Free Training Transcript: Web Mapping Services

Welcome to this Web Mapping Services video. You can download the Exercise workbook to follow along in your own copy of Tableau.

A Web Mapping Service is a way to share map images over the internet. A WMS server provides the tiles that make up maps in Tableau. Connecting to a WMS Server may be useful if you're looking for an alternative to the default maps that Tableau provides.

Using a WMS connection

To connect to a WMS server, go to the map menu, Background Maps, And choose Map Services. Click Add and choose WMS Server, then enter the URL. There are many publically available WMS Servers, or some companies have their own infrastructure. Note that the speed at which these maps render depends on the server that you're connecting to as well as your network connection.

Next, plot the data just like normal, here we'll double click on Country. If your maps ever don't look how you expected, check two places. First, go to Map and Background Maps and verify which map you're connected to. Second, check out Map Layers. Some WMS's have a lot of layers, so this is a good place to look and explore the options, including deselecting any layers that may not be working properly. As a note, it's possible to connect to multiple WMS servers in a single workbook – you can use as many as you need.

Tableau Map Source Files

If we want to save a WMS connection for use with other workbooks, we can create a Tableau Map Source file. Go to Map > Background Maps > Map Services> And select the map we're interested in > then click Export. The file type is saved as a .tms file. Instead, I'll click import. I'll open my Tableau Map Source file, and it's automatically applied to this view. Let's add some layers: and we'll add countries, maybe waterbodies, rivers, and streams.

Conclusion

Thank you for watching this WMS training video. We invite you to continue with the Free Training videos to learn more about using Tableau.