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Subject: Re: semi-transparent colors and z buffer  
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 25 Jun 2004 20:43:18 GMT  
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Patrick writes:

> I am using the map\_set and plots command to create an image through  
> the Z buffer. I have 2 datasets to be semi-transparently overlayed  
> onto the map. But when this is done the data overlays the map, hiding  
> the map data. Have searched around the web and seen several  
> transparency examples, but I cannot seem to get any of them to work.  
> Any suggestions?

There is only one way to get transparency in IDL, as far as I know, and that is to use two different images and alpha blend their values. In your case, you could draw the map on one image and the plots on another image and blend the two. This would be easier in object graphics, where images have alpha channels. Or, you could do it in direct graphics but you will have to write the alpha blending part by hand. (See any decent computer graphics text.)

Cheers,

David

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