

Data Management Plan

Funding obtained for this project will be used to continue Continuous Plankton Recorder (CPR) Tows on established Routes in the North Western Atlantic over the five year period from 2017 to 2022. These tows will continue to operate on a monthly cycle and will collect phytoplankton and zooplankton samples that are analysed to produce abundance and presence data over temporal and spatial scales for a large number of plankton taxa.

Data concerning tow position, dates, and times will be recorded on paper log forms by the towing ship's crew and later quality controlled and entered into the CPR database. Phytoplankton and zooplankton samples will be captured on silk cassettes within each CPR unit. These samples will be sent to SAHFOS at Plymouth in the UK where they will be analysed and archived. Analysis of all samples will be completed within one year of collection and the results will be incorporated into the CPR database after quality control checks.

Data quality and backup.

Taxon data for each sample will be entered into a holding database by two members of SAHFOS staff who will cross check data entered against paper records. Data will be further examined by other members of quality control staff before public release of the data in the CPR database. The CPR database is mirrored offsite, backed up offsite daily, and to tape on a weekly basis. (A months' worth of tape backups are saved and then recycled). The whole database is backed up to disc and sent to the British Oceanographic Data Centre (BODC) quarterly to ensure the data are secure and can be restored in the event of a hardware or software failure.

Access to Data

All data for taxa recorded on the tows will be supplied to BCO-DMO (<http://www.bco-dmo.org/>), providing open access to CPR data. This data will be supplied via the SAHFOS GBIF IPT¹ server and will be assigned a DOI prior to release. The data will be updated on an annual basis when a complete years' worth of CPR samples have been processed (release date typically September the following year).

Data resulting from processing of samples from these tows (and any other tows recorded in the CPR Database) are also freely available, direct from SAHFOS upon the completion of a data license agreement. This agreement is to ensure that data users always come to a recognized source for CPR data, to ensure the quality of the data provided, avoiding contamination of the data from a 3rd party, and to maintain statistics on the use of CPR data, as well as providing technical and scientific support to the data user.

¹ Global Biodiversity Information Facility – Integrated Publishing Toolkit