



<b>FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting</b>
<b>First Session</b>
<b>Rome, Italy, 2-5 February 2004</b>
<b>PRIORITIES FOR FIRMS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT POLICY</b>
<b>Author: Secretariat</b>

**Note: This is a list of items that would probably require attention within the framework of the FIRMS Information Management Policy. The items introduced with a square bullet are hot subjects, as evolving from internal discussions with FI units contributing to FIRMS, the content of Partners' annex 2, feedback received from Partners on case studies, and the technical discussions held around the validation of stock and resources inventories in FIGIS. Table 1 at the end of this document was generated during the Seychelles CWP20-FIGIS meeting, and was reproduced here for memory. The FSC is invited to comment on the list, to set priorities, and start discussing most important points.**

## Shopping list for priorities settings on FIRMS information management policy

Shopping Items	Priority Rank
<p>How does the FSC develop the elements of the IMP</p> <p>Baseline: IMP principles as per FIRMS Partnership arrangement</p> <p>Possible method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interactive work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e-mail (eg object ownership, object naming convention)</li> <li>training sessions</li> </ul> </li> <li>- rules evolving from discussions with stakeholders raised as candidate rules</li> <li>- unresolved issues finally discussed during the meetings</li> </ul>	
<p>FIGIS-FIRMS Dissemination policy</p> <p>FIRMS web-site: Style, layout and content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- banners, logos, accessibility</li> <li>- Partnership description</li> <li>- activities</li> <li>- progress indicators for the FIRMS programme</li> <li>- description of quality indicators used for the reporting</li> <li>- access to the FIRMS databases</li> <li>- glossary</li> </ul>	
<p>Web publishing policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> copyright: notion of Institution responsible versus entity defined as data owner</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> cover page information: elements of bibliographic citations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> sources information: standards to be applied</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> printing formats from web pages</li> </ul>	
<p>Collections dissemination policy. Which guidelines for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> access/presentation of information of sibling nature but corresponding to different concepts (eg maps of statistical areas and maps of assessment of management areas) or different elaboration/workflow mechanisms (eg FIDI Capture statistics against Global Tuna statistics, or catch statistics and catch data compiled for assessment purpose)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> production of cross-sources fact sheets drawn from various contributions to FIRMS</li> </ul>	
<p>Templates and editorial policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- layout issues: general FIRMS style, look and feel, query assistants: the presentation of stocks lists, identity sheets, fact sheets</li> </ul>	

Shopping Items	Priority Rank
<p>FIGIS-FIRMS security policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Joint data ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- editors – approvers rights</li> <li>- ownership for regional overviews (eg there is potential overlapping between FAO reporting and RFBs reporting)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Guidance on appropriate use of information contained in FIRMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- which type of analyses can be led</li> <li>- which types of automated routines can be run</li> </ul>	
<p>FIGIS-FIRMS language policy</p>	
<p>FIGIS-FIRMS encouragement policy</p> <p>How do we encourage submission of data by Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ flexibility, and facilitated submission of information</li> <li>□ training – assistance – sub-contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- languages included</li> <li>- maintenance of history, update cycles and recovery of historical data</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>How do we attract new Partners</p>	
<p>FIGIS-FIRMS quality assurance policy</p> <p>What are FIRMS quality criteria, and indicators</p> <p>Which rules for ensuring that the submission and use of this information is clearly documented and traceable</p> <p>Which rules for ensuring the transparency of the Partners’ information management policy</p>	
<p>FIGIS-FIRMS standards and data management</p> <p>Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FIRMS glossary: terminology used, definitions for data domains of interest to FIRMS (eg Aquatic resource, Fishery resource, Management units, ...)</li> <li>- endorsement of data domain names <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ objects naming conventions</li> </ul> </li> <li>- topic trees for harmonized presentation: is there a willingness to follow a trend of increasing harmonisation</li> <li>- metadata mandatory fields</li> <li>- methods for development of Metadata standards</li> </ul> <p>Data Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inventories: which control over the list of objects submitted by the Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ what is the position of the FAO global inventory of fisheries in FIRMS: workflow for inclusion in FIRMS</li> <li>□ consistency: do we look for a consistency between Partners annex 2, eg all Tuna bodies annex 2 should mention inclusion of the Tuna statistical data sets in FIRMS</li> <li>□ Management of historical data (eg links to source documents on Partners web-sites, with possible modification of URLs, or removal of documents)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- mechanisms for addressing and/or harmonizing alternative views</li> </ul>	

**Table 1: Information management policy – Policy/ Principles/ means for implementation (from CWP20 – FIGIS meeting, Seychelles, January 2003)**

Policy	Principles	Means
Provide guidance on the types of information needed.		
information remains under the full responsibility and control of data owners.	Assign permission to users and provide restricted/secure area for staging data validation and integrity checking, and resolution of conflicts.	
the information management policy will need to match the policies of partners regarding their publications and the dissemination of data and documents, including language requirements	the system should allow publication in different languages, the list of which is decided by the FSC	all controlled vocabulary, including metadata, might be available in three languages (English, French, Spanish).
	information submitted by partners is not inadvertently modified during compilation and collation within FIGIS	Consider using built-in relationships to facilitate searches on related objects.
	no ‘inappropriate’ use of information can be made, such as comparisons of analyses of status and trends or management advice, which be separated from associated interpretative text may distort partner’s source	guidance on the types of information that may be extracted by automated routines
	information disseminated in FIRMS is synchronised with information published by partners	Use a single, master copy of information submitted by partners.
	Consider what is made of the information contributed by a partner who then withdraws from the partnership	
Encourage partners to submit the best scientific information	Criteria allowing the establishment of quality levels are set-up, and partners contribution are checked against these levels of quality	Use quality indicators in metadata
	Quality levels are disseminated together with the contributions	
Encourage participation by partners and cooperation	Maintain flexibility, and facilitate submission of information	
	Identify which languages may be used by partners to submit information, as well as those languages used by FIGIS in reporting information (including consideration of languages other than those of the information submitted).	
	Consider maintenance of history, update cycles and recovery of historical data	requirements for archiving information and providing access to historic information

Table 1: Information management policy – Policy/ Principles/ means for implementation (from CWP20-FIGIS meeting, Seychelles, January 2003)

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Principles</b>	<b>Means</b>
Maintain objectivity timeliness and transparency	ensure that the submission and use of this information is clearly documented and traceable	the information that has been agreed to be made available through FIGIS shall be disseminated ensuring source and citations of responsible Party
Consider presentation of alternate views	domains where alternative views can be presented are identified	
	mechanisms for addressing and/or harmonizing such views are developed	facilitate the identification of alternate or conflicting views and information within FIGIS
		set-up security mechanisms to keep identified inconsistencies in the contributions of partners under confidential private access until they are resolved
FIGIS avoids the use of proprietary software wherever possible, in line with the general FAO policy		
[Establish and] maintain standards	as a guiding principle, metadata and controlled vocabularies (thesauri) standards should use existing standards wherever possible and, when extensions cannot be avoided, build such extensions on existing standards	XML is the core format for data and information input, output and exchange
		Thesaurus: contextual definitions need to be associated with the term
	Standards, guidelines and codes for standardization between data suppliers and FIGIS shall be made available through the CWP web page.	Exchange protocols of spatial information are part of the FIGIS-FIRMS standards: when presenting geo-referenced data, an individual data provider should use the appropriate geographical system <sup>1</sup> . Local organisations should make sure that the detailed maps that they might develop for

<sup>1</sup> note: this is likely to be a local standard.

Table 1: Information management policy – Policy/ Principles/ means for implementation (from CWP20-FIGIS meeting, Seychelles, January 2003)

Policy	Principles	Means
		their own use conform to existing map systems
Ensure enforcement of quality assurance (QA)	<p>FIRMS recognises the existence of two types of QA:</p> <p>1) QA of information submitted by partners: Partners are responsible for the information submitted and the QA associated with that information. Therefore, the veracity of this QA will depend on the needs of partners and their level of responsibility</p>	The internal quality assurance schemes of the partners should be transparent and information on them should be available to all users, though it need not be fully documented in FIGIS.
-	<p>2) Minimum QA required for the sound operation of FIGIS (to be further developed by the FSC) should include, inter alia, the following key issues.</p>	<p>Identification of which fields are mandatory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of training and support to partners in filling out fact sheets to ensure standardization in data provided.</li> <li>- Development of quality assurance indicators (both qualitative and quantitative, such as “risks indicators”)</li> <li>- Indicators of reliability and timeliness.</li> <li>- General guidelines for peer review.</li> <li>- Issues about discrepancies between sources, and related validation processes.</li> </ul>
	a single harmonised layout will be used for all partners	guidance on layout aspects such as the use of visual identities, logos and identity of partners, output formats and the attribution of information.