

FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting

Tenth Session

Copenhagen, Denmark 21-24 June 2017

SUMMARY OF TWG5 RECOMMENDATIONS

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Four TWG meetings were held during the intersessional period, three e-meetings (TWG 5.1, TWG 5.2, TWG 5.3), and TWG 5 which was held between the 29 February and 1 March 2016 in Rome, Italy.

The following themes were presented and discussed during the four sessions:

- TWG 5 (29 February-1 March 2016):
 - Future perspectives for the FIRMS Partnership
 - Inventories Minimum Data Requirement
 - Traffic light approach for the FIRMS State & Trend standard descriptors
 - FIRMS Stocks and Fisheries Map Viewer
 - Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF)
- TWG 5.1 (29 July 2015)
 - Traffic light approach for the FIRMS State & Trend standard indicators, a first proposal
 - Review and discuss advanced mock-up on FIRMS Stocks & Fisheries map viewer
 - BlueBridge project and Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries
 - Updating the FIRMS brochure
- TWG 5.2 (1 December 2015)
 - Traffic light approach for the FIRMS State & Trend standard indicators, a first implementation for review
 - FIRMS Stocks & Fisheries map viewer, a first prototype for review
 - BlueBRIDGE project and Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries, an update of the progress made so far
 - Updating the FIRMS brochure
- TWG 5.3 (27 October 2016)
 - FIRMS Stocks & Fisheries map viewer, toward its finalization
 - Traffic light approach for the FIRMS State & Trend standard indicators, a further implementation for review
 - Introducing the notion of “Assessment Unit” in the FIRMS data model

Future perspectives for the FIRMS partnership (TWG 5)

1. The FSC9 recognized FIRMS as a mature framework with strong foundations for global reporting on fisheries status and trends and noted that expectations were met from most of the partners.
2. The FSC9 has urged the Secretariat to cope with the following challenges: a **timelier reporting of partners' contributions**; expand reporting coverage; respond to target audience needs.
3. Although no definitive decision was recommended, it was noted that “**dormant partners**” (e.g., DG Mare, NEAFC, SEAFDEC) should be contacted with the aim to re-engage them in the current FIRMS activities as well as to obtain their data contribution.

Inventories minimum data requirement (TWG 5)

4. In order to increase timeliness and coverage ratio, a general consensus is required on identifying the minimum information requirement for **global level reporting** so that partners can choose to contribute in a simplified manner with relevant, valuable and focused information, i.e. on stock state or fishery status.
5. Links to **source reports** should be part of such minimum information contribution so that users access the broader knowledge. TWG members are invited to evaluate the proposed identified **inventory fields** as minimum data requirement.
6. For stocks, minimum requirements concern the stock identification descriptors (as per current inventory requirements), and ‘catches at stock level’ and ‘state of stocks’ for the purpose of global reporting.
7. The Secretariat is to prepare list of **mandatory and recommended fields**. This process will also be fed by the GRSF developments.

Traffic light approach for the FIRMS State & Trend standard descriptors (TWG 5, TWG 5.1-5.3)

Following the display of the FIRMS State and Trend standard descriptors together with the partners' indicators (approved as FSC9/D7.1 and implemented on April 2015), during FSC9 it was also agreed to move towards the “traffic light approach” where possible (approved as FSC9/D7.2).

Latest decisions and relative documentation are available at (FIRMS Wiki Page) http://figisapps.fao.org/FIGISwiki/index.php/FIRMS_Fishery_Resources_Standard_descriptors_for_State_and_trend#Traffic_light_approach and in the FSC10 Information Management Policy FSC10 meeting document.

8. The group welcomed the work done and there was a general agreement to move towards the finalization and release of the traffic light approach.
9. During the TWG5 the partners decided to adopt the **two-colour scheme** because the yellow icon associated to the term “Fully fished” can be subject to misinterpretation or misuse.
10. The “Biological state and trend” section was moved on top of the Marine Resource fact sheet.
11. It was agreed, for the purpose of simplicity and transparency, to place the traffic light icon upfront in the fact sheet and on the right of the main descriptors, and to elaborate a disclaimer to accompany the matrix.
12. The following suggestions have been left for discussion for the following TWG meeting:
 - a) The single colour applied to the combination of the two dimensions does not give clear indication of any considerable. Two icons, in place of one, could be considered to better rendering difference between the exploitation rate and the abundance level, e.g. as a consequence of a management action.
 - b) Consider matrix of lights (overall status, biological reference point, ecosystem approach, fishery management strategy/system) for future actions.

FIRMS Stocks & Fisheries map viewer (TWG 5, TWG 5.3)

FIRMS Wiki page:

http://figisapps.fao.org/FIGISwiki/index.php/Renewing_the_FIRMS_website#Stocks_.26_Fisheries_map_viewer

The development of the FIRMS Stocks & Fisheries map viewer is related to FSC9 decision D9.4, in the context of renewing the FIRMS website. In addition the secretariat implemented the recommendations made at the TWG5 meetings and eventually the new application was published in April 2017 <http://firms.fao.org/firms/stocks-fisheries-map-viewer>.

13. Partners were invited to provide comments toward the final clearance for public release (possible before the end of 2016), and to share the link with colleagues for any further feedback.
14. It was highlighted how collective wisdom of ‘multiple partners’ /laid the foundation of FIRMS, and how this is critical to maintain and represent in any of the FIRMS products including the new map viewer and FIRMS brochure.
15. There was support for the release of the Stocks and Fisheries Map Viewer once finalized. Absent partners will be informed about the release and relevant suggestions’ as to future modifications worth considering.

BlueBridge project and Global record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF) (TGW 5)

This FIRMS-TWG5 agenda item was discussed together with the BlueBRIDGE colleagues in a joint session with the BlueBRIDGE-TWG1 meeting (1-2 March 2016). FIRMS is one of the source of information for the Global Record for Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF), a task under the Horizon 2020 EU funded BlueBRIDGE project.

A summary of the BlueBRIDGE project can be downloaded here: <http://goo.gl/8JBNJR>.

16. The following suggestions were made regarding **data structure and GRSF overall logic**:
 - a) The governing board of the GRSF should pay attention to cases where possible nuance between a recognized stock and assessment conducted in specific areas which does not necessarily imply the identification of a stock like for their inclusion in the database;
 - b) Consider the notion of environment which is particularly important for coastal fisheries;
 - c) As fisheries information is so heterogeneous and dependent on many variables, the minimum data requirement should be kept as simple as possible.
17. The following suggestions were made regarding **unique identifiers**:
 - a) A mechanism to flag sub-sets of unique identifiers for traceability purpose should be provided in the GRSF and offered as web service;
 - b) In case of missing data, relevant information need to be substituted with “not applicable” standard code for consistency across the system;
 - c) The unique identifier should be expressed in form of a Uniform Resource Names (URN).

Updating the FIRMS brochure (TGW 5)

18. NAFO volunteered to edit the FIRMS brochure (available at <ftp://ftp.fao.org/FI/brochure/FIRMS/>).
19. IATTC, SEAFO and WECAFC volunteered for the revision of the text.

Introducing the notion of “Assessment Unit” in the FIRMS data model (TWG 5.3)

The recent activities for the GRSF - Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (part of the BlueBRIDGE project) highlighted issues associated with the use of the descriptor “Considered a single stock = Yes/No”. FIRMS is currently offering the option to specify if a marine resource is considered a single stock (from a biological point of view) and whether it is a management unit.

20. An update of the data model seems required, introducing a clear **distinction between the three concepts** (“assessment unit”, “management unit”, “biological stock”)
21. The proposal for consideration by partners is to introduce the notion of **“Assessment Unit”** to complement the notion of “biological stock” and “management unit”. This way, any FIRMS Marine Resource record would be qualified with three descriptors: “biological stock = Yes/No”, “assessment unit=Yes/No” and “management unit=Yes/No”.

“SmartForms” (TWG 5.3)

22. The development of “SmartForms” a mobile app was highlighted and partners informed that it will be released as a FAO corporate application (from an IT viewpoint), and an open source version is also expected.