

Swath sonar mapping of Earth's submarine plate boundaries

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All Surveys

NOAA > NESDIS > NGDC

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# MH370 Search Area

Ocean

More... +

Political

Terrain





Smith and Marks, 2014

### SRTM30 PLUS

#### SATELLITE GEODESY

| Scripps Institution Of Oceanography, University of California San Diego, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla, 92093-0225 |  |             |   |
|--|--|-------------|---|
| HOME   | GLOBAL TOPOGRAPHY                          |             |   |
| BACKGROUND   | MEASURED AND ESTIMATED SEAFLOOR TOPOGRAPHY |             |   |
| PEOPLE   | NEW! SRTM15_PLUS                           | V1          | November 29, 2014   |
| CI AD41  | NEW! SRTM30_PLUS                           | V10         | November 29, 2014   |
| TOPOGRAPHY   | NEW! Global Topography                     | V17.1       | November 29, 2014   |
|  | Reference: Smith, W. H. F.                 | and D. T. S | andwell, Global seafloor topography from satellite altimetry and ship dep |



# Global Seafloor Topography **Compilations**

### **GEBCO -2014**

### 30 arc second resolution

Ship-track soundings

**Gravity-derived** topography



GENERAL BATHYMETRIC CHART OF THE OCEANS (GEBCO) WORLD OCEAN BATHYMETRY

#### GEBCO\_08



Global distribution
of seamounts
Relationships with
Hotspots

### **Global compilations**

Large-scale structure of plate boundaries,
Evolving geometry through time



SRTM\_30Plus, Smith and Sandwell, 1997

# Swath Sonar needed to study active seafloor processes





# GEBCO, Smith&Sandwell

Swath Sonar Up to 40x improvement in resolution (100 to 25 m)



Spatial and Temporal Variability in Ocean Crustal Creation

Fine-scale segmentation



53°N

53°N





### Swath sonar coverage

# Plate boundariesCoastal Waters- EEZand UNCLOS mapping



Academic research
National hydrographic and oceanographic centers



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- •Swath sonar data cleaned & edited
- •Data Homogenization & DEM construction
- Merge with regional topography (GEBCO, ASTER IBCAO, other)
  Uses public access swath data from NOAA archives

Global Multi-Resolution Topography Synthesis gmrt.marine-geo.org

# Gridded swath sonar to full native resolution



# Swath Sonar Mapping Coverage for the Global Mid-Ocean Ridge



60% in Open access archives

~22% Unmapped in web accessible archives

Pacific-Antarctic Ridge
Central Indian Ridges
Arctic Ridges

## Swath Sonar Mapping Coverage for Subduction Zones



70% in open access archives

Unmapped in web accessible archives ~ 15%

Kuril/Aleutian
Java
South
Sandwich

Much MOR maped with early generation Seabeam "Classic" – narrow swath, pre-full coverage GPS





Modern systems provide >2x improvement in resolution and ~5x improvement in coverage over early generation swath mapping

## Summary

•While only ~10-15% of the global oceans have been mapped with swath sonar, percent of the global plate boundaries with some swath coverage is much higher.

•Partial (much pre-GPS) coverage available in public archives for ~60-70% of MOR and subduction zones.

 Adding coverage from restricted access archives – some data for 75-85% of the world's subduction zones and MOR

•Global compilations - opportunities for new global comparisons

•Modern sonars provide improvements in resolution/coverage – worth collecting new data in areas of old sparse coverage!