

Vessel Database trouble

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Hi David,

I just had a discussion with Dane. He still doesn't have access to the actual SQL database, although FIA has. It is clearly a matter of trust, which makes sense, as FIA obviously doesn't want more people messing up the data. Dane only has a copy in Excel and an 'aggregated' Excel spreadsheet prepared by Roitana. This aggregated data was created from putting different sources together and has already been approved by the DG as the official Vessel Database data.

What Roitana has asked Dane to do is to make sure that the data (and any by province summaries) from the SQL Vessel Database data matches with the official aggregated data prepared by Roitana, which is a bit problematic. The total number of records don't match and because changes that were made in the aggregated data, e.g. how missing data and outliers have been interpreted. Dane would need to identify which records are missing and both data sets cannot be reliably linked because of the changes.

Recommended approach:

1. The obvious solution is to use the aggregated data to create a new Vessel Database. I mean the data doesn't need to be 100% correct, as long as it can be 'cleaned' and since this is the officially endorsed data set, why trying to fix the original incomplete SQL database? According to Dane that is not possible, because of how the data is aggregated and he cannot share that data without permission from Roitana. **However, as I understand it, this aggregated Excel data is the best starting point for a clean Vessel Database.** I suggest Dane explains exactly why we cannot use the aggregated data as the vessel Database, or what we would lose if we do, we just need an easy entry point to prepare a version of the database that can be used for vessel registration and licensing;
2. The officially endorsed data still has a lot of issues for some fields. My additional suggestion to make the work manageable is to identify which fields in the SQL database are essential for licensing and registration and then focus only on these fields. For example, vessel ID, location, vessel/engine details, and ownership). That should make it easier to prepare a 'clean' database that can be made accessible on-line and eventually linked with SMART for use in vessel licensing. Then Dane can focus on assessing the status of these critical fields (the database has close to 150 fields), flag the records that are fine and preparing the web-interface to search/report/export these records; and,
3. We ignore the main issue is the permission for allowing FiA, FiACs, and GDWMTP access to the subset of the vessel census data, this can only be decided by the DG and it is unlikely that will happen before the end of the year.

I have three questions:

1. How do proceed with using the existing endorsed data set as the basis for the Vessel Database and if we decide it is the best way forward how do we discuss with Roitana to basically ignore the existing SQL database?
2. Since I am not a marine fisheries person, who can work with me on confirming the appropriate information necessary for vessel licensing and registration, to be shared with FIAC and GDWMTP, before presenting them to Roitana for consideration?
3. Do we agree to try to hit the 40% target **and** leave the issue of granting access to whatever data set we will agree on for FiA, FiACs, and GDWMTP, to FIA?

You (David) or Bert need to discuss this with Roitana, as we really need to make sure we get some results and don't expect Dane to do the impossible.

Please advise.

Best regards,
Theo