

EMODnet Ad Hoc User Working Group Draft Terms of Reference (ToR)

Contents

1	Background and Rationale	2
2	Users working group objectives	2
3	Users working group composition	2
4	Role and responsibilities	3
5	Deliverables / Expected Impact	3
6	Indicative timetable.....	3

1 Background and Rationale

The primary aim of EMODnet is to unlock marine data and make it accessible for a wide range of users including private bodies, public authorities and researchers.

There are seven thematic web-portals covering data resources from bathymetry, geology, physics, chemistry, biology, physical habitats and human activities. In addition, an 'EMODnet Entry Portal' is being established to provide an entry point delivering access to data, metadata and data products held by EMODnet thematic sites and demonstrating the value of a common platform to access and combine data from various thematic portals through use case studies.

EMODnet project activities are reviewed and advised on by the EMODnet Steering Committee (operational matters), the Marine Observation and Data Expert Group MODEG (strategic and technical advice), EC DG MARE (overall oversight) and the EMODnet Secretariat (operational implementation).

The proposed User Working Group is an ad hoc working group under the EMODnet Steering Committee and will operate in close liaison with the other advisory bodies to ensure EMODnet meets the needs of its different users.

2 Users working group objectives

The EMODnet users working group objectives are to;

- Guide the development of the EMODnet Entry Portal (use case studies, functionalities, presentation, ...);
- Evaluate and improve the overall user experience as well as the coherence between the various EMODnet thematic lots and work;
- Discuss and provide recommendations related to user and usability matters to the EMODnet Steering Committee; and
- Assess available EMODnet services by defining data/product evaluation and/or assist in data/product evaluation.
- Consider longer term future requirements (e.g. missing components, duplications, ...)

3 Users working group composition

The users working group composition of between eight to 15 members is based on nominations and open calls for participation and will be composed of:

- (i) External data users and experts from key stakeholder sectors (private industry, universities, research organization, policy makers, spatial planners) with a broad multidisciplinary perspective, able to cover at least two or more thematic and geographical areas;
- (ii) Representative of the Entry Portal developers (VLIZ);
- (iii) Members of the EMODnet Secretariat;

External data users and experts will be selected to ensure a balanced coverage of EMODnet thematic areas as reflected by the EMODnet lots. The Secretariat will be responsible for the organization and running of the meetings.

4 Role and responsibilities

The EMODnet Secretariat convenes and chairs the user working group meetings. To this end, the Secretariat shall draw up an agenda based on the user group work plan to be circulated well in advance of the Meeting. The agenda shall be adopted by the group at the start of the meeting. The Secretariat meeting documents in advance of the meetings and provide meeting minutes within one month after the meeting. The Secretariat will report on the agreed actions and report to SC members accordingly.

5 Deliverables / Expected Impact

The main output of the user working group is to provide recommendation on

- Selection and development of current and future EMODnet Entry Portal use case studies;
- Prioritisation and development of additional EMODnet Entry Portal functionalities, visualisation tools and presentation;
- Proposed harmonisation actions to improve the coherence of the user experience for the various EMODnet thematic lots, in particular in view of obtaining, using and combining data from more than one portal;
- EMODnet services in terms of data/product evaluation.

6 Indicative timetable

The Ad Hoc User Group is established for an initial duration of three-years (2014-2016) which can be extended by the Steering Committee for another three year period depending on the need.

The Ad Hoc User Group will be activated and work remotely using email, skype and other virtual meeting tools as required. In addition, depending on the budgetary and operational feasibility, it is anticipate that the User Group will meet physically during one workshop in 2014 and one workshop in 2015 (one day meetings) organised by the EMODnet Secretariat.

Actions/activities in 2014:

- Propose ToR and composition by June 2014
- Invite members before summer 2014
- Kick-off / first workshop late 2014