

First World Seabird Conference. Victoria, Canada. 2010.

Seabird Tracking Databases Workshop

Synopsis

The growing availability of seabird tracking data, for an ever increasing range of species, necessitates enhanced coordination and data sharing for effective utilization in research and conservation issues. This workshop was convened to bring together tracking data owners, users and the managers of databases storing data to discuss how to facilitate improved access to, and use of, tracking data.

Four of the larger tracking data repositories were brought together; the BirdLife 'Global Procellariiform Tracking Database', movebank.org, TOPP and the OBIS-SEAMAP database. The function and utility of each database was discussed and note was made that no one database facilitated all the needs of the tracking community. It was therefore proposed that linkages be developed that allow 'interoperability' across databases such that tools may be used across them and such that they facilitate all necessary functionality.

As an 'easy win', and as a first step to providing the more complex functionality, initial development will focus on cross-database searching. This will involve standardizing metadata between databases and setting up systems within each that will allow for searches to return results from, and links to, other databases. In addition to this, the functions will also be extended to a central place (i.e. seabirds.net) so that users may quickly find, and be directed to data.

Once these have been implemented and some of the initial issues better understood, then further interoperable functionality will be developed so that the raw tracking data may be read and fed between the different databases. This will make a full range of operations available to all data (and subsequently the owners of that data), regardless of the repository where it was initially submitted.

Draft Timeline

Definition of metadata standards (including Taxonomy) - October 2010

Development of systems to present and search between databases - Jan 2011

Development of central database search on seabirds.net - Jan 2011 (Funding and resource dependent)

Further development of interoperable functions and data sharing (yet to be determined)
- Spring 2011 onward

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