



Strengthening the links between European marine
fisheries science
and fisheries management

Conclusions of the VMS Data meeting

October, 14th 2009

2:30 – 6:00 pm

Attendees:

John Lock - MariFish Co ordinator - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs/Marine and Fisheries Science Unit - UK

Céline Bonhomme - Head of Scientific Affairs - French Department for Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture

Maurice Heral - MariFish WP7 leader - Director of the Prospective and Scientific Strategy - Ifremer

Simon Jennings - Cefas, Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture - UK

Patrick Berthou - Head of the programme "ecosystem approach to fisheries" - Ifremer Brest

Youen Vermard - Fisheries Department for the Channel and North Sea - Ifremer BoulogneS/Mer

Sophie Sergent - MariFish WP7 administration - European and international Affairs Department - Ifremer

(1) Process for exchange of VMS Data between France and UK - area Channel

The Cefas and Ifremer teams will work together through a pilot project to examine the many practical aspects of VMS data sharing, in particular to test compatibility between the two approaches for estimating fishing pressure. This will be achieved partly through a short technical workshop, which will include a closing session with officials from Defra and the French Department of Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture.

This workshop lead on by Patrick Berthou (Ifremer) must be planned during the first six-month period of the year 2010 [3 - 4 days] to fit in the framework of MariFish WP7 and CHARM calendar.

Patrick Berthou will set out a timetable for the pilot project, deliverables such as commun format of exchange between Cefas and Ifremer.

There needs to be some correspondence and joint preparatory activities between the two teams before the workshop to organize comparison on data treatment between the two teams.

(2) Commun communication to the commission

Our next step is to make the Commission's DCF group aware of this pilot project and the many issues that are emerging from our practical attempt to share VMS data. We need to emphasise to the Commission that the pilot project aims to address practical issues such as the development of common data products to support DCR, data resolution etc. We may be able to access Commission funds to help the further development of the pilot project.

The French Department for Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture will facilitate the contact with the adhoc DCF group.

(3) Estimation of the fishing effort

Fishing vessels below 15m are not monitored by VMS. Given the numbers of smaller vessels operating in the Channel, it will only be possible to assemble a partial picture of the fishing effort in the Channel through the MariFish project. However it is important to focus on the more international elements of fishing effort, taking place outside the national coastal boundary, and it is this international aspect that is the challenge when it comes to data sharing between the two countries.

Through this project we will be able to demonstrate that we can work together on the important issue of VMS data sharing and can jointly develop methodology for analysing the data. If we are successful MariFish will be able to demonstrate real leadership, especially in the context of WP7 collaborative programming.

(4) Integration of the VMS Data in the ecosystem approach process

After the development of the maps for fishing effort by metier, the next stage will be to develop them for specific gears. The frequency of the use of each gear and information on fishermen's behaviour will then be used in conjunction with the habitat maps and appropriate models to estimate fishing impacts on habitat.