

## **Ocean Tracking Network Data Policy and Management Methods**

Robert Branton<sup>1</sup>, Susan Dufault<sup>2</sup>, Marta Mihoff<sup>3</sup>

Faculty Of Science, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada.

<sup>1</sup>Bob.Branton@Dal.Ca, <sup>2</sup>Susan.Dufault@Dal.Ca, <sup>3</sup>Marta.Mihoff@Dal.Ca

Canada's \$160M CAD global Ocean Tracking Network (OTN), headquartered at Dalhousie U. in Halifax is transforming marine animal tracking into a collaborative discipline. Data policy and management methods being developed at Dalhousie as part of the OTN project are clearly a critical element in this process. One OTN scenario has oceanographic variables being measured by sensors on tagged animals and acoustically transmitted to lines of receivers on the ocean floor with resulting oceanographic observations being submitted to established national oceanographic data centres for quality control and integration into international data flows and animal observations being submitted to Dalhousie where they are assembled into spatially enabled tracks linked to the available oceanographic data. As part of this process tag owners can optionally request time limited data access restrictions (embargoes) on the data. All data are to be routinely copied from Dalhousie to the Integrated Science Data Management Branch of Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans for long term archiving as well as for integration with other International Oceanographic Commission programs such as the Ocean Biogeographic Information System, with credit being given to both the tag owner and the receiver line operator. Underlying these efforts, the Ocean Tracking Network has a simply stated Data Policy describing how data are to be submitted, accessed and used. Dalhousie expects this policy be a part of all formal collaboration agreements as well as to be a guide for ocean tracking data infrastructure development and processing. The OTN is constructing an open source, publicly accessible, spatially enabled, standards based data warehouse using this policy. Other data processing innovations expected to arise from these efforts, include: time-variant collection metadata templates (fieldbooks), centralized mystery tag posting and resolution, and detachable workspaces for off-site data processing and regional node development. For more info, see: [www.oceantrackingnetwork.org](http://www.oceantrackingnetwork.org).