

South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation

9th Meeting of the Data and Information Working Group

Port Vila, Vanuatu, 19-23 September 2011

DIWG-09-05

Review of Public Domain Data Rules

(Initially proposed at the 8th DIWG, in Viña del Mar, Chile in November 2010; referred to this 9th meeting to allow for further consideration and discussion)

Introduction

Part 8 of the “[Standards for the collection, reporting, verification and exchange of data](#)” ([Data Standards](#)) provides the rules for the maintenance of confidentiality of SPRFMO data (Annex 1).

Public domain data are described as:

1. data on fishing activities aggregated by flag state, calendar year, and 5° by 5° areas, except where such data describes the activities of three or less vessels (in which case a lower resolution is to be used);
2. data on the number and type of vessels authorised to fish, aggregated by flag state and calendar year.

Non public domain data are to be disseminated to participants in response to a written request from the collective Parties to the Negotiation, for the purposes documented by those Parties.

Comment

The categories of data described to be in the public domain, particularly for vessels, are quite restrictive compared to those of other RFMOs. This paper suggests some areas in which more data might be put in the public domain, for the consideration of the Working Group.

In respect of fishing activities generally, the aggregation of catch and fishing effort data to levels of years and 5° by 5° areas might be relaxed to months and 1° by 1° areas, subject to the requirement of never presenting information from fewer than 3 vessels.

In respect of vessels, it is a normal practice established by other RFMOs to provide names, vessel types, and principal dimensions publically (for example [CCSBT authorised vessels](#)). Further the name, flag, length and radio call sign of vessels with IMO numbers are available on other web sites, for example www.vesseltracker.com. The SPRFMO description of public domain data in respect of vessels could be widened to include all the information in 2(a)-(t) and (y) and (z) of Annex 7 Standard for vessel data of the Data Standards without adversely affecting commercial confidentiality.

The description of public domain data only deals with data on fishing activities and fishing vessels. SPRFMO data also include fishing effort data and those biological data for which templates are provided (length, sex, maturity). However, the application of transparency in respect of these data is more difficult. While in principle it would be good practice to make them widely available, they generally require some processing using other detailed data, which are not usually in the public domain before they are useful. For, example, fishing effort needs to be standardised and biological data are generally collected as samples which must be raised using information on the sampling framework, that might include catches on individual unloadings. Therefore, it might be more productive to urge participants to make available estimates of derived quantities such as standardised CPUE and length and sex compositions of catches than to specify which biological or fishing effort data should be in the public domain.

International Consultation decisions affecting transparency made after the adoption of the Data Standards

The 2011 Interim Measures for Pelagic Fisheries, which apply only in respect of *Trachurus* species, require that the Interim Secretariat posts a register of authorized vessels on the web site. The register should note which of the vessels are actively fishing in the Convention Area. This requirement implicitly extended the description of public domain vessel data by listing individual vessels authorised to fish for *Trachurus* species and indicating whether the vessels were known to be actively fishing. The data posted on the web site in response to the 2011 Interim Measures include vessel flag, name, previous name, previous flag, IHS-Fairplay(IMO) - formerly Lloyds/IMO number, Gross tonnage and an indication of whether the vessel is actively fishing in the SPRFMO area. There seems to be no reason for restricting this information only for vessels fishing *Trachurus* species.

[The Interim Benthic Assessment framework envisages](#) the mapping of a joint trawl footprint at a resolution of 20 minutes by 20 minutes during 2002-2006. During the development of the framework it was noted in the report of the 4th Science Work (subsequently adopted by the 4th round of the International Consultations) that the footprint would essentially have to be publically available. This suggests that any occurrence of bottom trawling or bottom fishing generally within a 20 minute block during 2002-2006 should be considered to be in the public domain. The period 2002-2006 was chosen in 2007 as a recent period and there seems to be no reason not to continue treating such data as being in the public domain in succeeding years, nor to restrict the method to trawling.

Recommendation

Annex 2 contains a proposal for a revision of the rules for the maintenance of confidentiality. It is recommended that the Data and Information Working Group review the proposed rules and to recommend changes to the Data Standards to the Preparatory Conference.

Annex 1

Existing rules

8. Maintenance of confidentiality

The interim Secretariat of the proposed SPRFMO is to compile and disseminate accurate and complete statistical data to ensure that the best scientific evidence is available while maintaining confidentiality where appropriate. Specifically the interim Secretariat is to:

- (a) Compile and disseminate on request the following “public domain” data:
 - (i) Data on fishing activities, aggregated by flag state and calendar year and 5 degree by 5 degree areas, except in those cases where such data describes the activities of less than 3 vessels (in which case a lower resolution will be used);
 - (ii) Data on the number and type of vessels authorized to fish, aggregated by flag state and calendar year;
- (b) Operate comprehensive and robust processes to maintain the confidentiality of the non-public domain data that Participants provide to it. These processes will be based on the ISO/IEC27002:2005 (updates ISO/IEC 17799:2005) international standard for information security management¹. SPRFMO specific data security standards will be developed over time;
- (c) Compile and disseminate to Participants or their designates non-public domain data (being any data not described in 8(a)):
 - (i) In response to a written request from the collective Parties to the Negotiation, for the purposes documented by those Parties; and
 - (ii) In the absence of a written request from the collective Parties to the Negotiation - only with the authorization of the Participant(s) that originally provided that data.

In the case that an interim Secretariat has not been established, the Convener of the Data and Information Working Group will assume the roles of the interim Secretariat with regard to the Maintenance of Confidentiality.

These standards will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they are adequate for the current and foreseeable needs of the proposed SPRFMO.

¹ www.iso.org/iso/en/prods-services/popstds/informationsecurity.html

Annex 2

Proposed new rules for Section 8

8. Maintenance of confidentiality

The interim Secretariat of the proposed SPRFMO is to compile and disseminate accurate and complete statistical data to ensure that the best scientific evidence is available while maintaining confidentiality where appropriate. Specifically the interim Secretariat is to:

- (a) Compile and disseminate ~~on request~~ the following “public domain” data:
 - i) Data on fishing activities, aggregated by flag state and ~~month and 1 degree by 1 degree areas, except in those cases where such data describes the activities of less than 3 vessels (in which case a lower resolution will be used);~~
 - ii) ~~Data for vessels authorised by Participants shall include current flag, name, registration number, international radio call sign, IHS-Fairplay (IMO) number, previous names, port of registry, previous flag, type of vessel, types of fishing methods, when built, where built, length, length type, moulded depth, beam, gross tonnage (and/ or gross register tonnage), power of main engine(s), hold capacity, vessel authorisation start and end dates.~~
 - iii) ~~The occurrence of bottom fishing within a 20 minute block (without specifying flag, any vessel identification, or measure of fishing effort).~~
- (b) Operate comprehensive and robust processes to maintain the confidentiality of the non-public domain data that Participants provide to it. These processes will be based on the ISO/IEC27002:2005 (updates ISO/IEC 17799:2005) international standard for information security management². SPRFMO specific data security standards will be developed over time;
- (c) Compile and disseminate to Participants or their designates non-public domain data (being any data not described in 8(a)):
 - (i) In response to a written request from the collective Parties to the Negotiation, for the purposes documented by those Parties; and
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