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Subject: Re: Contouring data over maps  
Posted by [wmc](#) on Tue, 04 Aug 1998 07:00:00 GMT  
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102ff455a31f815f989824@news.frii.com, davidf@dfanning.com (David Fanning) writes:

> Jason Hasenbuhler (hasenbuh@rex.cs.tulane.edu) writes:

>

>> What I need to know is how to make IDL respect the land/sea continental

>> boundries when I plot my interpolated data.

>

> There is, I feel safe in saying, no easy way to do what you want to do.

I think Davids right. I have found in the past that attempting to define "nodata" regions with contour causes problems at the edges of those regions. It has been easier to contour everywhere, and then polyfill in white/background everywhere else (and then redraw the coastline, probably, because bits of it will have been clipped).

Unfortunately, map\_continents does not appear to have an option to fill the sea regions. I'd do it by using a GCM land-sea mask but you probably don't have that. If you're drawing to the screen, then:

```
set your map projection
map_continents,/fil
mask=tvrd()
contour your data
img=tvrd()
img(where(mask eq !p.background))=!p.background
tv,img
```

ought to work. Some variant might work with postscript, too.

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