Examples of best practices in use: benefits and challenges

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Australia’s Marine Sampling Best Practices

Australian Marine Parks
Standards are like toothbrushes. Everybody wants one but nobody wants to use anybody else’s.

— Connie Morella —

Standards are like sex; one mistake, and you’re stuck supporting it forever!

-Mark Pilgrim
Content of best practice package

1: Introduction
- Background on monitoring
- Field Manual rationale
- Field Manual process & format
- Comparative assessment
- Contributor list

2: Planning & Design
- Importance of design
- Design in monitoring
- Sampling design issues

All Field Manuals will include the following, with required and recommended steps delineated:
- Platform description
- Platform use in marine monitoring
- Pre-survey preparations
- Onboard collection methods
- Onboard sample/data processing
- Post-survey sample/data processing
- Data QC and release
- Version control and future updates

Technical advice
Example forms & templates
Process of development

1. Form working group
2. Develop content
3. Working group consultation
4. Complete draft
5. Strawman draft
6. Internal and external review
7. Package released
8. Solicit feedback
9. Field test
10. Revise content
11. Assess uptake

Version 1
- Released 2018

Version 2
- Released 2020
Version 2 Updates

- Increase from 70 to 136 collaborators representing 53 organisations
- Corrections, updates and stakeholder feedback considered in Version 2
- New best practice (imagery acquired from remotely operated vehicles)
- Amalgamated best practice (multibeam)
- Online version
Why go digital?

- Increases flexibility of user experiences and needs.

- Readily reflects minor corrections by harvesting through the source document maintained on Google docs.

- Version control is easier to manage through permissions on GitHub and GoogleDocs.

- Analytics are easily generated.

- A clearly documented workflow will help future contributors to maintain and update best practices.

- More flexibility to embed imagery and other media (e.g. video tutorials) in future versions.
Are these actually best practices?

Further information:
marine-sampling-field-manual.github.io
Marine sampling field manual for benthic sleds and bottom trawls: https://repository.oceanbestpractices.org/bitstream/handle/11329/473/FieldManuals_NESPMarineHub_Chapter8_Sled_v1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

MESH Recommended Operating Guidelines for Trawls and Dredges: https://www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu/resources/recommended-operating-guidelines/

Ocean Best Practices
To qualify as “GOOS endorsed” a best practice is expected to

a. have completed a rigorous community review process whereby comments are publicly invited and adjudicated
b. be approved by the leadership of the relevant network, expert team or other community leaders, after the review, including potential content changes in response to feedback given to the author for changes.
c. is fit for the purpose as defined and fully satisfies the definition of a best practice OBPS
d. has been recognised as such through the relevant GOOS body, e.g. GOOS BioEco panel, BGC panel, OOPC or OCG or ETOOFS, after the approval of the relevant network leadership
e. Is available and identifiable within the OBPS repository, or will be submitted as soon as endorsement is received.
To learn more or submit your own best practice, please visit www.oceanbestpractices.org