

# **Limiting Interpretative Error in Analogue-Derived Digital Maps for Environmental Management**

**Ian A Allan and James A Peterson**

## **Summary**

*The transition from spatial information systems based on analogue (paper) maps, to those based on digital maps is an inevitable consequence of micro economic reform. Some of the maps (spatial themes) relevant to environmental management can already be assembled from digital spatial databases, but others are still in analogue form. In that decision makers habitually use the paper map, a cultural, as well as a technical transition is implied. It is argued here that data quality retention during analogue to digital conversion cannot be taken for granted. Analogue thematic data for Local Government planning migrates effectively to digital GIS only if underpinning archives are salvaged carefully and data lineage is documented. This must be done well enough for guiding the imposition of constraints on query and analysis procedures relating to inappropriate uses. In that overt application of thematic data needs to be transparent and spatially consistent, online documentation of it should be offered. Options for decision support are explored and demonstrated.*