

Working Group on Acoustic Trawl Data Portal Governance (WGAcousticGov; outcomes from 2022 meeting)

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i Executive summary

The Working Group on Acoustic Trawl Data Portal Governance (WGAcousticGov) was formed in 2020. The remit of the group was to establish and maintain a governance framework for the development and management of the ICES trawl acoustic database. The first step was to establish a mission statement and then build in the structures and guidelines required to achieve these goals, this was achieved in year one (ToR a). A key component of this structure was to establish means by which to log, track and address user issues and requests (ToR b). This was established in year one (GitHub). The group has made a number of improvements to the data portal, driven largely by the user group. Issues raised are addressed and discussed during the quarterly meeting cycle and through intersessional work (ToR c).

Much of the groups' work during the first three-year cycle has focused on addressing user requests and making improvements to the data portal. Addressing user requests will constitute the main body of work of the group into the future. Communication with survey planning and expert groups through updates during the annual meeting cycle has provided a means to inform existing users and to attract new users (ToR, d). The ICES Trawl Acoustic database is one of the data repositories for the Horizon2020 MEESO project (Ecologically and economically sustainable mesopelagic fisheries). A dedicated training workshop on how to use the database was provided as one of the work package (Work package 1: Data management) deliverables in 2021.

A further ICES hosted training course will be carried out in 2023 in collaboration with StoX software developers (ToR, d) aimed at the wider community and intended for new and existing users.

Overall, progress on ToRs was positive during the current cycle and new ToRs have been proposed to build on progress made to date.

ii Expert group information

Expert group name	Working Group on Acoustic Trawl Data Portal Governance (WGAcousticGov)
Expert group cycle	Multiannual
Year cycle started	2020
Reporting year in cycle	3/3
Chair	Ciaran O'Donnell, Ireland
Meeting venue(s) and dates	14 September 2020, Online meeting (23 participants)
	10 December 2020, Online meeting (23 participants)
	25 February 2021, Online meeting (12 participants)
	20 May 2021, Online meeting (12 participants)
	23 September 2021, Online meeting (15 participants)
	9 December 2021, Online meeting (13 participants)
	22 February 2022, Online meeting (15 participants)
	27 May 2022, Online meeting (12 participants)
	27 September 2022, Online meeting (16 participants)
	01 December 2022, Online meeting (17 participants)

1 Progress to date

First formed in 2020, the governance group has made good progress towards achieving the groups ToR within the first reporting cycle. Updates on the groups work are communicated to users and through annual survey planning and expert Working groups (WGBIFS, WGIDEEPS, WGIPS, WGACEGG and WGFAST). Overall, progress on ToRs was positive during the current cycle and new ToRs have been proposed for review to build on progress made to date.

New ToR will build on existing ToR to provide a service to users and facilitate better communications with third party software providers and to build on outreach to the wider community. The next reporting cycle is scheduled to begin in 2023.

1.1 First year (2020)

The Year 1 work plan focused on achieving ToRs a and b. The group met twice during year-1 (Sept and Dec). The group undertook the development of a governance framework document (ToR a). The document outlined a structured management plan for the development of an effective and efficient data portal for high-quality survey data and how these goals would be achieved. The construction of the governance framework document started during the first meeting and continued offline. The document was presented for review during the second meeting. A platform was established within GitHub to receive, record and process user feedback requests (ToR b). The group worked through specific individual requests and established a procedure to address and catalogue user requests. The focus of the second meeting was on addressing users' needs and working through the current request backlog.

The ICES Trawl Acoustic database is one of the data repositories for the Horizon2020 MEESO project (<https://www.meeso.org/>). A dedicated training workshop (WK) on how to use the database, upload formats for biological and acoustic data and metadata descriptions was provided as one of the WP deliverables in 2021. This workshop was provided by Hjalte Parner and Vaishav Soni on the 18-19 February 2020, ICES HQ, as part of the deliverables for MEESO work package 1.

Updates on the groups work are communicated to users and through annual survey planning and expert WGs (WGBIFS, WGIDEEPS, WGIPS, WGACEGG and WGFAST).

1.2 Second year (2021)

The group transitioned into its second year of operation with quarterly online meetings (Feb, May, Sept and Dec). The Year 1 work plan focused on achieving ToRs a and b. The group undertook the development of a Framework document (ToR a). Year 2 work continued to build on this with the ongoing work to receive, record and process user feedback requests through the GitHub page and how to facilitate item requests within the database structure. The group contacted several survey planning groups (WGBIFS, WGIPS and WGACEGG) to determine how biological sampling is undertaken at a national level, as a preliminary review of deck-to-database sampling strategies. This topic will be further discussed during the WGIPS 2023 meeting (January).

Updates on the groups work are communicated to users and through annual survey planning and expert WGs (WGBIFS, WGIDEEPS, WGIPS, WGACEGG and WGFAST).

1.3 Third year (2022)

In year 3, the group continued to focus on addressing user needs through the feedback portal (ToR c) representing the main body of the groups work. An ICES training course is scheduled to take place in 2023 providing training to new and existing users of the data portal (ToR d). This training course will be run in conjunction with training on the StoX software package. Both the database and StoX are widely used for the storage and processing of acoustic survey data.

Updates on the groups work are communicated to users and through annual survey planning and expert WGs (WGBIFS, WGIDEEPS, WGIPS, WGACEGG and WGFAST).

New ToRs were proposed and have been submitted for review.

Annex 1: List of participants

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Annex 2: Resolution

2019/FT/EOSG15 The **Working Group on Acoustic Trawl Data Portal Governance (WGAcoustic-Gov)**, chaired by Ciaran O'Donnell (Ireland), will meet by web conference, four times per year and may meet physically once per year, to work on ToRs and generate deliverables as listed in the Table below.

	Meeting dates	Venue	Reporting details	Comments (change in Chair, etc.)
Year 2020	14 September 10 December	Online meetings	E-evaluation	
Year 2021	1) 25 February - Q1 2) 20 May - Q2 3) 23 September - Q3 4) 9 December - Q4	Online meetings	E-evaluation	
Year 2022	1) 22 February - Q1 2) 27 May - Q2 3) 27 September - Q3 4) 1 December - Q4	Online meetings	Final report to DSTSG	

WGAcousticGov will report on its activities by the March ACOM and SCICOM meetings in the form of a business report the following year to DSTSG and WGFAST.

ToR descriptors

ToR	Description	Background	Science Plan codes	Duration	Expected Deliverables
a	Establish a governance framework setting out a forward looking plan, including objectives of the Acoustic Trawl Data Portal, responsibilities, processes and resources.	In order to successfully develop and maintain a workplan for the Acoustic Trawl Data Portal, it is necessary to first establish a vision for the future supported by guidelines on project management, handling of feedback, task prioritisation and expected resource availability.	3.2, 4.1, 4.2	3 years/ Generic ToR	The WGAcousticGov manifesto: Mission statement on the direction of the Acoustic Trawl Data Portal development and overarching short to medium terms goals. Guidelines on how to prioritise Definition of resources available Definition of responsibilities.
b	Provide a platform for end user feedback to the the Acoustic Trawl Data	The Acoustic Trawl Data Portal should be develop to meet the requirements of end users and thus needs	3.2, 4.1, 4.2	3 years/ Generic ToR	A github site to allow users to submit feedback and requests.

	Portal according to the groups guidelines.	to be responsive to user feedback. To achieve a long-term stability, availability and quality, the Acoustic Trawl Data Portal development requires a workplan with clear objectives and milestones. This can only be successfully implemented when resource requirements have been estimated and the availability of resources is known.			Provide an annual workplan, with an agreed and prioritised list of Acoustic related expert group recommendations along with suggested resource allocation, budget estimates and feasibility estimates.
c	Coordinate and advise on the interpretation and prioritisation of recommendations, the groups guidelines and requests addressed to the Acoustic Trawl Data Portal.	The project planning cycle needs to be responsive (more than one meeting a year) in order to the Acoustic Trawl Data Portal development effectively. Although there is an annual plan, short term priorities must be evaluated against resource availability and needs of the ICES advice processes that vary through the year.	3.2, 4.1, 4.2	3 years/ Generic ToR	
d	Coordinate the development of user guidance and training for the Acoustic Trawl Data Portal.	As the Acoustic Trawl Data Portal develops over time a range of users will require various levels of training including step by step user manuals, tutorials and workshops. Documentation of guidelines and procedures will also be necessary. Outreach activities will be required.	3.2, 4.1, 4.2	3 years/ Generic ToR	Annually updated training documentation. Workshops with specific goals proposed and planned where necessary. Relevant fora for dissemination investigated and outreach activities planned.

Summary of the Work Plan

Year 1	First meeting to establish ToRs a) and b) will be conducted via WebEx and followed by subsequent quarterly WebEx meetings in 2020 dealing with ToR c) and d). First physical meeting has not been determined and will most likely not take place in 2020 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.
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Year 2	ToRs c) and d) will be addressed in quarterly WebEx meetings, with the potential annual meetings intended to coincide with WGFAST for prioritising ToR b), with potential review of ToR a).
Year 3	ToRs c) and d) will be addressed in quarterly WebEx meetings, with the potential annual meetings intended to coincide with WGFAST for prioritising ToR b), with potential review of ToR a).

Supporting information

Priority	High priority
Resource requirements	No additional resource requirement for ICES. A commitment of time from the members of the group consistent with progressing actions identified in the quarterly meetings
Participants	Survey planning groups; WGIPS, WGBIFS, WGACEGG, WGIDEEPS, expert groups WGFAST and WGFTFB and assessment working groups; WGWIDE, HAWG and WGHANSA. One or more members from each WG representing data providers, data users and relevant expert groups. ICES Secretariat and other related EG members as need be.
Secretariat facilities	Community Sharepoint site, Remote meeting facilities
Financial	No financial implications
Linkages to ACOM and group under ACOM	This is an integral component to the overall Quality Assurance Framework (of Advice) that ACOM together with the Coordination group are describing
Linkages to other committees or groups	There is a strong linkage to DIG as the main umbrella for data/software governance structures.
Linkages to other organization	NOAA via participation by members of WGFAST have expressed interest in joining the group system.