

Stakeholder involvement in CRITTERBASE - Data interoperability for marine conservation and sustainable ecosystem management

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Biogeographical research plays a pivotal role in understanding large-scale patterns of biodiversity, particularly concerning environmental change, human impacts, and sustainable ecosystem management. To conduct such research effectively, reliance on FAIR data is imperative. However, many data are not open-access and exist only in spreadsheets and local databases, which hinders the scientific analysis and data reuse. In addition, databases often employ disparate data models and (meta-)data schemas. Consequently, merging data from different sources requires time-consuming data synchronisation and often acts as a bottleneck for initiating analyses at large spatial and temporal scales. In our presentation, we elucidate our approaches to addressing data interoperability between CRITTERBASE and other data systems utilised by various decision-makers and stakeholders. Using illustrative examples, we demonstrate: (1) how seamless data exchange across different systems forms a fundamental basis for evaluating the suitability of areas for the expansion of offshore wind farms in the German Bight; (2) we delve into the implementation of (meta-)data interoperability for a federated search tool focused on Arctic and Antarctic data, with the expectation of enhancing the discoverability of CRITTERBASE data for the polar regions; and finally, (3) we present an ongoing initiative for data interoperability aimed at facilitating the smooth integration of CRITTERBASE data into leading databases such as PANGAEA for data archiving, publication, and distribution. It is highlighted how efforts related to data interoperability can contribute to capacity building, i.e., improving data handling and management for individual users and larger organisational structures, ultimately leading to biogeographical research and decision-making in the context of marine conservation and sustainable ecosystem management.

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