fourteen countries. Terrain unit shapefiles for nine EU countries (Croatia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania) and five non-EU countries (Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Ukraine and Moldova), generated subsequent to the EU FP7-funded eSOTER (2012), provided the geographic basis for the current work (Table 1).

Table 1. GIS files used for the SOTER Danube basin project.

GIS shapefiles	Source
SOTER terrain units for whole area	https://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/public_path/shared_folder/SOTER/Danube Terrain_Units.zip
Outline of Danube basin	https://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/public_path/shared_folder/SOTER/Danube- basin-outline-and-14countries-boundaries.zip, derived from EEA (2016).
Country-boundary for the 14 countries	https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/gisco/geodata/reference- data/administrative-units-statistical-units/countries, derived from Eurostat, 2013 version.

Shapefiles for the respective countries were created using a mask of the 'outline of the Danube basin and country-boundary shapefile for the fourteen countries' as provided by JRC (Appendix 1. The country boundaries are derived from Eurostat, version 2013; the Danube basin outline is from EEA (European Environment Agency), 2016 version.

The shapefiles were provided in the following projection ETRS_1989_LAEA, EPSG: 3035, see https://spatialreference.org/ref/epsg/etrs89-etrs-laea/. Being raster-based, several polygons have irregularly shaped boundaries.

2.2 Preparation of country-specific terrain unit shapefiles

The shapefiles described in Section 2.1 provided the basis for compiling 14 sets of terrain units using ArcMap[®]. In case of terrain units occurring in two neighbouring countries, the corresponding terrain units were allocated the ISOC code for the respective countries, while preserving the original SUID.

On visual inspection, some of the resulting polygons were rather small requiring some 'cleaning up'. As a rule of thumb, the minimum size of a single SOTER unit is 0.25 cm^2 on the map (Van Engelen and Dijkshoorn, 2013, p. 29). At a scale of 1:250,000 this corresponds with ~1.6 km² in the field. This is the smallest area that can still be cartographically presented at the given scale. Small polygons that 'fulfil' the above criterion were eliminated by merging them with neighbouring polygons that have the largest area or the longest shared border. As a result, the total number of terrain units per country, as detailed in Table 2, will be less than would have been obtained for a 'raw' clip with the original layer.

The full clipping and overlaying procedure is described in Appendix 2. Scripts were written in R (for final figures) and Python using tools from the ArcPy package for geo-processing. The scripts are provided in Appendix 2 to make the procedure transparent and reproducible.

The original layers like 'Outline of Danube basin' and 'SOTER (terrain) units for whole area' required postprocessing as described in Appendix 2, step 3.

3. Results

Table 2 gives an overview of terrain units mapped for each country. The corresponding GIS attribute tables were exported to Ms Excel (XX_SOTER.xlsx, resp. XX_SOTER.xls). Next the xls files were imported into an 'empty' SOTER attribute database for the corresponding country (see Batjes and Ribeiro 2019a) and appended to the terrain table. The resulting 'empty' SOTER attribute databases are named XX_SOTER.mdb, where XX is the ISO country code. Together with corresponding GIS files these are available to project partners via a protected website; login procedures are described in Appendix 3. These materials, plus the accompanying reports, provide the basis for the actual data compilation by the respective partners in the Danube basin.

Country	Number of terrain units	Average area (km ²)	Total area (km²)	Minimum area (km²)	Maximum area (km²)
AT	1020	79.05	80630.54	1.69	2422.1
BA	504	74.24	37415.33	1.61	902.21
BG	682	69.23	47217.18	1.66	1201.91
CZ	301	70.22	21135.7	1.75	1232.8
DE	656	85.79	56278.71	1.64	1858.51
HR	432	80.68	34854.28	1.61	1771.85
HU	801	116.12	93012.98	1.72	11174.27
MD	185	67.1	12413.54	2.31	838.36
ME	111	61.38	6812.94	1.72	587.24
RO	2546	93.6	238308.9	1.7	13206.49
RS	899	90.95	81762.68	1.9	3178.33
SI	248	66.21	16419.25	1.74	746.43
SK	585	80.44	47060.2	1.79	1111.97
UA	386	77.19	29794.72	2.08	1724.77

Table 2. Number of terrain units mapped per country

For each country, an html file (e.g. AT_soter.html) was created to facilitate the pre-visualization of the files using the information for elevation, relief intensity and slope as attribute information; results can be explored in Appendix 3.

4. Towards SOTER data compilation

This report with data files corresponds with deliverable D.A3 of the Danube basin project. It should be consulted in conjunction with the preceding reports on the SOTER methodology and database (Batjes and Ribeiro 2019a, b). These materials provide the basis for compiling the actual SOTER databases for the fourteen Danube Basin countries.

Filling of the respective country SOTER attribute database(s) will be done by the regional partners, under a subcontract with Cranfield University, in the context of Work Package 3 on data compilation and WRB correlation. This will be done according to the 'terrain units with one terrain component with one or more soil components' case, as adopted for the SOTER Danube project (Batjes and Ribeiro 2019b).

Meanwhile ISRIC will develop an application to generate XML/GML files for the country SOTER databases according to INSPIRE specifications. In first instance, the procedure will be developed and tested using a hypothetical example (deliverable D.A6). Towards the end of the project (Work package 3, month 18), ISRIC will provide a tool to generate (GML) files for the SOTER's compiled by the 14 partners, as well as the merged SOTER database for the whole Danube basin (D.B2).

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We thank Dr Stephen Hallett (Cranfield University) for his editorial comments.

References

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Description of the Danube basin Terrain Units layer

(Source: Marc Van Liedekerke, JRC)

The Danube Basin Terrain Units layer at scale 1:250,000 has been created using a methodology similar to the one developed during the eSOTER (2012) FP7 project. The resulting layer is an ESRI[®] shapefile, the polygons of which delineate Terrain Units (TU) as defined in the SOTER methodology at scale 1:250,000.

The shapefile contains a number of attributes of which the TUID, being the unique Terrain Unit identifier is the most important; the other attributes are the results of various input and subsequent computations that have led to this layer. They can be regarded as additional information, which may be useful when compiling the actual SOTER attribute databases for each Danube Basin country.

TUID ^a	Unique identifier for the Terrain Unit $^{\rm b}$				
HYPSCLASS	Hypsometry classes (elev	s) hypsclass codes			
	0-10		1		
	10-50		2		
	50-100		3		
	100-200		4		
	200-300		5		
	300-600		6		
	600-1500		7		
	1500-3000		8		
	3000-5000		9		
	5000+		10		
SLOPECLASS	Slope percentage (%)	Slopeclass			
		code			
	0-2	1			
	2-5	2			
	5-10	3			
	10-15	4			
	15-30	5			
	30-45	6			
	45+	7			
RICLASS	Relief Intensity (elevation	n range (m) within 1 km ²)	Class codes		
	0-5		1		
	5-20		2		
	20-50		3		
	50-100		4		
	100-300		5		
	300+		6		
SURFCOND	Surface condition, consolidated and unconsolidated parent material Values: Unconsolidated, Consolidated, Water				
GENETICS	Values: Eluvial-colluvial, Marine, N/A				
TEXTURE2	Surface texture class: Values: Clay, Gravel, Loam, Sand, n/a (refers to polygons with water and peat, where texture is not appropriate)				

^a Known as SUID, see van Engelen and Dijkshoorn (2013).

^b Note: The maximum length of the TUIDs numbers in the shapefiles exceeds the SOTER default (for SUID).

Hence, the format has been set to 'Long Integer' in the MS Access database to be compatible with the terrain unit shapefile provided for the Danube basin.

Appendix 2. Procedure for delineating country terrain unit shapefiles





Figure 3. Masks issue (mismatch between boundaries of Danube basin and countries boundaries)



Figure 4. Solution (keep only the area common to the basin mask and the country boundaries and eliminate small polygons along the borders)

********** ########## ## Adapting Danube Basin Mask *## M. Ruiperez-Gonzalez* ## ISRIC - World Soil Information ## Version 1 - March 2019 ## Project: EU-JRC Service Contract #936108; Deliverable D.A3 ########## *### initialization* import arcpy, os import numpy from arcpy import env from arcpy.sa import * ### settings arcpy.env.overwriteOutput = True arcpy.CheckOutExtension("spatial") arcpy.env.workspace = "E:/GIS 2019/Danube-basin-outline-and-14countriesboundaries/" #path = "E:/GIS 2019/Danube-basin-outline-and-14countries-boundaries/" #### define auxiliary function # update area (km2) def update area(input, field): arcpy.AddField management(input, field, "Double") expression = "{0}".format("!SHAPE.area@SQUAREKILOMETERS!") arcpy.CalculateField management(input, field, expression, "PYTHON",) return(input) ### intermediate outputs path and name union = "E:/GIS 2019/Intermediate/union.shp" union multi = "E:/GIS 2019/Intermediate/union multi.shp" ### processing # union of the original Danube mask with the countries boundary and update area field arcpy.Union analysis ("countries Danube strat.shp; Danube mask.shp", union, "ALL", "", "GAPS") arcpy.MultipartToSinglepart management (union, union multi) # union --> multipart update area (union multi, field="area") # remove small polygons < 300 km2 that overlay with the basin mask and the country boundaries arcpy.MakeFeatureLayer management (union multi, "layer") ; size = "300" # make a feature laver arcpy.SelectLayerByAttribute_management("layer", "NEW_SELECTION", '"FID_Danube" <> ' + str("-1")) # select polygons that overlay in the Danube mask; id <> -1 arcpy.SelectLayerByAttribute_management("layer", "SUBSET_SELECTION", '"FID_countr" <> ' + str("-1")) # select from those polygons that overlay in the country boundary mask; id <> -1 arcpy.SelectLayerByAttribute_management("layer", "SUBSET SELECTION", '"area" > ' + str(size)) # select from those the ones bigger than 300 km2 arcpy.CopyFeatures_management("layer", "final.shp") # export the selected polygons arcpy.Dissolve management ("final.shp", "Danube mask adapted.shp") # dissolve the output layer *****

########## end of script;



Figure 5. Differences between the masks

Step 2: Eliminate small polygons (\leq 1.6 km²) from the SOTER terrain units for whole area

There are 2389 polygons \leq 1.6 km² in the original layer corresponding with 739.8 km2 of the total area of the original layer. These were 'eliminated' by merging them with neighbour polygons. After the clip with the basin boundary layer, 837 terrain units were merged with a bigger unit. In total this corresponds with 339.21 km² of the total area (803116.9 km²).



Figure 5. Small polygons in yellow (\leq 1.6 km²)

```
##########
## Eliminating <= 1.6 km2 terrain units from the original terrain units file
## M. Ruiperez-Gonzalez
## ISRIC - World Soil Information
## Version 1 - March 2019
## Project: EU-JRC Service Contract #936108; Deliverable D.A3
******
#########
### summary
# 2389 units of the original file have area mvl <= 1.6 km^2
### initialization
import arcpy, os
import numpy
from arcpy import env
from arcpy.sa import *
#### settings
path = "E:/GIS 2019/"
arcpy.env.workspace = str(path) + "/ scratch/" # used for intermediate results
arcpy.env.overwriteOutput = True
#### define auxiliary function
# update area (km2)
def update area(input, field):
   arcpy.AddField_management(input, field, "Double")
   expression = "{0}".format("!SHAPE.area@SQUAREKILOMETERS!")
   arcpy.CalculateField management(input, field, expression, "PYTHON", )
   return(input)
```

eliminate polygons by merging them with neighboring polygons that have the

```
largest area or the longest shared border. Uses an area threshold.
def eliminate smallpoly(input, output, threshold):
    arcpy.MakeFeatureLayer management(input, "layer")
    arcpy.SelectLayerByAttribute management("layer", "NEW SELECTION", '"area" <= '</pre>
+ str(threshold))
    arcpy.Eliminate management("layer", "layer_.shp", "LENGTH")
    arcpy.Dissolve management("layer .shp",
output, "TUID; HYPSCLASS; SLOPECLASS; RICLASS; SURFCOND; GENETICS; CARBONATE; TEXTURE2; ",
"", "SINGLE PART", "DISSOLVE LINES")
    update area(output, "area")
    return (output)
#### processing
# mask the terrain units file using the Danube mask adapted
mask = str(path) + "/Danube-basin-outline-and-14countries-
boundaries/Danube mask adapted.shp" # basin mask adapted to the country boundary
arcpy.Clip analysis(str(path) + "/Danube Terrain Units/Danube Terrain Units.shp",
mask, "tu_v0.shp", "") # clips the soter map with the country boundary
update area("tu v0.shp", "area") # update the area
# eliminate small polygons using a threshold
input = "tu v0.shp";
                      output = " tu v0.shp";
                                                 threshold = "1.6"
# apply eliminate_smallpoly function N times
n = 3 \# needs some iteration to eliminate all the small polygons
for x in range(n):
    eliminate smallpoly(input, output, threshold)
    arcpy.CopyFeatures_management(output,input) # recycle the input name in case
we need to iterate on this shapefile
    if x == n:
       break
# copying the file in the inputs folder
arcpy.CopyFeatures management(input,str(path) +
"/Danube_Terrain_Units/Danube_Terrain_Units_adapted.shp") # recycle the input name
in case we need to iterate on this shapefile
***********
######### end of script;
```

Step 3: Clip terrain units map using the fourteen target country boundaries and the adapted basin mask

Main steps in the process were to:

- clip country boundaries with adapted basin mask
- split per country (using CNTR_ID); 14 target countries
- extraction of terrain units that overlay with each of the countries boundaries; loops through the countries files.
- apply same process looping through countries
- organize fields in the attribute table; add new fields such as country code and ISOCSUID code (concatenation of country code and TUID).
- eliminate polygons by merging them with neighbouring polygons that have the largest area or the longest shared border. Uses an area threshold.



Figure 6. Romania terrain units clip (example)

import libraries

```
import arcpy, os
import numpy
from arcpy import env
from arcpy.sa import *
arcpy.CheckOutExtension("spatial")
#### settings
path = "E:/GIS 2019/"
output path = str(path) + "/Deliverable D.A3/"
arcpy.env.overwriteOutput = True
#### start with a clean folders structure
arcpy.Delete management(str(path) + "/_scratch/")
arcpy.CreateFolder_management(str(path), "/_scratch/")
arcpy.env.workspace = str(path) + "/_scratch/" # used for intermediate results
#### define auxiliary function
# update area (km2)
def update area(input, field):
    arcpy.AddField management(input, field, "Double")
    expression = "{0}".format("!SHAPE.area@SQUAREKILOMETERS!")
    arcpy.CalculateField management(input, field, expression, "PYTHON", )
    return(input)
# eliminate polygons by merging them with neighbouring polygons that have the
largest area or the longest shared border. Uses an area threshold.
def eliminate smallpoly(input, output, threshold):
    arcpy.MakeFeatureLayer management(input, "layer")
    arcpy.SelectLayerByAttribute management ("layer", "NEW SELECTION", '"area" <= '
+ str(threshold))
    arcpy.Eliminate management("layer", "layer .shp", "LENGTH")
    arcpy.Dissolve management("layer_.shp",
output, "ISOCSUID; TUID; COUNTRY; HYPSCLASS; SLOPECLASS; RICLASS; SURFCOND; GENETICS; CARBON
ATE; TEXTURE2; ", "", "SINGLE_PART", "DISSOLVE_LINES")
    update_area(output, "area")
    return (output)
#### paths for input data
mask = str(path) + "/Danube-basin-outline-and-14countries-
boundaries/Danube_mask_adapted.shp" # basin mask adapted to the country boundary
admin = str(path) + "/Danube-basin-outline-and-14countries-
boundaries/countries Danube strat.shp"
#soter = str(path) + "/Danube Terrain Units/Danube Terrain Units adapted.shp"
#### processing
## clip country boundaries with basin mask
arcpy.Clip analysis (admin, mask, str(path) + "/Danube-basin-outline-and-
14countries-boundaries/admin masked.shp")
## split per country (using CNTR ID); 14 target countries
arcpy.Split analysis(str(path) + "/Danube-basin-outline-and-14countries-
boundaries/admin_masked.shp", str(path) + "/Danube-basin-outline-and-14countries-
boundaries/admin masked.shp", "CNTR ID", str(arcpy.env.workspace), "")
# extraction of terrain units that overlay with each of the countries boundaries;
loops through the countries files.
# apply process in a loop; define expression and list of fields
#expression = "{0}".format("!SHAPE.area@SQUAREKILOMETERS!")
#field = "area"
# define field list for dissolve
fieldList = ["ISOCSUID", "TUID", "COUNTRY",
"HYPSCLASS", "SLOPECLASS", "RICLASS", "SURFCOND", "GENETICS", "CARBONATE", "TEXTURE2"]
fieldListDiss =
"ISOCSUID; TUID; COUNTRY; HYPSCLASS; SLOPECLASS; RICLASS; SURFCOND; GENETICS; CARBONATE; TEX
TURE2"
```

apply process looping through countries

```
for shapefile in arcpy.ListFiles("*.shp"): # done per country
   name = shapefile.split(".")[0] # variable with the country name
    arcpy.Clip analysis(str(path) +
"/Danube Terrain Units/Danube Terrain Units adapted.shp", str(shapefile),
"layer0.shp", "") # clips the soter map with the country boundary
    # organize fields in the attribute table
   arcpy.AddField management ("layer0.shp", "COUNTRY", "TEXT") # add a new field
for the country code
   arcpy.CalculateField management("layer0.shp", "COUNTRY", '"{}"'.format(name),
"PYTHON 9.3") # calculate country code
   arcpy.AddField management ("layer0.shp", "ISOCSUID", "TEXT") # add a new field
for the ISOCSUID code
    arcpy.CalculateField management("layer0.shp", "ISOCSUID",
'"{}{}"'.format(name,'!TUID!'), "PYTHON 9.3") # calculate ISOCSUID code
   arcpy.Dissolve management ("layer0.shp", "layer2.shp", "ISOCSUID;", "",
"SINGLE PART", "DISSOLVE LINES")
    # ISOCSUID as first column in the attribute table
                               joinField = "ISOCSUID";
   inFeatures = "layer2.shp";
                                                              joinTable =
"layer0.shp"
    # join by the ISOCSUID code and keep fields of interest
   arcpy.JoinField management(inFeatures, joinField, joinTable,
joinField, fieldList)
    # update area field
   update area(inFeatures, "area")
    # create a country folder to store results
   arcpy.CreateFolder_management(str(output_path), name) # creates a folder for
the country in the deliverables folder
   input = "layer2.shp";
                            output = "layer3.shp";
                                                      threshold = "1.6"
    # apply eliminate smallpoly function N times
   n = 3 \# needs some iteration to eliminate all the small polygons
   for x in range(n):
       eliminate_smallpoly(input, output, threshold)
       arcpy.CopyFeatures management (output, input) # recycle the input name in
case we need to iterate on this shapefile
       if x == n:
           break
    # update area field
    arcpy.Dissolve_management(input, str(output_path) + "/" + name + "/" +
str(name) + "_soter.shp", str(fieldListDiss), "", "MULTI_PART", "DISSOLVE_LINES")
update_area(str(output_path) + "/" + name + "/" + str(name) + "_soter.shp",
"area")
******
```

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######### end of script;

Appendix 3. Results

For each country there is an html file that presents a quick overview for the country. The HYPSCLASS, SLOPECLASS and RICLASS (see Appendix 1) can be displayed on screen.

These files are named XX_soter.html and stored in folder \XX\html_files, where XX is the country ISO code.

















^a Part of county falling within the Danube basin.