

Interagency Ocean Observation Committee

Animal Telemetry Network (ATN) Implementation Task Team

Scope of Work – September 21, 2015

Goals

The ‘Strategic Plan and Recommendations for an Animal Telemetry Network (ATN) through U.S. IOOS’ lists specific recommendations for how the U.S. IOOS can integrate animal telemetry efforts into a system to deliver critical information on biological resources and ecosystem functions, as well as oceanographic data that will complement and enhance existing observing capability. Following the Strategic Plan, the initial ATN Task Team was formed under the IOOC to develop the ‘ATN Implementation Plan’ that provides the details on how the ATN will be structured and conduct operations. The goal of the new ATN Task Team will be to support the transition of the ATN from the planning phase to operational phase and become an integrated component of the IOOS enterprise.

Objectives

The task team will address its transitional goal by focusing in three key areas:

- A:** Constitute the ATN Steering Group (SG) to support the transition from the current governance of the ATN, to that described in the Implementation Plan and vital to the future development and growth of the network.
- B:** Improve coordination, support, maintenance and enhancement of existing ATN infrastructure and capability particularly in the RAs, and with regard to the development of the ATN Data Assembly Center (DAC). To accomplish this objective the task team must develop a better understanding of current and planned telemetry capabilities in the RAs, their interest in future developments, and establish lines of communication between the RAs, IOOS PO, potential funders and ultimately the SG.
- C:** Identify an initial suite of animal telemetry observations that will constitute the backbone or baseline observations of the ATN. With a SG and the DAC in place the final component of an operational network is the core of observations that will flow into the DAC. This will only be effective with engagement from the RAs and existing telemetry programs and partners.

Actions

- A. Constitute the ATN Steering Group.** This is a key step in the transition from the current governance of the ATN to that described in the Implementation Plan and vital to the future development and growth of the network. The SG will provide long-term technical and programmatic expertise, as well as leadership for the ATN. The IOOC ATN TT will solicit members for designated seats representing federal agencies involved in animal telemetry, IOOS RAs, and non-federal entities. In addition, each member agency of the IOOC with an interest in ATN data should identify a single point of contact (POC) for ATN issues. This individual, who may or may not sit on the SG, would provide input on ATN-related issues to that agency’s ATN SG member and be responsible for coordinating input and feedback on the ATN works with all interested parties in the agency. In the future the ATN Network Coordinator will work to harmonize the needs of the SG, the IOOS Program Office, RAs, and stakeholders; therefore, the NC will play an active role in assembling the SG.

- B.** Improve coordination, support, maintenance and enhancement of existing ATN infrastructure and capability particularly in the RAs, and with regard to the development of the ATN DAC. Specific tasks may include:
1. To improve coordination, support, maintenance and enhancement of ATN activities in the RAs and beyond, the TT will develop a plan to communicate ATN goals, objectives, activities, and success, via an ATN website, list server, or otherwise.
 2. To develop a better understanding of current and planned telemetry capabilities in the RAs, and their interest in future developments, the ATN Task Team (TT) will expand an initial survey of Federal partners (Spring 2015) to the IOOS RAs, and including current regional animal telemetry experts. Specifically the survey will 1) identify regional ATN assets, 2) historic datasets, and 3) current and planned animal telemetry projects. The survey results will be used to prioritize the order of regional workshops (see activity C1 below), feed into gap analyses, and planning discussion at each workshop. Survey results will be communicated with the community as outlined in the communications plan (see activity B1)
 3. To develop the ATN Data Assembly Center, a key piece of existing and future network infrastructure, the TT will provide guidance as needed to ensure project progress in Phase II of the DAC development. Key areas of development for the DAC include a) Infrastructure upgrades, b) Ingesting data from data providers external to the TOPP team, c) Bringing the DAC into compliance with IOOS DMAC standards, and d) Entering the entire TOPP data base into the DAC.
- C.** Identify an initial suite of animal telemetry observations that will constitute the baseline observations of the ATN.
1. In line with the Implementation Plan and building on the results of the Federal partner and RAs surveys (see activity A1) the TT will convene the first two in a series five planned regional workshops. These workshops will engage the scientific community, the IOOS PO, RAs, stakeholders, and federal and state agencies to identify and prioritize needs for animal telemetry observations (satellite, archival, and acoustic) of aquatic species (e.g., pinnipeds, sharks, whales, fishes, turtles, and seabirds) that complement existing and planned efforts. ATN baseline observations may be a combination of the needs identified through the workshop and existing and planned efforts. The TT will develop terms of reference for all workshops, and for the first two will identify participants, summarize relevant survey results, and conduct preliminary gap analyses. Because the ATN TT will be inviting expertise outside the federal family, these events will be published in the federal register in coordination with the IOOS Program Office (PO).
 2. Recommendations and outcomes of each workshop will be communicated to the IOOC and the ATN community in accordance with the communication plan (see activity B2).

Outcomes

Regular updates on activity progress will be provided to the IOOC/co-chairs

- Formation of ATN Steering Group: nominations for membership in place.
- Communications plan, including a summary of the survey results
- Two regional workshops will be held and recommendation and outcomes of each workshop will be communicated to the IOOC and the ATN community in accordance with the communication plan.

Timeline and Costs

Timeline. The Steering Committee will remain in effect for one year, or until 1 September 2016, unless disbanded sooner or extended as agreed upon by participants in coordination with the IOOC co-chairs.

Costs. The project will receive an initial commitment by the IOOC for \$25,000 to support workshops to address the tasking outlined above. The Task Team can receive additional funds if agreed upon by a majority of the IOOC Co-Chairs.

Frequency & Coordination

The frequency of the Task Team meetings will be as agreed by the group to achieve the activities in a timely manner. Notionally the Task Team will meet on phone conferences on a bi-weekly or monthly basis.

Co-Chairs will include Dr. Michael Weise (ONR), Dr. Sean Hayes (NOAA/NMFS/SWFSC), and the ATN Network Coordinator (initially Dr. Sam Simmons from September 2015 to March 2016 during her detail at the IOOS PO). The co-chairs will lead the task team, chair meeting, and identify actions. All actions undertaken as part of this SOW will be agreed upon by both co-chairs, and in consultation with the Task Team as needed.