FishSOOP

Newsletter #13 | November 2024

Dear all,

Thank you to everyone who has engaged with us recently to complete the new IMOS legal agreement and the user survey. Your feedback has been outstanding and will play a valuable role in shaping future directions of the program. This month's newsletter contains a 'sneak peek' at the preliminary results of the survey, with a fuller analysis to follow in later editions. Read also about how IMOS FishSOOP has been making an impact internationally, with UNSW Sydney hosting the international Fishing Vessel Observing Network (FVON) meeting. There are also some data insights from last month and detail of the legal agreements and surveys for those vessels that have not yet been contacted.

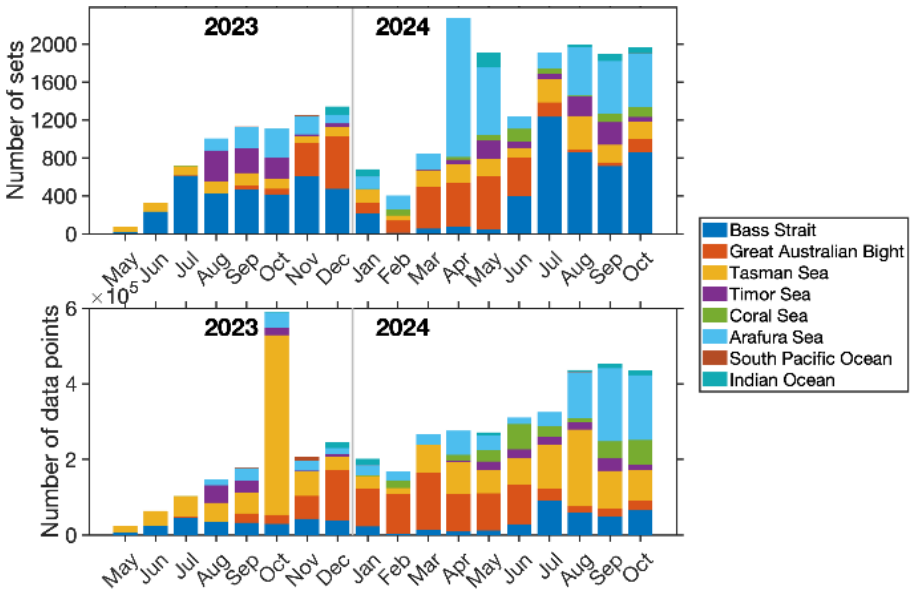
Fishing Vessel Observing Network (FVON) meeting

FishSOOP is part of FVON, an international network of projects which seek to enhance our understanding of the oceans through collaborations between the fishing industry and academia. Fourteen representatives from projects from as far afield as Japan, Sweden, Portugal, Italy, and the USA met at UNSW Sydney for a 3 day workshop to develop the international network. All of the projects use a similar model to IMOS FishSOOP, whereby cost effective, low impact sensors are attached to fishing gear to gather open access oceanographic data quickly and effectively and provide benefit back to the fishers who collected the data.

The group discussed long term funding, data standards, data impact, governance, future collaborations, and capacity building in areas without established ocean observing programmes. The aim of the network is to raise the profile and impact of fishing vessel based observations, support existing projects, and encourage the growth of new initiatives in the areas of greatest data need.

FVON has recently been endorsed as an emerging network by the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), as part of the UN's Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Activities & Insights



Another solid month of data collection by the fleet, with more than 430,000 data points across nearly 2000 sets. Fishers in Bass Strait and the Indian ocean are contributing large amounts of data both in terms of the number of sets, and the number of temperature datapoints with depth. It is remarkable how much data has been collected and we are grateful for all your efforts.

End user survey – initial findings

We have now surveyed around two thirds of the fleet anonymously thanks to diligent work by Bryce who has spoken to many skippers personally. Skippers are both the observers and (in many cases) first users of the data gathered, so it's vital that we understand their views on how we can improve the project, particularly with regards to data impact. Some interesting themes have already emerged.

- **Operational decision making**
  - Several respondents (namely those operating pots and traps) use the data to make dynamic operational decisions about where to fish and which species to target. Other respondents intend to do so once they have monitored trends over a longer period.
- **Reducing stress on live catch**
  - One respondent uses the data to reduce stress on live animals and thereby improving catch quality. They do so by matching the temperature of the water in which the fish are transported to the temperature at depth as recorded by the FishSOOP sensors.
- **Satisfaction**
  - Satisfaction with the project is high across the fleet, with the vast majority responding positively about their experiences.

- **Interface**
  - Whilst the emails are useful, some respondents would like to see a better way of interacting with the data e.g. through an app or dashboard.
- **Future data avenues**
  - There is a clear desire for additional data, particularly assessments of salinity and chlorophyll

A fuller exploration of the responses given will appear in a future edition of the newsletter, once the remainder of the fleet has been surveyed. This will include intended changes to the project arising from this feedback. Thank you again for your time – your input really does make a difference.

Engagement

For those skippers who haven't yet had a call, Bryce will be in touch shortly regarding your experiences and ongoing participation in the project. He will ask you about the matters outlined below regarding the transition of the project from FRDC to IMOS. Please share your thoughts, ideas, and comments with him so that we can improve the output for all stakeholders.

Legal agreement

Participating vessels will be required to sign an updated legal agreement. Please read this carefully as the content may differ from previous version(s) you have signed. You have 2 options for completing this.

1. Wait for the call from Bryce who will take you through the form on the phone and record your details/consent.
2. Alternatively, you can read and complete the form yourself via this link / QR Code.

Sensor re-calibration

The Moana sensors deployed from your vessels require re-calibration every 2 years and several are due in the next few months. We will notify those vessels requiring this and arrange for replacement sensors either to be fitted to your vessel or dispatched to you via post. If using post, we will include a pre-paid envelope for you to return your previous sensors.

Survey

We want to hear your views about FishSOOP and how we can improve the project going forward under IMOS, so please complete our end-user survey as fully and honestly as you can. Again, you have two options for completing this.

1. Wait for the call from Bryce who will take you through the form on the phone and record your responses.
2. Complete the survey using this link / QR code.

Feedback

Please provide your feedback and comments by emailing us. We are particularly keen to understand which elements of the data you receive are most useful and how we can improve.

Matt Irwin, Project manager, UNSW
FishSOOP@unsw.edu.au

Bryce Nurnaitis, Liaison, Fishwell
bryce@fishwell.com

Thank you

Thank you for your continued support of the FishSOOP program - the data that you help us gather is extremely valuable to the wider community. It will help us improve weather and ocean forecasting models daily, allow us to monitor changes in the oceans, and enable a better understanding of the risks and impacts of climate change, while also contributing to operational decision making at sea, and fisheries stock assessment and research.

Professor Moninya Roughan

Chief Investigator

Partners

IMOS Fisheries Ships of Opportunity sub-Facility is operated through the University of New South Wales and the Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS) an IMOS partner.

Operating Institution

University of New South Wales as a partner in the Sydney Institute of Marine Science

Delivery Partners

Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)
Charles Darwin University (CDU)
Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC)
Fishing Vessel Observing Network (FVON) – International
Fishwell Consulting
Northern Territory Fisheries
University of the Sunshine Coast (USC)
University of New South Wales (UNSW)

For information, please see the FishSOOP website and/or email FishSOOP@unsw.edu.au

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About IMOS

The Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS) operates a wide range of observing equipment throughout Australia's vast and valuable coastal and open ocean estate.

IMOS makes all of its data openly and freely accessible to the marine and climate science community, other stakeholders and users, and international collaborators.

IMOS is enabled by the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS). It is operated by a consortium of institutions as an unincorporated joint venture, with the University of Tasmania as Lead Agent.

NCRIS National Research Infrastructure for Australia
An Australian Government Initiative

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IMOS acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and Elders of the land and sea on which we work and observe, and recognise their unique connection to land and sea. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people past and present.