



# CWP

Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics

## Towards a coding system for Water Jurisdiction Areas

CWP ad-hoc Task Group on “Reference  
harmonization” (TG-RH2)

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# Context

- ToR of the CWP ad-hoc Task Group on “Reference harmonization for capture fisheries and aquaculture statistics” (TG-RH2)
- Better characterizing of national jurisdiction areas (NJAs) by opposition to Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)
  - To refine statistics reporting
  - To improve information management (eg Stocks & fisheries)
- **Enforcing and combining existing international standards**
  - UNCLOS terminology, already reflected in CWP website
  - Standards for country & territories:
    - ISO3, widely used by UN (eg. UN Geospatial) and regional organizations
    - M49 – for statistical use, promoted by UNSD
- In general lack of material officially stamped by UN
  - National jurisdiction areas are by nature **geographic areas**, subject of changes, claims and conflicts = highly sensitive information
  - **No recommendations / guidelines from UN Geospatial**
  - Only one relevant source – [Marine Regions](#) – maintained by [VLIZ](#)

# UNCLOS Terminology for water areas

- Alignment with existing UNCLOS (1982) terms and definitions, when possible, already promoted in [CWP website](#)
  - National jurisdiction areas
    - **Internal waters** and **archipelagic waters** (IW)
    - **Territorial Sea** (TS)
    - **Contiguous Zone** (CZ)
    - **Exclusive Economic Zone** (EEZ)
  - Areas beyond national jurisdiction
    - **International waters / High seas** (from Convention of High seas, 1958),
    - More recently referred as:
      - **water column beyond the EEZs** (UNCLOS, 1982)
      - **Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction - ABNJ**

# UNCLOS Terminology for water areas

- Avoid confusion between National jurisdiction areas and EEZs, and in general avoid to use the ‘EEZ’ naming “shortcut”
  - First explanation: **EEZs don’t encompass Territorial seas**
  - Not all National jurisdiction areas include EEZs (because not claimed by country)
  - EEZs and candidate EEZs boundaries are subject to changes, claims & conflicts
    - Conflicts between countries
    - Sovereignty claims by countries over water areas adjacent to *territories*
    - Requests to claim extension of EEZ over continental shelf beyond 200 nm
- To avoid confusion, the recommended practice is to use the *ad hoc* term **National Jurisdiction Areas (NJA)** to characterize water areas that are not ABNJ

# Standards for countries and territories

- Two international standards widely used
  - ISO 3 – still used for geographic areas by UN Geospatial
  - M49 – used essentially for statistics
- M49 is implemented by FAO, but less by RFMOs
  - ISO3 semantic is easily human interpretable (M49 is not); which makes it a good coding system for building *coding systems* and *semantic identifiers*
  - ISO3 is extended in some regional context when used for country-derived concepts: eg fishing fleet, flag
  - Some feedback that M49 doesn't bring added value compared to ISO3. Need more feedback from RFMOs
- Both are used for countries/nations but also *territories*

# Material available for water jurisdiction areas

- No recommendations/guidelines from UN Geospatial
- Only one source available to characterize water jurisdiction areas:
  - [Marine Regions](#) – maintained by [VLIZ](#)
  - Includes an *adhoc* implicit (numeric) *coding system* (MRGID) for all water areas defined in Marine Regions (IW, TS, CZ, EEZ)
- **Pros:**
  - Maintained in time
  - Well-documented; with references official texts (bilateral agreements, claims, etc)
  - Open to collaboration: ongoing exchanges with FAO/NFIS to consolidate the database (eg. Adding M49 coding system in addition to ISO3)
- **Cons:**
  - Not designed in support of UNCLOS, but designed for **biodiversity research**
  - Not using the official definition of EEZs → Ongoing interaction with FAO/NFIS towards introducing the concept of NJAs
  - Not aligned on UN countries & territories

# In summary – what we have

- UNCLOS water area definitions:
  - “NJAs”: IW, TS, CZ, EEZ
  - ABNJ
- 2 candidate systems for referring to *countries* (sovereign) and/or territories: ISO3, M49
- For the time-being, use of Marine Regions database to get the full list of geographic entities that combine water areas and countries/territories

# Candidate coding system for water jurisdiction areas

1. Context is CWP, we reflect it in coding system by using a *namespace: cwp*

namespace:areatype

**cwp:**



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2. We introduce the main breakdown between water jurisdiction areas main types: NJA vs. ABNJ

## Notes:

- ABNJ is in principle “one” huge area. Next slides are not to suggest a breakdown for ABNJ, but will focus on NJAs.
- this might deserve a future extension of present CWP TG-RH2 ToR to include ABNJ breakdown if applicable

namespace:areatype

cwp:nja

cwp:abnj

# Candidate coding system for water jurisdiction areas

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2. We introduce the main breakdown between water jurisdiction areas main types: NJA vs. ABNJ
3. We introduce the ‘national’ jurisdiction area type

#### Notes:

- Creating a code mentioning ‘eez’ water areas means that we should actually look case by case if an EEZ does exist. This work is not covered by MarineRegions database.

namespace:areatype

cwp:nja-iw

cwp:nja-ts

cwp:nja-cz

cwp:nja-eez

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cwp:nja-eez

Need replacement for ‘eez’ to reflect area beyond between ‘ts’ outer limit and ABNJ. Suggestions?  
ts-ext? ts-beyond?

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4. We introduce the country (sovereignty)/territories info and related codes

## Example with Territorial Sea (TS)

Using ISO 3?

`cwp:nja-ts-sov-iso_FRA`

`cwp:nja-ts-ter-iso_GLP`

Using M49?

`cwp:nja-ts-sov-m49_250`

`cwp:nja-ts-ter-m49_312`

M49 codes are numeric, implicit and not appropriate for semantic codes / identifiers

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## Example with EEZs

Using ISO 3?

`cwp:nja-eez-sov-iso_CHN`

`cwp:nja-eez-ter-iso_TWN`

The use of 'eez' is confusing, and in some cases can be problematic. This example shows the sensitiveness of handling 'eez' as it would recognize the existence of an EEZ for Taiwan, and sovereignty.

Using M49?

`cwp:nja-eez-sov-m49_156`

`cwp:nja-eez-ter-m49_???`

M49 codes are not necessarily appropriate for territories breakdown (missing codes)

# Current recommendations

- 1. Use UNCLOS terms & definitions, except 'EEZ'** highly sensitive that requires a different coding (TO BE DEFINED) for the space between Territorial seas and outer limit of NJAs
- 2. Use ISO 3 instead of M49**, for its human interpretability, and being the international standard used by UN Geospatial for countries/territories geographic areas, while considering a mapping with M49 where needed
- 3. Consider using alternate sources other than Marine Regions** to avoid any issue related to misalignment with UN countries & territories, and UN principle of neutrality. Includes:
  - Cross-check MarineRegions with inventory of UN official sources (tedious, but required)
  - Seek for recommendations / guidelines from UN Geospatial, to extend on guidelines received for land-based countries & territories information
  - Evaluate possibility (as CWP Secretariat, or FAO/NFIS) to participate to [UN-GGIM](#) (United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management) working groups, such as the [Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information](#)

# Next actions

1. Identify the best way to code the area that is adjacent and beyond Territorial Sea (TS) and adjacent to ABNJ or other NJAs, without mentioning the term 'eez' that is an UNCLOS legal term
2. Consolidate the digital coding system, based on IT best practices for:
  - *namespaces* handling (main *cwp* namespace and related *namespaces*: ISO, M49)
  - concept breakdown separators
3. Write recommended proposal as CWP TG-RH2 specific report



Thank you ▪ Merci  
Благодарю ▪ ¡Muchas gracias!  
謝謝 ▪ شكرا

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