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1 **Title: Comparing three approaches of spatial disaggregation of legacy soil maps based on**
2 **DSMART algorithm**

3

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33 **Abstract:**

34 Enhancing the spatial resolution of pedological information is a great challenge in the field of Digital Soil
35 Mapping (DSM). Several techniques have emerged to disaggregate conventional soil maps initially
36 available at coarser spatial resolution than required for solving environmental and agricultural issues. At the
37 regional level, polygon maps represent soil cover as a tessellation of polygons defining Soil Map Units
38 (SMU), where each SMU can include one or several Soil Type Units (STU) with given proportions derived
39 from expert knowledge. Such polygon maps can be disaggregated at finer spatial resolution by machine
40 learning algorithms using the Disaggregation and Harmonisation of Soil Map Units Through Resampled
41 Classification Trees (DSMART) algorithm. This study aimed to compare three approaches of spatial
42 disaggregation of legacy soil maps based on DSMART decision trees to test the hypothesis that the
43 disaggregation of soil landscape distribution rules may improve the accuracy of the resulting soil maps.
44 Overall, two modified DSMART algorithm (DSMART with extra soil profiles, DSMART with soil
45 landscape relationships) and the original DSMART algorithm were tested. The quality of disaggregated soil
46 maps at 50 m resolution was assessed over a large study area (6,775 km²) using an external validation based
47 on independent 135 soil profiles selected by probability sampling, 755 legacy soil profiles and existing
48 detailed 1:25,000 soil maps. Pairwise comparisons were also performed, using Shannon entropy measure,
49 to spatially locate differences between disaggregated maps. The main results show that adding soil landscape
50 relationships in the disaggregation process enhances the performance of prediction of soil type distribution.
51 Considering the three most probable STU and using 135 independent soil profiles, the overall accuracy
52 measures are: 19.8 % for DSMART with expert rules against 18.1 % for the original DSMART and 16.9 %
53 for DSMART with extra soil profiles. These measures were almost twofold higher when validated using
54 3x3 windows. They achieved 28.5% for DSMART with soil landscape relationships, 25.3% and 21% for
55 original DSMART and DSMART with extra soil observations, respectively. In general, adding soil
56 landscape relationships as well as extra soil observations constraints the model to predict a specific STU
57 that can occur in specific environmental conditions. Thus, including global soil landscape expert rules in
58 the DSMART algorithm is crucial to obtain consistent soil maps with clear internal disaggregation of SMU
59 across the landscape.

60 **Key words:** digital soil mapping, soil landscape relationships, spatial disaggregation, DSMART

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65 1) Introduction

66 Characterizing soil variability especially over large areas, remains a crucial challenge to foster
67 sustainable management of agronomic and environmental issues and help stakeholders to design
68 regional projects (Chaney et al., 2016). At the regional as well as country level, soil maps are often
69 available at coarse spatial resolution (Bui and Moran, 2001) which limits their ability to depict
70 accurate soil information. For instance, the finest soils maps covering France were elaborated by
71 administrative region at 1:250,000 scale, via a set of polygons, called Soil Map Units (SMU) with
72 crisp boundaries. The delineation of SMU is based on soil survey programmes involving
73 pedologists' expertise. In a coarse scale map, each polygon includes one or several Soil Type Unit
74 (STU), which are not explicitly mapped, but their proportions and their environmental conditions,
75 as well as soil characteristics, are provided in a detailed database (Le Bris et al., 2013).

76 To improve soil variability knowledge and overcome the limitation of a coarse mapping scale,
77 several methods have emerged in the field of Digital Soil Mapping (DSM). These methods offer
78 useful tools to predict soil spatial pattern from scarce or limited soil datasets by exploiting the
79 availability of model based methods and an extensive array of spatialise (and more often than not
80 gridded) environmental variables. In recent decades, DSM techniques have been increasingly used
81 to downscale soil information and improve their spatial resolution. Depending on the quality of
82 data and the complexity of soil cover, Minasny and McBratney (2010) supply a workflow that
83 outlines different models that can be explored. In general, two main pathways can be distinguished:
84 point based DSM approaches and map disaggregation approaches (Odgers et al., 2014; Holmes et
85 al., 2015). Point DSM approaches used legacy soil profiles, which are irregularly distributed and
86 collected according to specific objectives rather than to optimise a statistical criterion (Holmes et
87 al., 2015). The spatial distribution of soil properties can be estimated by fitting geostatistical
88 models such as ordinary kriging (Odgers et al., 2014; Holmes et al., 2015; Chaney et al., 2016;
89 Vincent et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2018) or cokriging, which takes into account the spatial
90 interrelations among several soil properties (Webster and Oliver, 2007). Additionally, McBratney
91 et al. (2003) developed the SCORPAN soil landscape model. It is an empirical quantitative function
92 of environmental covariates, allowing predicting soil attributes (soil type or soil property) based
93 on correlative and statistical relationships with predictor variables.



94 The second approach, known as spatial disaggregation, attempts to downscale the soil map unit
95 information to delineate unmapped STUs (Bui and Moran, 2001; Odgers et al., 2014; Holmes et
96 al., 2015). Alternatively, it can be defined as the process that allows estimating soil properties at a
97 finer scale than the initial soil map. Several techniques have been demonstrated through soil science
98 literature and tested in different case studies around the world. For instance, Kempen et al. (2009)
99 have explored the use of multinomial logistic regression (MLR) for digital soil mapping. Other
100 techniques have also been applied as decision trees using rule based induction (Bui and Moran,
101 2001), Bayesian techniques (Bui et al., 1999) and an area to point kriging method (Kerry et al.,
102 2012).

103 In the DSM field, machine learning techniques are increasingly used to elucidate the spatial
104 distribution of both soil type and soil properties across a large range of scale (Bui and Moran.,
105 2001; Scull et al., 2005; Lacoste et al., 2011; Lemerrier et al., 2012; Nauman and Thompson, 2014;
106 Holmes et al., 2015; Vaysse and Lagacherie, 2015; Ellili et al., 2019). They were also applied to
107 disaggregate superficial geology maps available at 1: 250 000 scale in Australia (Bui and Moran,
108 2001). The main advantage of these approaches is they allow handling both quantitative and
109 categorical (ordinal or nominal) soil and environmental variables, as explanatory covariates (Bui
110 and Moran, 2001).

111 Odgers et al. (2014) have developed a machine learning algorithm entitled Disaggregation and
112 Harmonisation of Soil Map Units Through Resampled Classification Trees (DSMART) to predict
113 STU as a function of the high resolution environmental data supplied over different study areas in
114 Australia. The DSMART algorithm is based on a calibration dataset derived from a random
115 selection of a fixed number of sampling points within each soil polygon. Each sampling point is
116 then assigned to one soil type following a weighted random allocation procedure based on the
117 proportions informed in the soil map database. The same procedure was applied by Chaney et al.
118 (2016) to spatially disaggregate the soil map of the contiguous United States at a 30m spatial
119 resolution using petascale High Performance Computer (HPC). Because integration of pedological
120 knowledge has been recognized as an effective way to improve digital soil mapping approaches
121 (Cook et al., 1996; Walter et al., 2006; Stoorvogel et al., 2017; Machado et al., 2018; Møller et al.,
122 2019), Vincent et al. (2018) have applied the DSMART algorithm with additional expert soil
123 landscape rules describing soil distribution in the local context of the Brittany region (France). By



124 adding supplement sampling points to the calibration dataset selected according to soil parent
125 material, soil redoximorphic conditions and topographic features, and by integrating soil landscape
126 relationships in the DSMART sample allocation scheme, the authors obtained a coherent soil
127 spatial distribution observing soil organisation along hillslopes and occurrence of intensely
128 waterlogged soils in the stream neighbourhood, as observed in Brittany.

129 This study aimed to test the hypothesis that adding soil landscape relationships in the disaggregation
130 procedure improved the accuracy of produced disaggregated soil maps. This involves assessing the
131 contribution of soil landscape relationships implemented in the DSMART algorithm by Vincent et
132 al. (2018). To achieve this objective, we compared disaggregated soil maps either derived from the
133 original DSMART algorithm, the DSMART algorithm with extra soil observations and the
134 DSMART algorithm fed by soil landscape relationships over an area of 6,775 km² in the eastern part
135 of Brittany, France.

136 **2) Materials and methods**

137 2.1) Study area

138 The Ille et Vilaine department covers an area of 6,775 km² and is located at the eastern part of
139 Brittany, France (48°N, 2° W) (Fig 1). It is drained by the rivers Ille and Vilaine and their
140 tributaries. Its climate is oceanic, with a mean annual rainfall of 669 mm and mean annual
141 temperature of 11.3° (Source: Climate Data EU). Main land uses comprise arable land, temporary
142 and permanent grasslands, woodland, and urban areas. In the present study, anthropogenic areas
143 were not considered. Elevation ranges between 0_20 m in the coastal zone and 20_150 m almost
144 everywhere expect in the western part of the department where it tills 256 m. The topography is
145 generally gentle with maximum slopes not exceeding 16%. The Ille et Vilaine department is part
146 of the Armorican Massif with complex geology (BRGM, 2009): intrusive rocks (granite, gneiss
147 and micaschist) in northern and north western zones, sedimentary rocks (sandstone) and
148 metamorphic rocks (Brioverian schist) in the central and southern zones, and superficial deposits
149 (Aeolian loam with decreasing thickness from north to south overlaying bedrock, alluvial and
150 colluvium deposits). According to the World Reference Base of Soil Resources, soils occurring in
151 Ille et Vilaine include Cambisols, Luvisols Stagnic Fluvisols, Histosols, Podzols, and Leptosols
152 (IUSS Working Group WRB, 2014).

153 2.2) Soil data



154 2.2.1) Regional soil database at 1:250 000 scale

155 In Brittany, soils are represented through a regional geographic database called “Référentiel
156 Régional Pédologique (RRP)” available at 1:250,000 scale (INRA Infosol, 2014). This regional
157 database identifies soils within Soil Map Units (SMUs), each containing one to several soil types
158 called Soil Type Units (STUs). STUs are defined as areas with homogeneous soil forming factors,
159 such as morphology, geology, and climate. In the study area, 96 SMU and 171 STU have been
160 distinguished and represented by a spatial coverage of 479 polygons.

161 In the regional database, SMUs were spatially delimited with crisp boundaries, while STUs were
162 not explicitly mapped, but their proportion in each SMU as well as associated environmental and
163 soil characteristics were accurately described in a semantic database (Le Bris et al., 2013; INRA
164 Infosol, 2014).

165 2.2.2) Soil validation data

166 To assess the quality of disaggregated soil maps, three validation datasets were used (Fig. 1):

- 167 • 135 soil profiles chosen following a stratified random sampling design and specifically
168 described and sampled from March to May 2017 for independent validation purposes in the
169 framework of the Soilserv research project (Ellili et al., 2019, submitted).
- 170 • 755 legacy soil profiles collected between 2005 and 2008 during the “Sols de Bretagne”
171 programme (INRA Infosol, 2014). These profiles were sampled to characterize
172 hydromorphic soil conditions and soil landscape heterogeneity.

173 Existing detailed soil maps (1:25,000) covering 87,150 ha, surveyed according to Rivière et al.
174 (1992) and revised later to adapt to the STU typologies developed in the RRP (Le Bris et al., 2013).

175 All soil profiles were allocated after description and analysis by an expert to a suitable STU. Both
176 legacy soil profiles and detailed maps were converted to raster format to perfectly meet the
177 prediction raster at 50m spatial resolution.
178

179 2.3) Environmental covariates

180 The SCORPAN concept (McBratney et al., 2013) allows one to predict STU as a function of a set
181 of covariates describing seven soil forming factors, namely soil properties (s), climate (c),
182 organisms (o), relief (r), parent material (p), age (a) and geographic position (n). In this study, ten



183 environmental variables (Table 1) were considered as covariates in the disaggregation process at a
184 50m spatial resolution. Terrain attributes included elevation, slope, Compound Topographic Index
185 (CTI) (Beven and Kirkby, 1979, Merot et al., 1995) and Topographic Position Index (TPI) (Vincent
186 et al., 2018) that together were derived from a 50m resolution Digital Elevation Model (IGN, 2008).
187 These attributes were computed using ArcGIS 10.1 (ESRI, 2002) and MNT surf software
188 (Squidant, 1994).

189 Environmental attributes describing soil parent material (Lacoste et al., 2011) and hydromorphic
190 soil conditions via waterlogging index (Lemerrier et al., 2013) were obtained using decision tree
191 methods. Waterlogging index derives from a natural soil drainage prediction. Four classes were
192 distinguished: well drained, moderately drained, poorly drained and very poorly drained. Aeolian
193 silt deposits and Soil Map Units boundaries are environmental covariates also obtained via expert
194 knowledge from soil scientists.

195 Landscape units reflecting vegetation, land use, and relief attributes were derived from a MODIS
196 imagery by supervised classification (Le Du Bayo et al., 2008). The Airborne gamma ray
197 spectrometry variable (K:Th ratio) (Messner, 2008), characterizing the degree of weathering of the
198 geological material, was also taken into account.

199 All soil environmental covariates were converted to raster format at 50 m spatial resolution.

200 2.4) Disaggregation procedure: DSMART algorithm

201 2.4.1) Original DSMART algorithm (Method 1)

202 The open source DSMART algorithm (Odgers et al., 2014) was applied to spatially disaggregate
203 the existing legacy soil map at 1:250,000 scale. DSMART algorithm uses machine learning
204 classification trees implemented in C5.0 (Quinlan, 1993) to build a decision tree from a target
205 variable (STU) and the environmental covariates supplied. The DSMART algorithm was written
206 in the Python programming language by Odgers et al. (2014) and was recently translated in the R
207 programming language.

208 Running DSMART algorithm requires four main steps (Fig. 2):



- 209 1) Polygon sampling by a random selection of a fixed number of sampling points ($n=30$)
210 within each polygon. This procedure allowed to select a total of 14,370 sampling points,
211 per iteration, covering the study area and ensured that all polygons were sampled.
- 212 2) Soil Type Unit (STU) assignment to each sampling point following a weighted random
213 allocation method. This step was based on the proportion of each STU informed in the RRP
214 database.
- 215 3) Decision tree generation: the full set of sampling points were spatially intersected with the
216 selected environmental covariates. This georeferenced dataset was then used as a
217 calibration dataset to build the decision tree allowing the prediction of an STU as a function
218 of environmental covariates. C5.0 created explicit models, which were applied to the
219 covariates rasters to generate a realisation of STU distribution over the study area at 50 m
220 resolution.

221 These three steps were repeated 100 times to generate 100 realisations of the potential soil type
222 distribution over the study area at 50 m of resolution.

- 223 4) Computing the probabilities of occurrence: the 100 realisations were stacked to calculate
224 the probability of occurrence of each predicted STU by counting the frequency of each STU
225 at each pixel. This procedure led to a set of 171 rasters depicting the probability of
226 occurrence of 171 STU.

227

228 2.4.2) Original DSMART algorithm + soil observations (method 2)

229

230 This disaggregation approach is similar to the original DSMART algorithm. However, the main
231 difference is that 755 additional soil profiles, spatially collocated, were added to the calibration
232 dataset to build decision trees. These soil profiles make it possible to incorporate real field
233 observations with established soil landscape relationships. For each realisation, a calibration
234 dataset (15, 125 samples) including virtual samples randomly selected from polygon units, as well
235 as soil observations were used to model soil type with environmental covariates. The model was
236 then extrapolated over the study area.

237

238 2.4.3) Original DSMART algorithm + expert rules (Method 3)



239 Including soil landscape relationships in the disaggregation process was explored by Vincent et al.
240 (2018) in a specific regional pedoclimatic context in Brittany (France). Expert soil landscape
241 relationships were used to assign STU to sampling points. These relationships were based on expert
242 pedological knowledge, which takes into account soil parental material as well as topography and
243 waterlogging in the UTS allocation procedure. This approach combines two sources of the dataset
244 to calibrate the model. The first one was derived from semantic information for each SMU/STU
245 combination. It consists in attributing a barcode to each SMU/STU combination, derived from a
246 concatenation of four features contained in the RRP database (parent material, SMU identifier, TPI
247 and waterlogging index), and to compare these barcodes to a stack of regional covariates
248 representing the same four features, to assign each pixel of the study area to a suitable STU. This
249 procedure allowed matching soil exhibiting specific features with their potential spatial
250 distribution. For instance, hydromorphic soils occur with slope sequences and valley positions,
251 while well drained soils occur in upslope or middle slope positions. Using a random sampling
252 stratified by SMU's area, a set of sampling points was selected with a proportion of one sample for
253 every 5 hectares and a minimum of five samples per polygon unit.

254 The second dataset was derived from a random sampling of a fixed number of sampling points in
255 each polygon unit. This procedure ensured that all polygons had been sampled. STU allocation was
256 based on the soil map unit proportions. The full set of each realisation (18, 320 samples) combining
257 expert calibration dataset as well as dataset derived from random sampling procedure was spatially
258 intersected with existing environmental covariates and used as a unique calibration dataset to build
259 decision trees.

260

261 2.4.4) Prediction of the most probable STUs

262 From all soil type probability rasters obtained, only the three most probable STUs (with the highest
263 probability of occurrence) were considered: for each pixel, the final prediction was the combination
264 of the three most probable predicted STUs (1st STU, 2nd STU, and 3rd STU) and their associated
265 probability of occurrence.

266 The classification confusion index (CI) between the first most probable STU and the second most
267 probable STU was calculated following Eq.1:

$$268 \text{ CI} = 1 - (P_{1^{\text{st}} \text{ STU}} - P_{2^{\text{nd}} \text{ STU}}) \quad [1]$$



269 Where $P_{1^{st} STU}$ and $P_{2^{sd} STU}$ denote respectively the highest probability of occurrence for 1st STU
270 and the second highest probability of occurrence for 2^{sd} STU, calculated at each pixel (Burrough et
271 al., 1997; Odgers et al., 2014).

272 This index was considered as an indicator of certainty assessment about the most probable
273 predicted soil class and is ranging between 0 and 1. It tends to 1. When the 1st STU and 2^{sd} STU
274 are predicted with similar probability of occurrence and zero when the probability of occurrence
275 of the 2^{sd} STU is close to zero.

276

277 2.5) Validation of disaggregated soil maps

278 The quality of soil maps resulting from the three DSMART algorithm based approaches was
279 assessed by combining both spatial and semantical validation methods. Spatial validation is divided
280 into 2 sub approaches (“pixel to pixel” and “window of 3x3 pixels”). For detailed soil maps and
281 accurate soil profiles, “pixel to pixel” validation consists in checking, at each pixel, if the predicted
282 STU respects the observed STU value (Heung et al., 2014; Nauman et al., 2014; Chaney et al.,
283 2016; Møller et al., 2019). The “window of 3x3 pixels” validation assumes that, for each pixel, the
284 predicted STU respects the observed STU value if it matches at least one of its 9 surrounding
285 neighbours (Heung et al., 2014; Chaney et al., 2016). This method provides some flexibility by
286 compensating spatial referencing error of soil maps and avoids the impact of fine scale spatial
287 noise.

288 The semantical validation was also performed considering either each STU or a group of STUs
289 sorted by expert on the basis of similar pedogenesis factors and similar diagnostic horizons
290 (Vincent et al., 2018; Møller et al., 2019). From the initial 171 STUs described in the soil database,
291 the sorting procedure led to 78 groups and 11 STU remained single.

292

293 2.6) Pair wise comparisons of disaggregated soil maps

294 To compare the soil type rasters derived from the three DSMART based approaches, pairwise
295 comparisons were performed using *Vmeasure* method implemented as open source software in an
296 R package called Spatial Association Between REgionalisations (SABRE) (Rosenberg and
297 Hirschberg, 2007). This is a spatial method developed to compare maps in the form of vector
298 objects and it was commonly used in computer science to compare (non spatial) clustering.



299 We divide the entire study area into 2 different sets of regions, referred to as regionalizations R and
300 Z. The first regionalization R divides the domain into n regions r_i ($i=1$ to n) and the second
301 regionalization Z divides the domain into m zones z_j ($j=1$ to m). Superposition of the 2
302 regionalization R and Z divides the domain into $n \times m$ segments having a_{ij} area. The total area of a
303 region r_i is $A_i = \sum_{j=1}^m a_{ij}$, the total area of a zone z_j is $A_j = \sum_{i=1}^n a_{ij}$ and the total of the domain is
304 $A = \sum_{j=1}^m \sum_{i=1}^n a_{ij}$.

305 The SABRE package calculates a degree of spatial agreement between two regionalizations using
306 an information theoretical measure called the *V measure*. *V measure* provides two intermediate
307 metrics: *homogeneity* and *completeness*. *Homogeneity* is a measure of how well regions from the
308 first map fit inside zones from the second map (Eq 2). *Completeness* measures how well zones
309 from the second map fit inside regions from the first map (Eq 5). The final value of *V measure* is
310 calculated as the weighted harmonic mean of homogeneity and completeness (Eq 8). All metrics
311 range between 0 and 1, where larger values indicate better spatial agreement. *V measure*,
312 homogeneity, and completeness are global measures of association between the two
313 regionalizations.

314 Additional indicators of disaggregation quality were calculated using Shannon entropy index of
315 regions and zones (Shannon 1948; Nowosad and Stepinski, 2018). These indicators qualify local
316 associations by highlighting the region's inhomogeneities (Eq 3, Eq 4), or zone's inhomogeneities
317 (Eq 6, Eq 7). Two normalized Shannon entropy was also computed using the ratios (S_j^R/S^R) and
318 (S_i^Z/S^Z) to derive maps of local spatial agreement between the two regionalizations R and Z. These
319 measures have a range between 0 and 1.

320 When S_j^R (Eq3) is close to zero, this denotes that the zone j is homogenous in terms of regions
321 (each zone is within a single region). However, when S_j^R value increases the zone is increasingly
322 inhomogeneous in terms of regions (it overlays an increasing number of regions). Therefore, S_j^R
323 (Eq 3) assesses the degree of this inhomogeneity or a variance of region in zone j . A global indicator
324 that measures a homogeneity of a given zone in terms of regions is given via Eq 2.

325 Analogous to homogeneity but with the roles of regions and zones reversed, the dispersion of zones
326 over the entire area is also computed using Shannon entropy (Eq 4 and Eq 7), and a global indicator
327 C (Eq 5) measures a homogeneity of a given region in terms of zones.



$$328 \quad h = 1 - \sum_{j=1}^m \left(\frac{A_j}{A}\right) \left(\frac{\text{Variance of regions in zone}_j=S_j^R}{\text{Variance of regions in the domain}=S^R}\right) \quad [2]$$

$$329 \quad S_j^R = -\sum_{i=1}^n \left(\frac{a_{i,j}}{A_j}\right) \log \left(\frac{a_{i,j}}{A_j}\right) \quad [3]$$

$$330 \quad S^R = -\sum_{i=1}^n \left(\frac{A_i}{A}\right) \log \left(\frac{A_i}{A}\right) \quad [4]$$

$$331 \quad c = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^n \left(\frac{A_i}{A}\right) \left(\frac{\text{Variance of zones in region}_i=S_i^Z}{\text{Variance of zones in the domain}=S^Z}\right) \quad [5]$$

$$332 \quad S_i^Z = -\sum_{j=1}^m \left(\frac{a_{i,j}}{A_i}\right) \log \left(\frac{a_{i,j}}{A_i}\right) \quad [6]$$

$$333 \quad S^Z = -\sum_{j=1}^m \left(\frac{A_j}{A}\right) \log \left(\frac{A_j}{A}\right) \quad [7]$$

$$334 \quad V_\beta = \frac{(1+\beta)hc}{(\beta h)+c} \quad [8]$$

335 β is a coefficient that allows promoting the first or the second regionalization, and by default, β
336 equals 1. V_β has a range between 0 and 1. It equals 0 in case of no spatial association and 1 in case
337 of perfect association.

338 The *V measure* method was applied in two main situations (DSMART+expert rules, Original
339 DSMART) and (DSMART + expert rules, DSMART+extra soil observations). The reference map
340 is always the map derived from DSMART algorithm with expert soil landscape relationships.

341 3) Results

342 3.1) Disaggregated soil maps

343 Applying DSMART based approaches yielded a set of soil maps and associated probability of
344 occurrence rasters. The original DSMART approach allowed to disaggregate the 96 SMUs into
345 108 STUs while DSMART with expert rules approach yielded 158 STUs and DSMART with extra
346 soil observations approach yielded 172 STUs with respect to the first most probable STU map. A
347 total of 171 STUs were identified in the Ille et Vilaine department within the RRP database.
348 Unpredicted STUs correspond mainly to rare STUs with low proportions ranging between 2 and
349 10% within the SMUs containing them.

350 Figure 3 shows the three maps of the 1st most probable STU derived from each approach as well
351 as the original soil map. Overall, the three most probable STUs maps captured the main pattern of



352 soil distribution of the coarse soil map. As one could expect according to the geological parent
353 material map (Lacoste et al., 2011), extensive areas of deep silty soils are developed in Aeolian
354 loam deposits encountered in the north east as well as in the north central parts of the study area.
355 Colluvial and alluvial soils were mainly predicted in the north coast part and large valleys zones.

356 The visual comparison of disaggregated soil maps highlighted global similarities in the soil spatial
357 distribution markedly affected by SMU boundaries. The three approaches distinguished very well
358 soils developed in marsh parent material in the coastal part (north) of the study area. However,
359 DSMART with soil landscape expert rules map as well as DSMART with extra soil observations
360 map remained more detailed and underlined a clear internal disaggregation of SMUs especially in
361 the north and the central parts of the Ille et Vilaine department. Visual inspection of the obtained
362 DSMART with extra soil observations map as well as DSMART with expert rules map showed an
363 increase in soil heterogeneity when compared to Original DSMART map. More importantly,
364 legacy soil profiles made it possible to take into account some rare soil types with low probability
365 to be predicted. Therefore, adding supplement sampling points via the expert calibration dataset
366 and the 755 extra soil profiles allowed to predict STUs characterized in the soil database with a
367 low spatial extent. Nevertheless, the three DSMART based approaches spatially disaggregated the
368 most frequent components disregarding the less frequent ones.

369 Figure 4 shows maps of the global probability of redoximorphic soils across the study area. STU
370 probability rasters, depicting hydromorphic soils, were added together to produce continuous maps
371 of hydromorphic soil probability. Visual inspection of three maps highlighted global similarities,
372 but local differences were recorded along the hydrographic network and in the southern part of the
373 study area. As could be expected, DSMART with expert rules well predicted hydromorphic soils
374 in valleys and coastal areas, with a probability of occurrence exceeding 80%. Adding soil landscape
375 relationships in the allocation process constrained hydromorphic soil predictions in specific
376 landscape positions. The same trend characterized DSMART with extra soil observations map,
377 particularly in the central part of the study area. Therefore, including 755 soil profiles had an
378 important role in the disaggregation process in the northern and the central parts where these
379 profiles were located.

380 The quality of maps resulting from DSMART based approaches was quantified via the probabilities
381 of occurrence of each STU predicted and the confusion index maps (Fig. 5). The latter measure



382 indicated areas where the probability of occurrence of the two most probable soil types was close.
383 Over the study area, the average probability of occurrence of the most probable soil type achieved
384 respectively 0.41 for DMSART map, 0.68 for DMSART with expert rules and 0.28 for DSMART
385 with extra soil observations maps. Meanwhile, the average confusion index reached 0.8 for the
386 original DSMART approach while DSMART with extra soil observations and DSMART with
387 expert rules achieved 0.9 and 0.43, respectively. Although the most probable soil classes provide
388 plausible maps of soil distribution, there is a significant prediction uncertainty as depicted by these
389 measures.

390 In regions where disaggregated soil maps showed low confusion index, particularly in northwest
391 and north coast areas of Ille et Vilaine department, high confidence in predictions was recorded.
392 These areas were predominantly deep loamy soils or developed in alluvial and colluvium deposits.

393 Figure 6 compares the cumulative area of the STUs estimated from the three disaggregated maps
394 and that derived from the regional soil database. For each STU, its relative predicted area was
395 estimated by counting the number of pixels where it was predicted. For the regional soil database,
396 each STU area was computed from total SMU area multiplied by the proportion of the STU. This
397 comparison shows that some STUs were overestimated by the disaggregation approaches when
398 comparing to the soil database. DSMART with extra soil observations and original approaches
399 showed similar cumulative STU areas under the curve whereas DSMART with expert rules had a
400 shape similar to the regional soil database.

401 The most abundant STU in the database (431: Stagnic Fluvisol developed from alluvial and
402 colluvium deposits) was predicted as the most frequent STU by DSMART with extra soil
403 observations and DSMART with expert rules, and it was predicted as the second most abundant
404 STU by the original DSMART algorithm. The 10 most abundant STUs in the soil database covers
405 almost 43% of the study area. Of them, 7 belong to the 10 STU most predicted by the three
406 disaggregation approaches (Table 2).

407 3.2) Covariates importance in the decision trees

408 Figure 7 gives the relative importance of the covariates used in DSMART based approaches. Soil
409 parent material and SMU boundaries were used systematically in condition rules regardless of the
410 disaggregation method. This was consistent with the contrasting pattern of geology and the



411 dependence relationship between SMU and its soil components. Considering the original
412 DSMART approach (Fig. 7.a), distribution functions of Aeolian silt deposits, airborne gamma ray
413 spectrometry variable (K:Th ratio) and elevation contributions were more dispersed according to
414 the STU considered than those of other covariates. For instance, Aeolian silt deposits contribution
415 varied between 20 and 80% with a median value of 42%, whereas slope contribution ranged
416 between 20 and 40 % with a median value of 28%. Aeolian silt deposits have an important weight
417 in STU predictions, due to its ability to represent soils inherited from this superficial parent
418 material, which is poorly represented in lithological maps.

419 DSMART with soil landscape relationships (Fig. 7.b) showed almost the same distribution function
420 of all covariates except for elevation where its distribution function was more dispersed. Since a
421 part of training samples was chosen with expert knowledge based on three environmental
422 covariates: TPI, a waterlogging index and soil parent material, we would expect the prominent role
423 of waterlogging index and TPI to constrain hydromorphic soils predictions and to achieve STU
424 distribution in the appropriate order along the toposequence. This most likely explains the
425 dominance of Fluvisol Stagnic in valleys areas followed by a transition to Cambisols commonly
426 found at upslope and midslope positions along the toposequences.

427 Analogous to the original DSMART algorithm, DSMART with extra soil observations (Fig. 7.c)
428 highlighted almost the same distribution of use of soil environmental covariates in the decision
429 trees, except for aeolian silt deposits, K:Th ratio and elevation. The latter covariates contributions
430 remained less dispersed compared to the original DSMART approach.

431 3.3) Validation of disaggregated soil maps

432 The validation procedure was performed for each DSMART based approach applied, considering
433 the three most probable soil types and using both semantic objects (STU or soil group) and spatial
434 neighbourhood (per pixel or 3x3 window of pixels).

435 Considering 755 legacy soil profiles prospected in the framework of “Sols de Bretagne” project,
436 per pixel validation accuracy reached 27%, for original DSMART maps and 34 % for DSMART
437 with expert rules (Table 3). A similar comparison using 135 validation sites derived from Soilserv
438 project showed that 18.1 % of soil profiles match DSMART maps, 19.8 % match DSMART with
439 expert rules maps and only 16.9 % match DSMART with extra soil observations maps (Table 3).



440 Using a 3 x 3 window of pixels markedly improves the global accuracies, which increased for the
441 two validation datasets (Table 3). DSMART with soil landscape relationships remained the best
442 performing method.

443 When compared to accurate soil maps (1:25,000), the validation procedure showed that DSMART
444 with extra soil observations as well as DSMART with soil landscape expert rules had almost the
445 same performance (37% and 38%) while best accuracy (44%) was observed for Original DSMART
446 maps (44%) (Table 3). These scores were clearly improved by considering soil groups and 3x3
447 pixels neighbourhood. For instance, the accuracy of DSMART with expert rules maps using soil
448 group reached 45.9% and increased to 62.1 % when considering 3x3 pixels windows (Table 3).

449 3.4) Comparing disaggregated maps

450 Figure 8 shows inhomogeneity maps measured by Shannon entropy. The map derived from
451 DSMART with soil landscape relationships was chosen as a reference map. This map deeply
452 disaggregates the initial SMUs into 120,653 regions with irregular shapes. By contrast, Original
453 DSMART map remained very similar to the original map and delineated the study into 40,459
454 regions. Both disaggregated maps reflect the main pattern of soil distribution over the study area
455 despite the difference in the disaggregation process. Visual inspection of maps DSMART with soil
456 landscape rules map and Original DSMART map revealed an overall similarity between
457 disaggregated maps, but local differences between them were depicted.

458 We calculated $h_1 = 0.49$, $c_1 = 0.58$ and $V_1 = 0.53$ as global measures of spatial agreement between
459 the two maps (DSMART+expert rules and Original DSMART). The average homogeneity of the
460 DSMART with soil landscape rules map with respect to the Original DSMART map was qualified
461 via h homogeneity index. Similarly, the average homogeneity of the Original DSMART map with
462 respect to the DSMART with soil landscape rules map was qualified via c completeness index.
463 Visually, the Fig. 8.b map seemed to be more homogeneous than the map Fig. 8.a in agreement
464 with the statistical assessment $c > h$. The large number of DSMART with soil landscape rules map
465 regions, which was three times higher than Original DSMART map zones, might explain this
466 difference. It is more likely that DSMART with soil landscape rules map regions cross through
467 multiple Original DSMART map zones than vice versa. However, two disaggregated maps
468 remained spatially associated according to the high V_1 score. The two inhomogeneity maps (Figs.



469 8a and 8b) highlighted the locations of greatest differences between two maps, mainly along the
470 hydrographic network.

471

472 When comparing disaggregated soil maps derived from modified DSMART algorithm (DSMART
473 with soil landscape rules and DSMART with supplement soil observations), we note that the
474 DSMART with extra soil observations map delineated the study area into 132,942 regions. For
475 both maps, internal disaggregation was well pronounced expect for DSMART with extra soil
476 observations map in the southern part of the study area. Visual inspection of selected maps showed
477 high spatial agreement and highlighted some locations of greatest differences, particularly in the
478 southern part of the Ille et Vilaine department. Even if the hydrographic network was well detailed
479 in both maps, it appeared more developed in DSMART with extra soil observations soil map.

480 Applying *V measure* method for assessing the spatial similarity between DSMART with soil
481 landscape rules map and DSMART with supplement soil observations map provided similar
482 information theoretical measures $h_2 = 0.47$, $c_2 = 0.48$, and $V_2 = 0.47$. Visual comparison of soil
483 inhomogeneity maps revealed constant variance measured by normalized Shannon entropy. This
484 was in agreement with the quantitative assessment $c = h$. Overall, the two disaggregated maps were
485 spatially correlated, as indicated by the global spatial agreement measure V_2 .

486

487 4) Discussion

488

489 4.1) Performance of the disaggregation procedures

490

491 Produced disaggregated soil maps closely resemble the abundant soils in the original soil map
492 (Holmes et al., 2015; Fig.3). The 1st most probable STU map derived from DSMART based
493 approaches captured the main spatial pattern of soil distribution across the study area. More internal
494 variation within SMUs was found when using DSMART with added point observations and
495 DSMART with soil landscape relationships. Local soil heterogeneity reflecting inherent
496 pedological complexity was depicted by the 1st STU maps which deliver a deterministic soil
497 landscape distribution, continuously varying with landscape features.

498 External validation was performed to assess the quality of disaggregated soil maps. Using 135
499 independent soil profiles and a per pixel validation approach, the overall accuracy reached 18.1%
500 for DSMART algorithm 1st STU map, 19.8% for DSMART with expert rules 1st STU map and



501 16.9% for DSMART with extra soil profiles 1st STU map. In the DSM literature, researchers who
502 applied classification tree decision methods founded similar validation results. For instance, by
503 applying DSMART algorithm in eastern Australia and using 285 legacy soil profiles, Odgers et al.
504 (2014) achieved an overall accuracy of 23%. Similarly, Nauman and Thompson (2014) explored
505 the use of expert rules for soil landscape relationships in the United States and achieved global
506 accuracy ranged between 22% and 24%. Similar disaggregation performance was recorded by
507 Holmes et al. (2015) in Western Australia (20%), Chaney et al. (2016) in the United States (17%)
508 and Møller et al. (2019) in Denmark (18%) using DSMART algorithm (Table 4). In contrast to the
509 latter studies, a large number of STU (171 STU) compose our soil dataset. This could certainly
510 decrease the chance of predicting the right STU, even through mobilizing relevant geographic
511 dataset to implement soil landscape relationships.

512

513 When considering a window of 3x3 pixels, the overall accuracy increased considerably for the
514 three DSMART based approaches maps, but DSMART with expert soil landscape relationships
515 achieved the highest accuracy scores. Chaney et al. (2016) highlighted a high degree of spatial
516 noise in the predictions by including pixel validation neighbours. Overall, prediction accuracy
517 increased twofold with a 3x3 pixel validation window and when grouping soils to a coarser level
518 of soil classification (171 versus 89 soil group). This was recorded for all disaggregated maps
519 regardless of the disaggregation procedure and suggests that fine soil taxonomic dissimilarities can
520 not be accurately mapped by disaggregation processes.

521

522 4.2) Legacy soil data

523

524 Legacy soil data used in this study provide an overall representation of soil over large areas (1:
525 250,000 scale). This database was derived from several soil surveys and pedological expert
526 knowledge. SMUs were spatially delineated, and their spatial organisation, as well as STUs
527 features, were described according to available soil data and pedological expertise. STUs and their
528 associated landscape characteristics were identified as accurately as possible using legacy soil
529 profiles collected according to a not probabilistic sampling design between 1968 and 2012. Hence,
530 differences in survey methods covering a large area over a long sampling period could lead to
531 errors in the STU definition or uncertainties in the estimation of their area in a given SMU.



532 Moreover, soil survey intensity was not uniform within SMUs. Thus, SMU components may be
533 derived from the unequal representation of soil samples across SMUs.

534 Harmonising soil data to reduce the number of STU is a great challenge by itself. Grouping some
535 STUs regarding their pedological similarities such as sharing comparable morphological criteria,
536 having similar pedogenic horizons and occurring in analogous environmental conditions is
537 worthwhile to be investigated. More importantly, unifying soil data according to more functional
538 aspects such as soil agricultural potential allows also to generate a relevant regional soil database
539 easily handled by soil users to satisfy their needs. Many countries around the world have already
540 harmonized their soil databases such as Denmark and Australia, where high pedological
541 complexity was captured with a reasonable STU number, with not exceeding 23 soil groups in
542 Denmark (Møller et al., 2019) and 73 soil groups in Australia (Holmes et al., 2015).

543

544 4.3) Taxonomic similarities

545

546 In the recent DSM literature, DSMART approach is considered as an efficient tool to disaggregate
547 existing coarse soil maps. In this study, we compared variants of the DSMART based approach,
548 which differed by the training dataset used to calibrate the C5.0 model and the allocation procedure.
549 Modified DSMART algorithms used additional calibration datasets derived from supplement soil
550 observations and expert sampling of polygons. Hence, taxonomic similarities were not taken into
551 account neither in the calibration process nor in the current component assignment scheme. Even
552 if there is a large number of STUs addressing inherent soil landscape heterogeneity, there is most
553 likely a short taxonomic distance between many of them. As a result, these STUs may have similar
554 forming conditions, making it a challenge to suitably constrain the prediction probabilities using
555 DSMART algorithm. This likely explains the high confusion index scores recorded in the present
556 study, particularly for original DSMART and DSMART with extra soil profiles approaches. As
557 demonstrated by Minasny and McBratney (2007), including taxonomic distance in decision trees
558 using pedological knowledge is a relevant way to decrease the misclassification error. Therefore,
559 future effort and improvements of the DSMART algorithm should take into account the taxonomic
560 distance between STU in the disaggregation procedure.

561

562 4.4) Mapping comparison



563

564 A quantitative comparison between disaggregated soil maps was performed using a novel approach
565 called *V measure* method. This method was commonly used to assess the spatial agreement
566 between land cover maps and thematic biotic and abiotic factors maps, as done by Nowosad and
567 Stepinski (2018) in the United States, but never before for soil maps.

568 In the present study, V_1 (0.53) was larger than V_2 (0.47) suggesting that DSMART with expert soil
569 landscape relationships map is much more similar to Original DSMART map than DSMART with
570 extra soil observations map. This might be explained by the allocation procedure for training
571 samples. The original DSMART algorithm tends to promote most abundant STUs with high
572 proportions of occurrence within polygons and penalized STUs with low proportions (comprise
573 between 2 and 10%). Therefore, frequent STUs are more likely to be predicted rather than rare
574 STUs. Meanwhile, by adding supplement soil profiles, preliminarily assigned to a suitable STU to
575 the training dataset, we constrain STUs with low proportions of occurrence predictions.

576 Major differences between DSMART with expert rules map and DMSART with soil observations
577 were mainly observed in the southern part of the study area and valleys areas. In general, Fluvisol
578 Stagnic soils were overestimated by DSMART with extra soil observations. This was likely due to
579 the purposive sampling design followed to supplement soil observations. The 755 legacy soil
580 profiles were selected to characterize hydromorphic soil conditions and to characterize inherent
581 soil landscape variability supposed to be organized along the hillslope.

582

583 4.5) Improvements and future work

584

585 Even though this work emphasizes the contribution of pedological knowledge in the disaggregation
586 process, other pathways can also be explored to improve map's accuracy. As recommended by
587 Mulder et al. (2016), compensating the temporal changes and differences in laboratory analytics is
588 a good option to improve the quality of legacy soil data. This suggests harmonising local soil
589 database and regrouping some STUs with similar soil forming factors through statistical modelling.
590 Moreover, additional environmental covariates with high spatial resolution should be used to
591 capture micro landscape variability (Lacoste et al., 2014; Odgers et al., 2014; Chaney et al., 2016;
592 Møller et al., 2019). For example, adding a more detailed Digital Elevation Model allowed to
593 capture small terrain features, where may be particular, STUs occurs. Improving both polygon



594 sampling procedure and current components assignment scheme turned out to be important to
595 reduce uncertainty prediction. This suggests drawing virtual soil samples proportionally to
596 polygons areas and using supplement STU characteristics based on surveyor observations (slope
597 shape, hillslope position, soil texture ...) to guide STU allocation procedure (Møller et al., 2019).
598 Assuming that the decision tree can be built to relate STU descriptors to legacy soil data, this
599 method can replace weighted random allocation procedure and should help minor STU prediction
600 by constraining raster probabilities.

601 5) Conclusion

602

603 We applied three DSMART based approaches, including original DSMART algorithm, DSMART
604 with extra soil observations and DSMART with soil landscape relationships, to disaggregate legacy
605 soil polygons over a large area in Brittany (France). Regardless of the disaggregation approach, the
606 produced soil maps at 50 m spatial resolution successfully address the main soil spatial pattern
607 regarding prior pedological knowledge of our study area. Performance assessed against 135
608 independent soil profiles, 755 legacy soil profiles, and accurate 1:25,000 soil maps highlighted that
609 DSMART with expert rules maps achieved highest validation measures. Overall, modified
610 DSMART algorithms allowed minor STUs prediction, whereas original DSMART algorithm
611 promoted abundant STUs prediction with poor spatial structure improvement. Adding pedological
612 knowledge as well as extra soil observations in the prediction process constrained STU
613 probabilities, even STUs with low proportions. However, some particular STUs reflecting
614 hydromorphic soils or loamy soils were greatly overestimated for all the three DSMART based
615 approaches.

616 Soil maps produced using the original DSMART and DSMART with expert rules have a high
617 spatial agreement, but the latter map appeared more detailed and provided a spatially continuous
618 and consistent STU's prediction. Therefore, generalizing soil landscape relationships taken to
619 account several STU descriptors and landscape features should be implemented in the future
620 version of DSMART algorithm to capture soil landscape heterogeneity and consequently guarantee
621 coherent variability of soil properties.

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624



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656 **Figure captions**

657

658 Figure 1: Location of the study area and the validation datasets

659 Figure 2: Schematic of the DSMART based approaches algorithm. The steps in DSMART are: 1)
660 construct the calibration dataset; 2) train C5.0 model; 3) estimate STU maps and their associated
661 probabilities of occurrence

662 Figure 3: Digital soil map of the most probable STU and their associated probability of occurrence
663 for the whole study area and for a focus zone, a) Legacy soil map: most probable STU for each
664 SMU, b) original DSMART approach; c) DSMART with expert rules; d) DSMART with extra soil
665 observations

666 Figure 4: Global probability of hydromorphic soils over the study area derived from a) original
667 DSMART, b) DSMART with soil landscape relationships and c) DSMART with extra soil
668 observations. The probabilities of the three STU with highest prediction occurrence are summed if
669 they are hydromorphic

670 Figure 5: Confusion index maps for a) Original DSMART approach; b) DSMART with expert
671 rules; c) DSMART with extra soil observations

672 Figure 6: Cumulative area of the 171 STUs estimated from the regional soil database and predicted
673 by different DSMART based approaches

674 Figure 7: Violin plots of the relative importance of each environmental covariate used in a) Original
675 DSMART approach; b) DSMART with expert rules; c) DSMART with extra soil observations

676 Figure 8: Spatial association between disaggregated maps of Ille et Vilaine department. a) map of
677 inhomogeneity of DSMART with soil landscape relationships map in terms of original DSMART
678 map b) map of inhomogeneity of original DSMART map in terms of DSMART with soil landscape
679 relationships map c) map of inhomogeneity of DSMART with soil landscape relationships map in
680 terms of DSMART with extra soil observations map d) map of inhomogeneity of DSMART with
681 extra soil observations map in terms of DSMART with soil landscape relationships map.
682 Inhomogeneity (variance) is measured by normalised Shannon entropy
683



684 **Table headings**

685

686 Table 1. Description of the environmental covariates selected. Summary of environmental
687 covariates. P: parent material; S: soil properties; R: relief; O: Organisms; C: categorical; Q:
688 quantitative.

689 Table 2. Ten most extended STUs according to the regional soil database and their respective rank
690 by area using three DSMART based disaggregation procedures

691 Table 3. Overall accuracies (%) obtained using various external validation approaches for the three
692 most probable STU

693 Table 4: Comparison between the size areas covered, number of soil map units, soil type units of
694 the original legacy soil maps and the accuracy achieved in other studies using DSMART algorithm

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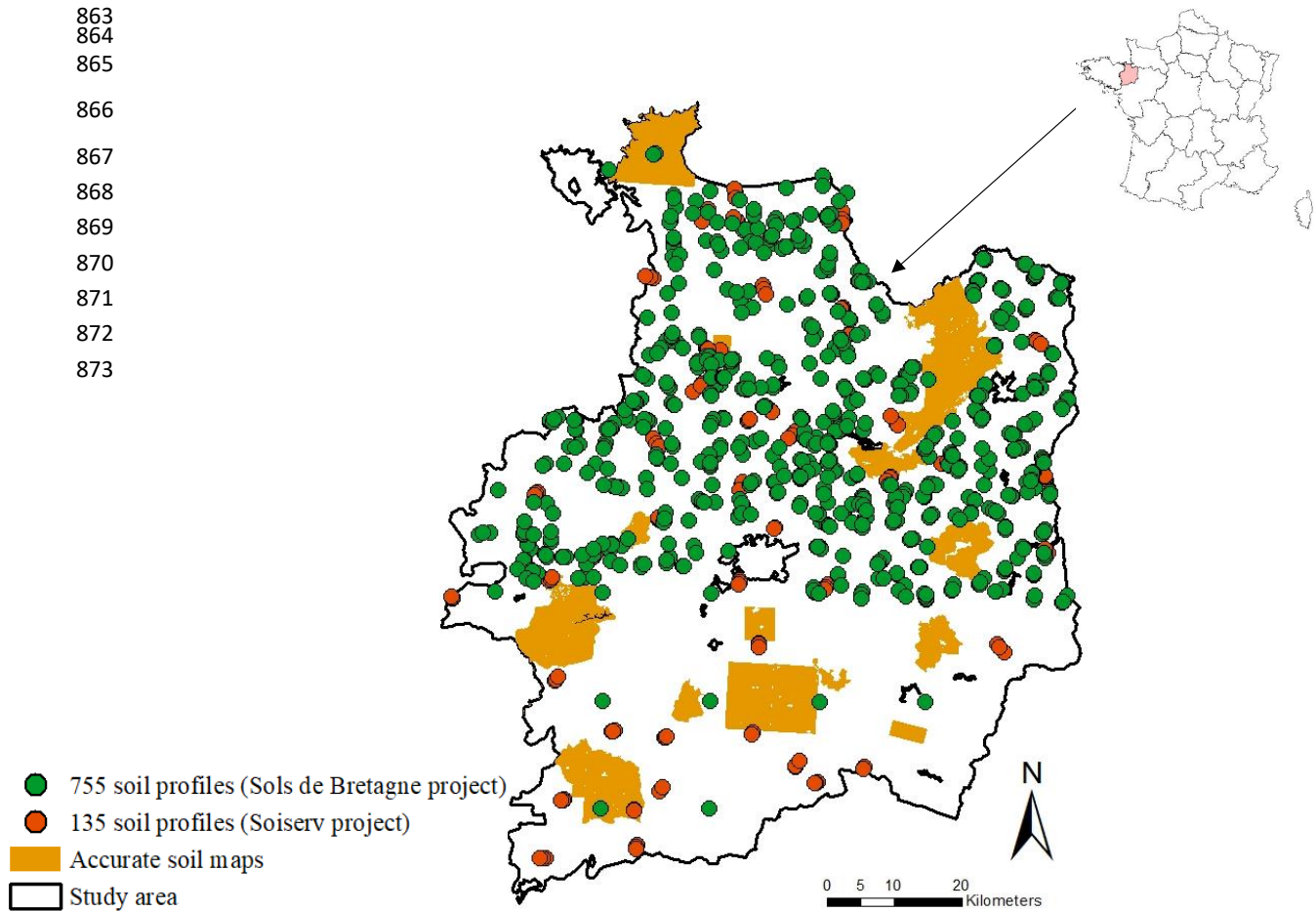


Figure 1: Location of the study area and the validation datasets

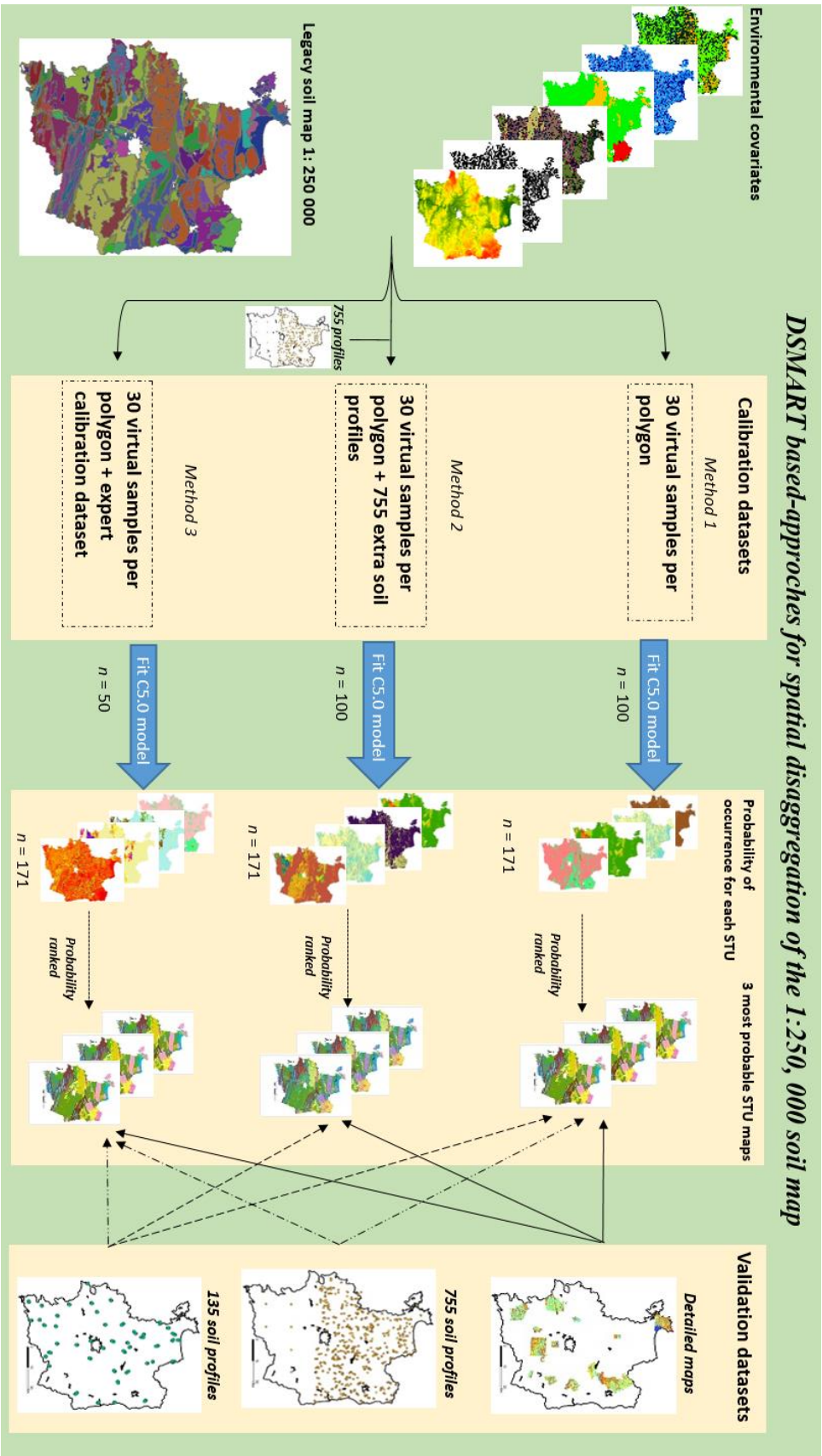


Figure 2. Schematic of the DSMART based approaches algorithm. The steps in DSMART are: 1) construct the calibration dataset; 2) train C5.0 model; 3) estimate STU maps and their associated probabilities of occurrence

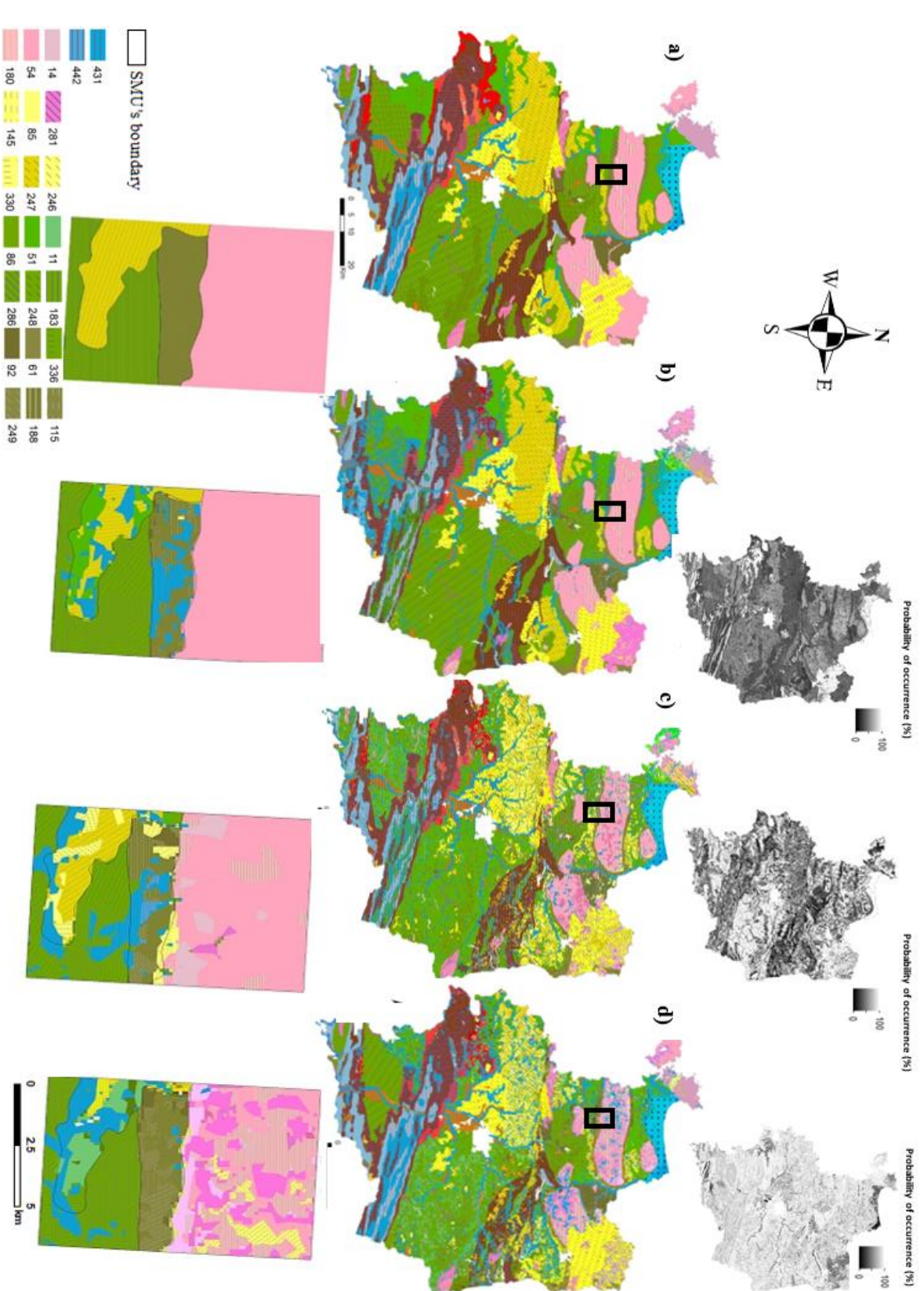


Figure 3. Digital soil map of the most probable STU and their associated probability of occurrence for the whole study area and for a focus zone, a) Legacy soil map; b) most probable STU for each SMU, b) original DSMART approach; c) DSMART with expert rules; d) DSMART with extra soil observations

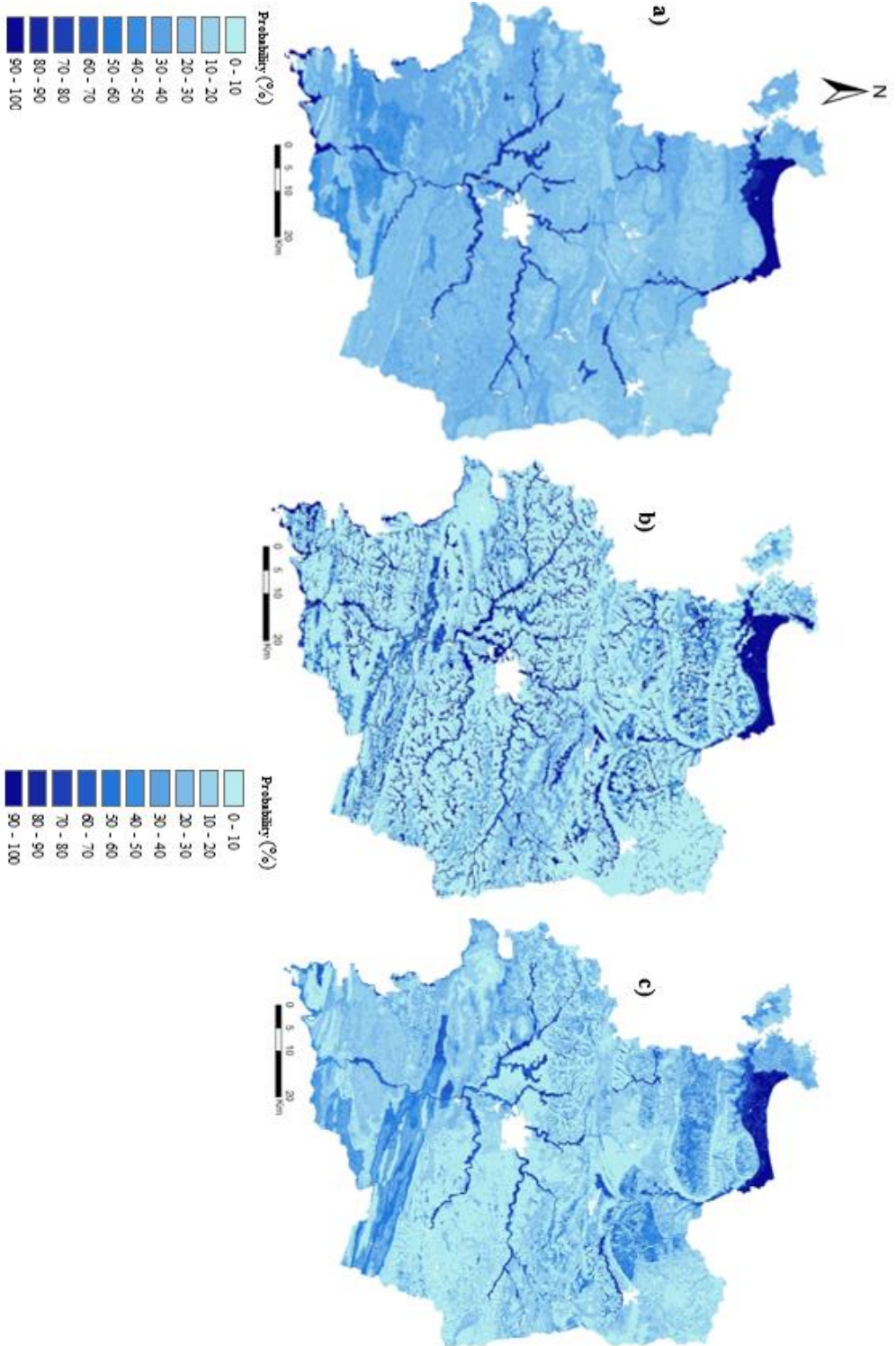


Figure 4: Global probability of hydromorphic soils over the study area derived from a) original DSMART, b) DSMART with soil landscape relationships and c) DSMART with extra soil observations. The probabilities of the three STU with highest prediction occurrence are summed if they are hydromorphic.

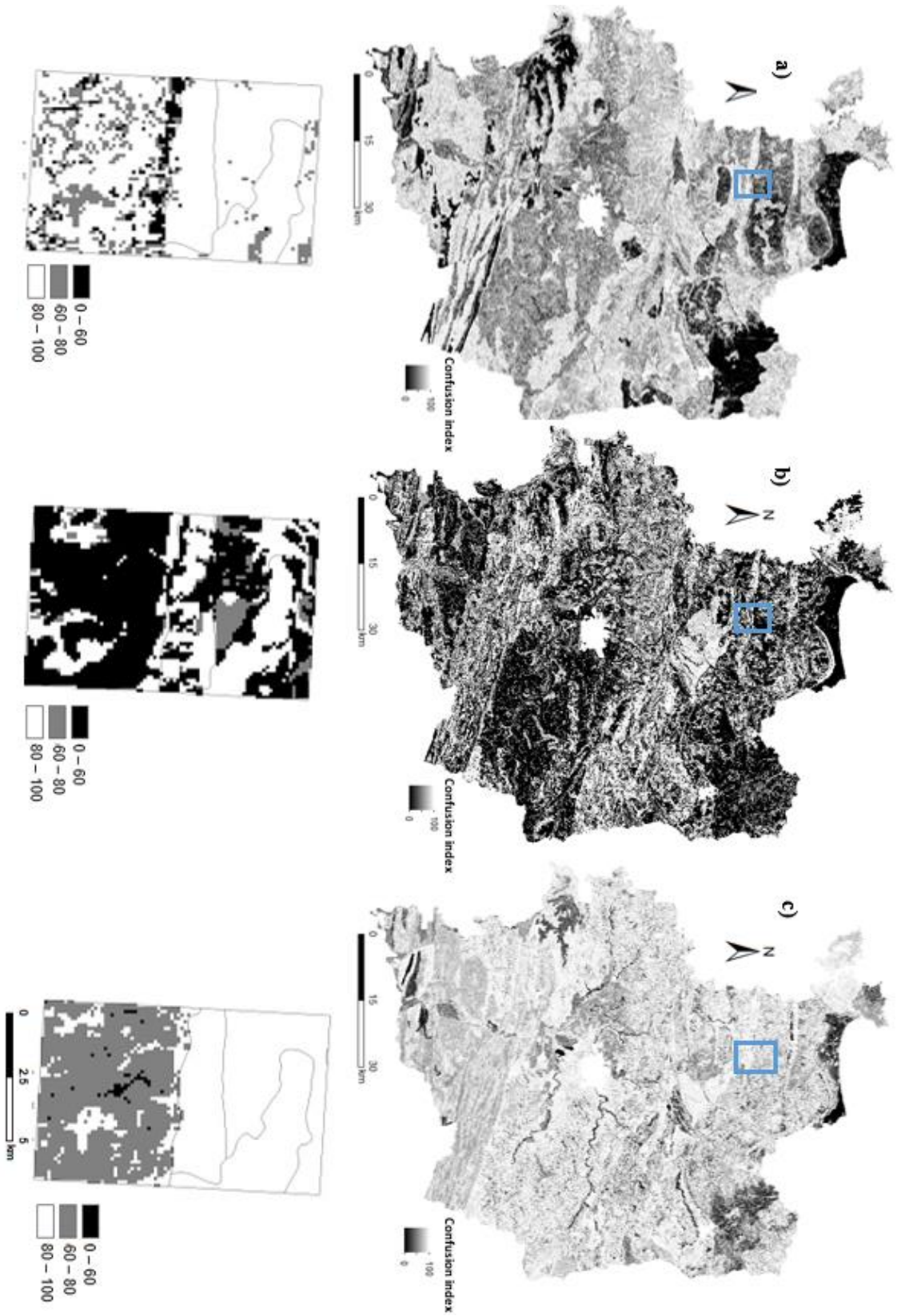


Figure 5 Confusion index maps for a) Classic DSMART approach; b) DSMART with expert rules; c) DSMART with extra soil observations

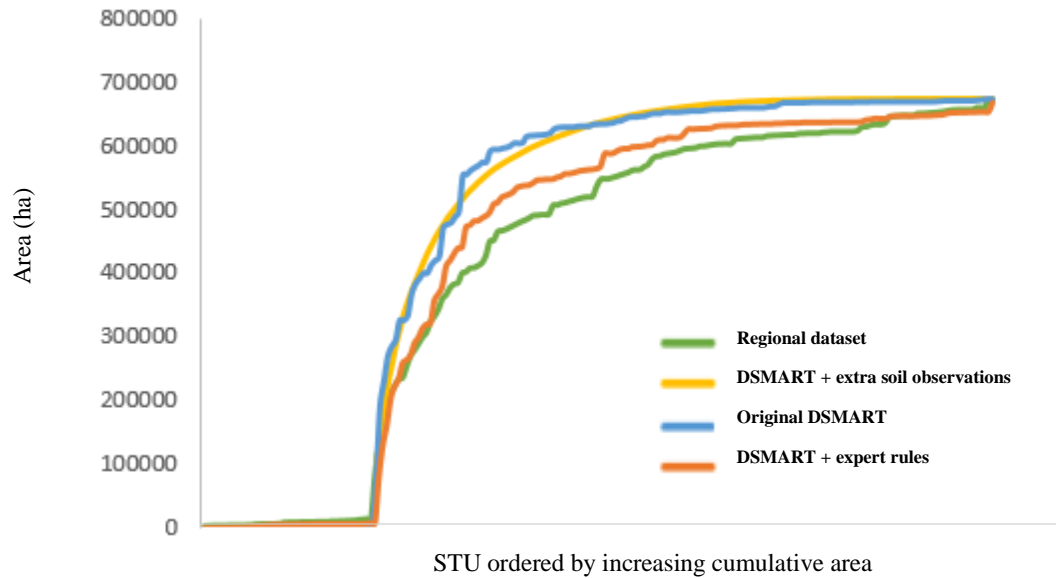


Figure 6: Cumulative area of the 171 STUs estimated from the regional soil database and predicted by different DSMART based approaches

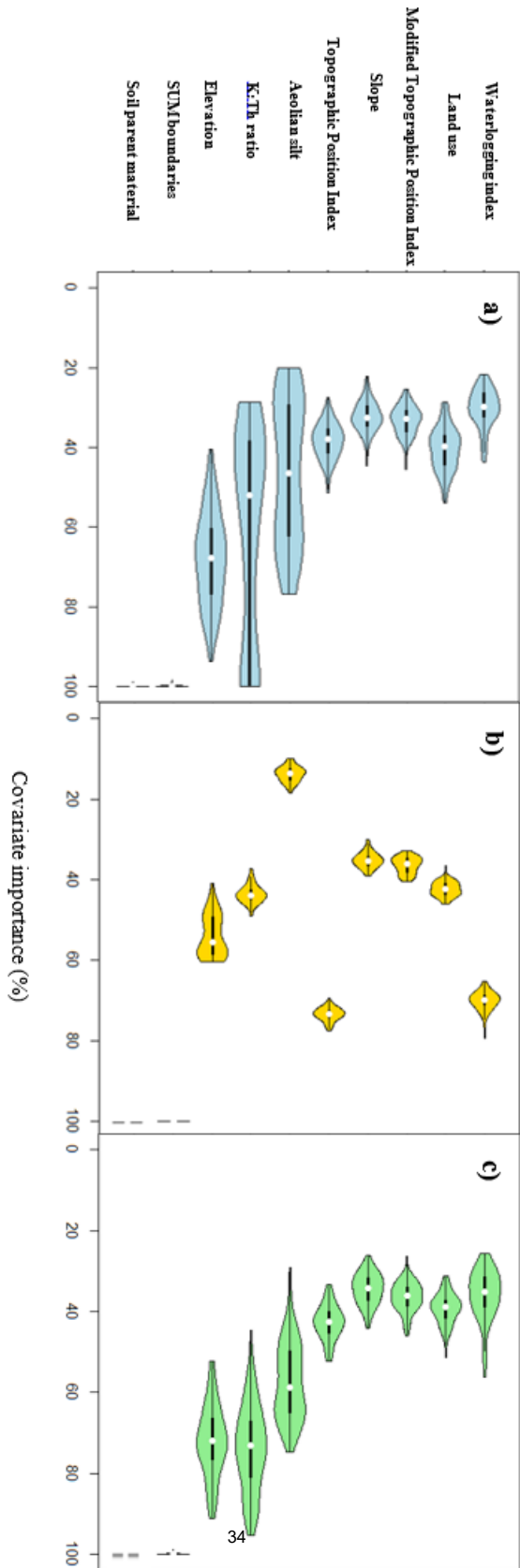


Figure 7: Violin plots of the relative importance of each environmental covariate used in a) Original DSMART approach; b) DSMART with expert rules; c) DSMART with extra soil observations

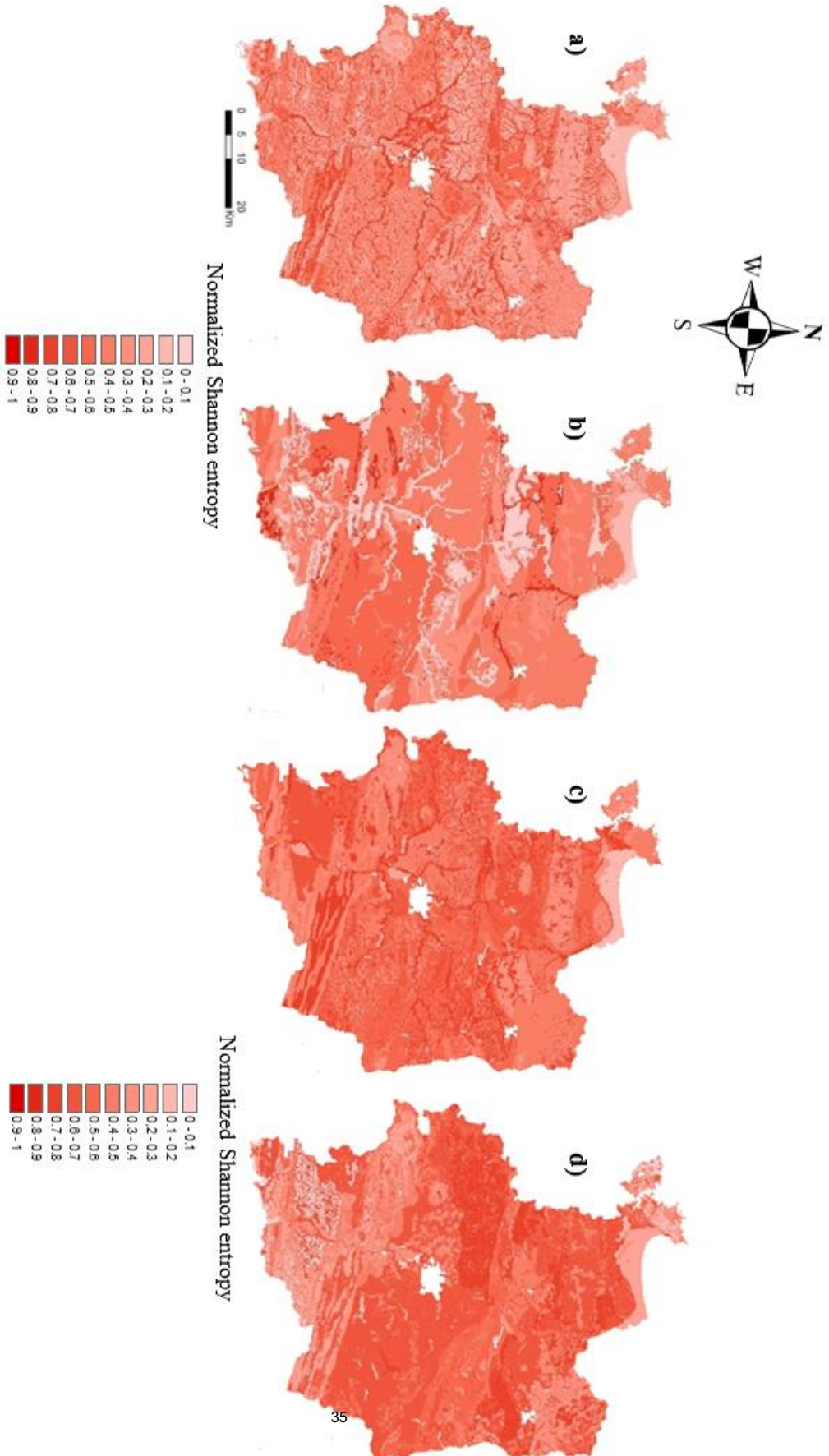


Figure 8: Spatial association between disaggregated maps of Ille et Vilaine department. a) map of inhomogeneity of DSMART with soil landscape relationships map in terms of original DSMART map b) map of inhomogeneity of original DSMART map in terms of DSMART with soil landscape relationships map c) map of inhomogeneity of DSMART with soil landscape relationships map in terms of DSMART with extra soil observations map d) map of inhomogeneity of DSMART with extra soil observations map in terms of DSMART with soil landscape relationships map. Inhomogeneity (variance) is measured by normalised Shannon entropy



Table 2 Ten most extended STUs according to the regional soil database and their respective rank by area using three DSMART based disaggregation procedures

STU	1 :250, 000 dataset			Original DSMART approach		DSMART with extra soil profiles		DSMART with expert rules		
Label	WRB classification	Parent material	Rank	Estimated area (km ²)	Rank	Predicted area (km ²)	Rank	Predicted area (km ²)	Rank	Predicted area (km ²)
431	Fluvisol Stagnic	Alluvial and colluvial deposits	1	688	2	757	1	983	1	740
248	Cambisol	Brioverian schists	2	480	1	1154	2	461	2	492
51	Cambisol	Brioverian schists	3	402	5	397	4	395	3	424
61 ₃ 183	Cambisol Cambisol Stagnic	Gritty schists Sandstone	4 5	227 216	9 11	177 162	30 5	53 308	14 10	128 192
256	Cambisol	Aeolian loam	6	200	6	385	3	418	6	314
286	Cambisol Stagnic	Brioverian schists	7	179	23	62	9	187	24	80
86	Cambisol	Brioverian schists	8	169	12	126	15	124	4	358
340	Albeluvisol Stagnic	Granite and gneiss	9	168	7	347	10	177	11	189
54	Cambisol	Brioverian schists	10	167	4	451	18	98	5	324



Table 1. Description of the environmental covariates selected

Summary of environmental covariates. P: parent material; S: soil properties; R: relief; O: Organisms; C: categorical; Q: quantitative.

Environmental covariate	SCORPAN factor	Type	Unit or number of classes
Terrain attributes derived from the digital elevation model			
Elevation	R	Q	m
Slope	R	Q	%
Compound Topographic Index (TPI)	R	Q	Log (m ³)
Topographic Position Index	R	C	5 classes
Pedology and geology			
Soil parent material	P	C	22 classes
Soil Map Units	R	C	96 classes
Aeolian silt deposits	P	C	2 classes
Waterlogging index	S	C	4 classes
Organism			
Landscape units	O	C	19 classes
Gamma ray spectrometry from 250 m airborne geophysical survey interpolations			
K:Th ratio	P	Q	

Table 3. Overall accuracies (%) obtained using various external validation approaches for the three most probable STU

Pixel to pixel validation of STU					
	DSMART approach	Most probable STU	Second most probable STU	Third most probable STU	Total
Soil maps (87 150 ha)	Original DSMART	23	13	8	44
	DSMART with expert rules	19	11	7	37
	DSMART with extra soil observations	22	9	7	38
Independent soil profiles (n=135)	Original DSMART	11	5	3.8	18.1
	DSMART with expert rules	10	4.4	3.7	19.8
	DSMART with extra soil observations	8.2	6	2.7	16.9
Legacy soil profiles (n=755)	Original DSMART	14	7	6	27
	DSMART with expert rules	18	9	7	34
	DSMART with extra soil observations				



Pixel to pixel validation of STU group					
	DSMART approach	Most probable STU	Second most probable STU	Third most probable STU	Total
Soil maps (87 150 ha)	Original DSMART	26	13	9	48
	DSMART with expert rules	22.5	13.7	9.7	45.9
	DSMART with extra soil observations	25	10	7	42
Independent soil profiles (n=135)	Original DSMART	16	7	4.6	27.6
	DSMART with expert rules	18	8.4	5.2	31.6
	DSMART with extra soil observations	15	8	3.8	26.8
Legacy soil profiles (n=755)	Original DSMART	19	12	9	40
	DSMART with expert rules	23.4	15	11.8	50.2
	DSMART with extra soil observations				

Neighbourhood of 3 x 3 validation of STU					
	DSMART approach	Most probable STU	Second most probable STU	Third most probable STU	Total
Soil maps (87 150 ha)	Original DSMART	31	16	14	61
	DSMART with expert rules	29.6	19.4	13.1	62.1
	DSMART with extra soil observations	28	11	9	48
Independent soil profiles (n=135)	Original DSMART	15	6	4.3	25.3
	DSMART with expert rules	17	6.7	4.8	28.5
	DSMART with extra soil observations	11	7	3	21
Legacy soil profiles (n=755)	Original DSMART	19	10	7	36
	DSMART with expert rules	27.9	15	11.9	54.8
	DSMART with extra soil observations				



Table 4: Comparison between the size areas covered, number of soil map units, soil type units of the original legacy soil maps and the accuracy achieved in other studies using DSMART algorithm

Study	Area (km ²)	Map units	Soil type unit	Accuracy
Odgers et al (2014)	68,000	1,110	72	23
Holmes et al. (2015)	2,500,000	5,069	73	20-22
Chaney et al. (2016)	-	-	-	17
Møller et al. (2019)	43,000	11-14	18-23	12-18