1

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Canadian Technical Report of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences ####

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DESIGN GOALS, TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION AND PRACTICAL USE OF ANOTHER DATA ENTRY SYSTEM (ANDES)

by

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Ricard, D., Fishman, D., Beazley, L., Boivin, B., Emberley, J., Martin, R., Rolland, N., Sean-Fortin, D., Stoyel, Q. and Vergara, P. 2024. Design goals, technical implementation and practical use of Another data entry system (Andes). Can. Tech. Rep. Fish. Aquat. Sci. nnn: vi + 43 p.

An event logger and data entry system to facilitate the capture of information collected during scientific field work conducted by DFO Gulf Region was developed. The application, called "Another data entry system" (Andes) was implemented as a browser-based environment that facilitates its deployment in a variety of data capture scenarios. Here, we describe the design goals and implementation details of Andes, and present a number of usage cases. Although the system is tailored primarily for use on fishery-related ecosystem surveys, the flexibility of the application in terms of adapting to new gear types and deployment options promotes its use in a wide variety of applications. To promote transparency, longevity, endorsement and use of Andes by other scientific groups, the application utilizes Open Source software and a shared code development platform.

RÉSUMÉ

Ricard, D., Fishman, D., Beazley, L., Boivin, B., Emberley, J., Martin, R., Rolland, N., Sean-Fortin, D., Stoyel, Q. and Vergara, P. 2024. Design goals, technical implementation and practical use of Another data entry system (Andes). Can. Tech. Rep. Fish. Aquat. Sci. nnn: vi + 43 p.

Un système d'entrée de données pour faciliter la saisie des informations recueillies lors des activités scientifiques menées par la Région du Golfe du MPO a été développé. L'application, qui s'appelle "Another data entry system" (Andes), a été mise en œuvre en tant qu'environnement basé sur un fureteur, ce qui facilite son déploiement dans une variété de scénarios de saisie de données. Les objectifs de conception et les détails de mise en œuvre d'Andes sont décrits, et un certain nombre de cas d'utilisation sont présentés. Pour promouvoir l'utilisation d'Andes par d'autres groupes scientifiques et assurer la pérennité du projet, l'application s'appuie sur des logiciels code source ouvert et utilise une plate-forme de développement de code partagé.

1 Introduction

The scientific activities conducted by the Atlantic regions of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) include ecosystem surveys, oceanographic monitoring surveys, sentinel fisheries programs, coastal surveys, port sampling and many others where field data are collected. These monitoring programs require the collection of a wide variety of information on the marine environment and ecosystems, and are used to inform science-based decision-making. To support the collection of data and metadata during those surveys, paper-based systems were initially used during field work on research vessels, fishing vessels or at commercial ports. With the advent of computing capabilities, paper data sheets were digitized and the resulting data was stored for subsequent analyses. In the 1980s and early 2000s, a number of computer-based data entry systems were developed, in particular to support the activities of scientific ecosystem cruises where a variety of instruments are used to collect data. For scientific trawl surveys, this meant a tool that could support the activities associated with processing the catches from the net, and that could also be used to manage other survey activities while at sea. In the Maritimes and Gulf regions of DFO, the Groundfish Survey Entry (GSE) and later the Ecosystem Survey Entry (ESE) were deployed on workstations in the wet laboratory of research ships. These applications supported the capture of data on individual specimens, including the collection of length frequencies and more detailed sampling based on the survey goals and associated protocols. In the Québec Region of DFO, a similar tool called the "Module des Relevés de Recherche" (MRR) was developed and used to directly enter data in digital format on the research vessel.

The later versions of those data entry systems were built with Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) and relied on Microsoft Access databases. While highly functional, both the ESE and the MRR have important limitations:

- Despite being used over a local area network (LAN), these tools are not designed to work in a networked configuration.
- These tools are unilingual (French or English depending on the DFO region) and their infrastructure does not readily support multiple languages in their user interface.
- Pre-.NET Visual Basic (VB), the main development framework used to build the applications, is a dated programming language. To adapt the software so that modern libraries can be used and to develop an Application Programming Interface (API) in VB will become increasingly difficult over time.
- The use of a Version Control System (VCS) is incompatible with the Microsoft Access applications that VB applications rely on. The absence of a VCS presents serious challenges for managing, disseminating and troubleshooting versions of an application across multiple platforms and is a major impediment for a collaborative approach to development.
- While these applications were built by DFO, multiple attempts to obtain support for these tools from Information Management and Technology Services (IMTS) (now Chief Digital Officer Sector) were unsuccessful. This lack of support means that technicians often resort to either using a spreadsheet application such as Excel, or use a pen and paper to perform activities unsupported by the applications. Performing data entry using separate

and disconnected methods means that the data has to be manually consolidated at a later date which is time-consuming and prone to error.

- The lack of a true server-side application (e.g. web application) means that agile development is effectively impossible; especially in the context of a scientific mission that is underway.

While the status quo was meeting the immediate data capture needs of DFO scientists, a proactive stance towards addressing the above spurred the development of *An*other *d*ata *e*ntry *s*ystem (Andes). This project effectively began in the summer of 2018 and coincided with a need to provide application support for port sampling data collection. The first field deployment of Andes for an at-sea scientific mission took place in the fall of 2019 during the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence September ecosystem survey. In its pilot year, Andes was used in parallel to the ESE on board CCGS *Teleost* and was tested and modified to ensure that it performed as intended in supporting data entry during scientific activities.

This report documents the design principles that guided the development of Andes, provides technical details about its implementation and examines the usage cases encountered thus far. It provides guidelines for assessing the suitability of Andes for novel applications (e.g., other field activities and sampling programs) and discusses the ways in which the application could gain further adoption in supporting a diverse range of data collection activities within DFO.

2 Methods

The overall goals for the redevelopment of the data acquisition system used in the DFO Gulf Region were to utilize a contemporary software development environment, facilitate transparency through use of a shared code development environment, have the ability to support multiple languages, and to support flexible deployments. The envisioned application would be modularized into different consoles to allow for a diverse range of uses, while leveraging the same core features and infrastructure that the existing application were built on. As the starting point of Andes was the ESE which was used during the annual September survey conducted by the DFO Gulf Region, the replacement data entry software had to first replicate all the proven functional capabilities of the ESE. Early versions of Andes achieved those goals and the system was further developed throughout its usage by scientists in the Gulf Region.

The development of Andes coincided with the desire to revamp data collection procedures relating to commercial port sampling activities (Benoît and Daigle 2007). To provide an alternative to the paper-based forms, an application that could be deployed on field tablets for scientific staff was required. A typical usage case for such an application is to obtain length-frequency samples from commercial fisheries landings, either onboard fishing vessels, on wharves or in fish processing plants. Sampling protocols often include additional requirements such as length-stratified sampling of materials such as otoliths, or the collection of whole individuals for later processing in the laboratory. The data structure, protocol flexibility, and deployment requirements of this initial port sampling application provided many of the foundational components for other usage cases.

Andes was designed with 3 main usages in mind: A) as the main data entry system for ecosystem survey observations; B) to track and capture data and metadata from oceanographic observations; and C) for commercial port sampling activities. For use on the ecosystem surveys, the application must allow for the capture of all information and parameters detailed in the sampling protocols of the survey (e.g. Hurlbut and Clay (1990)). This entails the capture of all information related to fishing activities, plus ancillary variables such as weather, sea state, and water temperature. As catch contents are sorted and identified during the ecosystem surveys, the data entry application must support users in obtaining catch weights and abundance by taxon, individual observations of a specimen's length, weight, maturity status, etc. The application should also be designed to flag users when specimens are to be collected, or when additional sampling requirements are present (e.g. collecting fish otoliths, gonad samples, fin clips, etc.).

A large component of the ecosystem surveys conducted by the Gulf, Québec, Maritimes, and Newfoundland and Labrador Regions includes the collection of physical, chemical, and biological oceanographic data in support of the Atlantic Zone Monitoring Program (AZMP) (Therriault et al. 1998). A CTD/Rosette system is deployed at a subset of fishing stations where vertical profiles of conductivity (salinity), temperature, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll and other parameters are collected. Water samples (e.g., nutrients, dissolved oxygen, salinity) are collected at predetermined depths using the Rosette system and attached Niskin bottles, and plankton samples are also collected via vertical ring net tows. These data support annual "state of the ocean" reporting conducted by the AZMP, and are also used in various stock assessments and ecosystem research projects to provide additional ancillary variables for interpreting the captures data.

Historically, the event metadata associated with the deployment of oceanographic equipment on the ecosystem surveys was recorded using the Electronic Logbook (ELOG) system, a browser-based logging system developed by the Paul Scherrer Institute, Switzerland. However, ELOG was installed and operated in complete isolation from logging systems used for the biological data, making it difficult to merge the two datasets upon completion of a survey. Ideally, the new application would streamline the capture of oceanographic data and simplify its association with the corresponding biological data.

The following section outlines additional user requirements and design principles that also played a role in decision-making during the development of Andes.

2.1 Flexibility, scalability and reliability

The development environment used for the application must be a contemporary programming language with a proven track record for performance, usability and adaptability. Within the context of DFO Science, there are a high number of usage cases under which this application can be deployed. For example, the number of users might range from a single employee alone in the field to several dozen scientists, technicians and vessel personnel participating in a research cruise. Similarly, the application might need to be deployed on a stand-alone device or accessed from within a LAN or even over a wide area network (WAN). The application must be able to accommodate a wide range of practical scenarios.

2.2 Version control/source control

The utilization of a VCS is an indispensable component of a sustainable development workflow. Version management is especially important in the context of having concurrent instances of the application in production at any given time. Knowing the version of a production instance is necessary to resolve any issues that might arise. Similarly, databases and backup files are intimately linked to an application's version number. In order to successfully re-instantiate a backup file, the precise version under which it was produced must be known. The VCS will also provide an indispensable framework for the coordination, examination and integration of contributions from collaborators.

2.3 Unit Testing

The application performance needs to be reliable, especially considering its potential to be deployed in remote field environments. The implementation of unit tests is a practical way to ensure the maintenance of core functionality over time. At one extreme, the addition of any code can be preceded by the creation of unit tests (i.e., test-driven development). This approach will maximize the stability of an application, but can hinder the momentum of a project, especially in its early stages. At the other extreme, application development in the complete absence of unit testing occurs at a relatively fast pace but will result in a project that is vulnerable to breaking in unexpected ways and one that is difficult to maintain and to on-board new development team-members.

2.4 Backup strategy

In all deployment scenarios, data of high business value will be captured and there is little to no tolerance for data loss. Accordingly, the application must have a way to facilitate the implementation of a robust data-backup strategy. Capturing numerous snapshots of the application (and database) is ideal since doing so provides redundancy as well as the ability to revert to a specific point in time. If possible, the backup files and snapshots should be stored on storage volumes that have some form of redundancy.

2.5 Customizable protocols

The flexibility of scientific project leads to design, modify and report on their sampling protocols, without depending on developers, is very important. The application should allow users to provide a variety of detailed information based on their particular sampling protocols, without the need to change the application source code. Similarly, different protocols utilize different code conventions for the identification of biological catches. The application should offer the flexibility of users to utilize their preferred system of catch codes.

2.6 Quality control

The implementation of quality control checks in a data entry application is of paramount importance. For the usage case that supports a scientific fisheries survey, the following quality control checks must be part of the application:

Fishing sets The application should ensure all the required information about a fishing location have been filled in. Users should be warned if the fishing station start and/or end coordinates fall outside the expected sampling stratum (if applicable).

Catches The application should verify the validity of catches that do not have any specimen-level data entry associated with them. This validation is important to help identify catches that might have been entered accidentally.

Specimens The application should flag specimens whose length falls outside an acceptable range and should not allow blank values. Similarly, a validation of the specimen's length-to-weight ratio should be performed to warn users if a recorded measurement falls outside the expected range.

Observations Individual observations are characterized by an observation type. Observation types should have predefined data types such as integer, float, string or categorical. The application should ensure that inputted observation values respect the data type of the corresponding observation type, and falls within an allowable redefined range. In the case where an observation type (e.g., sex) has a set of defined categories (e.g., male, female, unknown), the application should ensure that any entered values fall within the set of available options.

2.7 User interface

The user interface of the application can have a significant impact on user experience and on-boarding. By ensuring the application has a modern and intuitive interface, the barriers related to on-boarding new users are significantly reduced. Furthermore, an intuitive interface will reduce the need for extensive help documentation. Wherever extra annotation is required, documentation should be inserted directly in the application in the form of tool tips and help bubbles. By appealing to the end users' intuitions and by providing in-situ help documentation, we reduce the likelihood that fields and features get used incorrectly.

2.8 Reactivity

In the context of being on a research vessel survey, data entry happens at a very high rate and on numerous devices; often with multiple transactions per second. Accordingly, it is imperative that the application does not create a bottleneck for data entry and is able to keep pace with experienced technicians. The usage of a reactive Javascript library (code execution on client devices) in conjunction with an API (code execution on the server) would allow data entry to occur without webpages having to constantly refresh.

2.9 Multilingualism

The ability for users to choose the language of their choice in the application is of considerable importance to this project. Previous tools that have been used were unilingual, and this by itself would have limited the scope of their use in a Canadian national context.

3 Results

3.1 Architecture

The architecture of Andes differs significantly from that of its predecessor (see Figure 1). The application and its associated services are centralized on one or several servers and include: 1) a web-service for handling HTTP requests and responses; 2) a database service for storing data associated with the application; 3) a file-sharing service for handling the storage of backups and related files; 4) a printing service used for printing out specimen labels; and 5) a message-brokering service for handling asynchronous tasks. Client devices, such as data-entry workstations, no longer require the installation of anything more than a modern web browser; i.e., one that is capable of supporting HTML5 and ECMAScript 2016 (Javascript). Accordingly, this increases the range of devices and operating systems that may be used for accessing the application. For instance, the switch to using Andes has allowed for the integration of mobile phones, tablets and linux workstations into the data entry workflow. Finally, the new configuration means multiple stations can simultaneously receive and enter data into the same Andes instance.

The Django Web Framework was selected for the backend of this application due to its modularized nature; virtually all aspects of the programming framework can be decoupled. Furthermore, the Django framework is written in pure Python language—an open-source, generalized object-oriented programming language that is popular for use in data-heavy applications. In addition to standard Django templates used to render HTML webpages to end-users, the web framework also contains an elaborate REST-API component. Django uses an Object Relational Model (ORM) to handle the data layer, and includes APIs for a variety of modern relational database management systems (i.e., PostgreSQL, MariaDB, MySQL, Oracle, SQLite, etc.). Several of the application's frontend templates contain reactive components implemented in Vue.js.

The frontend of the application is built in HTML5, JavaScript and Cascading Style Sheet (CSS). Most users will be familiar with the flow and functionality of a web browser and will be comfortable navigating and entering data into a website. Facilitated by the Django model and form classes, all controls (i.e., fields) on the website contain verbose descriptions and help text. The Bootstrap v5.0 CSS and JavaScript libraries were utilized in order to give the application a sleek, modern look and to ensure compatibility with different types of devices (e.g., personal computers, tablets and mobile devices). The Bootstrap library also provides palatable styles for displaying help text in the form of popups and tool tips.

While web applications are most often used over a network, the Django library comes with a development web-server that permits users to serve and use the application locally. In this scenario, a single computer acts simultaneously as server and client. While there are important limitations to the use of the Django development web-server in a full-scale production environment, the option to run and use Andes on a single device is an advantage for stand-alone, non-networked usage cases (e.g. field tablet used for port sampling).

The architecture used by Andes creates networking requirements that were not previously present in the ESE and MRR. The server and the client devices must be connected to the same network. The network does not need to have access to the WAN (i.e., the internet) connection. As long as they are connected to the same LAN, they can be configured to work together. This suits the networking environment on board remote vessels that can have sporadic connection failures with the outside world.

The Andes application provides access to its various components based on an internal system of authentication and authorization. The credentials of a given user will affect what action they are able to do. For example, while the chief scientist is able to modify sampling requirements for the mission, other users are not.

3.2 Andes Modules

The main index page of the Andes user interface (Figure 2) allows users to access several different modules that loosely correspond to the main use cases defined in the above Methods section. Access to the different modules is determined by a system of authentication and authorization. Consequently, the index page will appear different to users depending on the permissions they have been granted.

While Andes has been implemented using a modular design, there is a core set of components that are used across modules. This is true at the level of the database, where in addition to a number of shared tables, sub-modules will have tables that are specific to a given use case. For example, while the Mission table is used across several modules, the Specimen table is specific to the Ecosystem Survey module.

Similarly, Andes has modules that are used across multiple user scenarios; in particular, the Bridge module (Figure 3) and the Cruise Dashboard (Figure 4). These modules display high-level information to end users such as queued stations, vessel speed, position, heading and various summaries of science activities that are underway or that have already taken place. All core pages of the application can be toggled to night mode, as desired.

3.2.1 Bridge

The Bridge module (Figure 3) is used by navigation and fishing officers in the wheelhouse (usually on a tablet) to input fishing set metadata. The data entry occurs in two ways: 1) by directly editing the set form (a.k.a. the set card); and/or 2) via the Fishing Console, which is displayed in Figure 5. The Fishing Console can capture a number of different events that take place during fishing as well as information coming from the sonar and trawl mensuration system sensors (e.g., Scanmar system).

3.2.2 Set manager

The Set manager module is used to manage upcoming sets and review completed set cards. Typically accessed by the chief scientist, it provides the ability to select upcoming sampling locations and initialize the corresponding set cards. The Set manager module is where sets can be activated and deactivated. Additionally, this module is where any quality assurance flags associated with a set and its catches can be reviewed and accepted.

3.2.3 Ecosystem Survey

The Ecosystem Survey module is the main entry point that technicians will use to input survey data. A depiction of the main tables involved in the Ecosystem Survey module, and their relationships are displayed in Figure 6. This component of Andes replicates the capabilities of the ESE for capturing detailed information on length, weight, ageing material, maturity, etc. about fish and invertebrate specimens. This module, typically accessed from the wet laboratory of a survey vessel, is used for all entry of data related to measurements and observations of marine organisms. New catches are first entered into the Active Set page, as portrayed in Figure 7. The Active Set page accepts regional catch codes as a way to input new catches into a set. If a code is not known by the user, a search feature is available. Next, baskets and their corresponding weights and statuses (e.g., sampled vs. not sampled) are then entered into the Catch Card page (Figure 8). Finally, specimens are entered into the Data Entry page (Figure 9). As the data entry progresses, users are dynamically prompted with observation fields that follow the catch-specific sampling protocol. An overview of the sampling protocol is displayed on the right-hand side of the Data Entry page.

3.2.4 Shrimps

The Shrimps module is an extension of the ecosystem survey module focused exclusively on shrimps as it has different workflow requirements. This module allows the user to subsample a total catch of shrimp into different species and maturity stages before collecting biological data (cephalothorax length for all species and occasionally weight for *Pandalus borealis*).

3.2.5 Charts

The Charts module (Figure 10) leverages the Bokeh Python library to generate data visualization of arbitrary length and weight observation variables that were attributed to specimens. The module provides an interactive scatter plot of length vs weight as well as a length histogram. The data can be filtered by species, set and sex (when available). This visual presentation of the data is meant as a supplemental validation aid in identifying outliers that may have escaped the quality controls. Should outlier points need further manual inspection/intervention, a direct link to access/edit the specimen data is conveniently made available.

The user is also presented with options to include an empirical growth model together with weight vs length scatter data. This option, which only applies for “official” length and weight observation types, can be useful for tuning the tolerance band used for quality control (see Quality Control section below).

3.2.6 Oceanography

The Oceanography module is a component of the Andes application that is capable of being deployed independently of the Ecosystem Survey module. This module is used to track and record the deployment of CTD/Rosette systems and plankton nets (Figure 11). Basic metadata, such as the location and date/time of deployment, ‘on bottom’ and gear recovery events can be collected. Additionally, the Oceanography module allows for users to enter which water samples/parameters were collected from pre-determined depths after CTD/Rosette deployment (Figure 12). The simplified Entity Relationship Diagram of the Oceanography module of Andes is presented in Figure 13. Upon completion of a survey, Andes is designed to provide a series of oceanographic summary reports that summarize aspects of the data collected:

Mission instrument report Provides a summary of the oceanographic equipment used on the survey, including component type, model, serial number, and date of last calibration (for CTD sensors).

CTD metadata report For each fishing set and station where the CTD/Rosette system was deployed, the date, time, position, sounding, and bottle sample IDs are provided.

Hydrolog report For each fishing set and station number, a summary of the CTD/Rosette and ring net deployments are provided, including the event numbers corresponding to each gear deployment, comments entered into Andes regarding each gear deployment, summary information related to each set and station, including surface temperature, sounding, day of year, and date/time.

Plankton report This report provides a summary of the plankton net deployments conducted in relation to each fishing set and stratum. The wire out and wire angle, as well as flow meter start and end are provided.

Bottle report This report provides a detailed summary of each CTD/Rosette operation (e.g., altimeter height, bottle height and depth, max. CTD depth), the water samples/parameters collected, and also includes the results of the Winkler titrations for dissolved oxygen samples, if entered into the Oceanographic Activity detail page.

TS report This report provides a summary of the surface and bottom temperature and salinity data from each CTD cast in relation to each set, station, and stratum.

ELOG report This report emulates the .log summary report produced by ELOG. This report is required in order to upload the survey data into the Microsoft Access template used by AZMP to load data to BioChem, DFOs national repository for discrete and plankton data.

These reports facilitate the post-processing of the data, its integration into existing databases and its distribution and upload to various open data platforms.

3.2.7 Forecasting utility modules

There are a number of task-specific modules designed to assist in mission forecasting and planning. These modules are designed to provide timely information to scientific staff participating in a research cruise, and to also assist the chief scientist and watch leaders in the planning and execution of a mission.

Cruise dashboard

The cruise dashboard module is used to provide an overview of the current status of a mission to all Andes users (Figure 4). It provides a range of real-time statistics that are used for planning purposes, including current status (e.g., fishing, steaming, deploying/retrieving net), the list of upcoming stations, and data from the latest trawl.

Forecasting

The forecasting tool is designed to provide real-time prognostics of survey completion targets based on assumed transit speeds and time spent fishing and processing the trawl catches (Figure 14). This feature provides a useful tool for the chief scientist to evaluate different sampling objectives and to compare different survey route options. As the conditions change regularly during a survey, this tool links with the set manager to provide an estimate of the amount of time required to complete planned stations. This tool can be used for short-term planning (i.e. a day's worth of sampling) or longer-term planning (i.e. a mission's worth of sampling).

Progress Map

Another task-specific utility is the progress map which shows what strata have been completed based on target and minimum number of sets per stratum. This map provides the chief scientist with a clear visual depiction of what has been accomplished and what remains to be accomplished during the survey. The number of sets conducted in each stratum is compared to the minimum and target number of sets per stratum to determine the colour that each stratum will appear in the progress map (Figure 15).

3.2.8 Images

The images module is a component of the Andes application designed to streamline image management during surveys. The module enables images to be captured and stored directly from the application using a smart phone, tablet or webcam. Doing so allows images to be directly linked to the set, catch, or specimen that they represent, eliminating the need to manually create this link from a filename after data collection is complete. Images are queued during data collection based on various triggers (user request, rare catch, sampling protocols, etc.). The queued images are listed in the app allowing users to capture them on a camera-enabled device which can be separate from the one being used for data entry.

3.2.9 Port sampling

Andes was adapted from a previous port sampling module to support activities where technicians obtain length frequency samples from commercial fishing activities. The port sampling module of Andes is fully stand-alone and is primarily used independently of all other modules. The protocols used in the Port Sampling module are much simpler than those belonging to the Ecosystem Survey module. Through these protocols, users are able to control collection quotas (e.g., “keep two specimens per bin”), the flow of data entry (e.g., which field should be displayed in the sample form) and the layout of the data entry page (e.g., length bins organized in a vertical or horizontal configuration) (see Figure 16). Typically, production instances of this module are deployed on rugged field tablets that are suitable for use in wet environments.

The design of the user interface is simple and intuitive, where each length bin is a large button on the display. As specimens are tallied, the corresponding buttons on the touchscreen are pushed. When the collection quota of a given length bin has been met, the color of the button changes from blue to green. A screenshot of the data entry page is presented in Figure 17. Data export reports which allow the data from the field tablets to be imported into external production / archival databases are also available. The various tables of the Port Sampling module and how they relate to one another are shown in Figure 18.

3.3 Technical Implementation of Other Design Goals

3.3.1 Version control/source control

Git was selected as the VCS for this project due to the fact it is widespread in use and open-source. The remote repository for this project is currently hosted as a private project on the Gulf Science organizational GitHub account. The project is additionally making use of GitHub infrastructure including, pull requests, issue management (e.g., bugs, feature requests and general enhancement requests), security alerts and version releases. The Andes online documentation is served using GitHub Pages.

3.3.2 Unit testing

For Andes development, we use a mixture of test-driven development for critical components of the application, and are also continually adding unit tests for more user-specific components. Using the built-in Python/Django testing framework, this strikes a middle ground between the two approaches described in the above section. While the goal is not to impose test-driven development for the application, the use of unit tests is highly encouraged, especially to back up the core functionality of the application.

3.3.3 Backup strategy

The Andes application has the capability to perform manual and automatic backups. These backups consist of two parts: the full contents of the database (in JSON format, in raw SQL format, or a standalone SQLite database file) and metadata pertaining to the current version of the application (i.e., the git hash). The structure of the application models and associated data structure will change over time with development. Accordingly, in order to re-instantiate a particular data snapshot, it is critical to know the precise software version from which it originated. This combination of data export and git version number, gives users the perpetual ability to recreate the exact application environment from the time of the snapshot, no matter how much the application has changed in the interim. In the application, backups are automatically created upon closing sets. Moreover, users also have the ability to manually trigger a backup at anytime.

3.3.4 Customizable protocols

Andes provides project leads the ability to create and modify sampling protocols through the user interface. By doing so, project leads are able to shape the flow and control the behaviour of the application during data entry. This includes deciding which fields to display in a form (e.g., set cards), importing stations and other geographical features (e.g., sampling strata, Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation areas, Marine Protected Area (MPA)s, etc.) and the quotas and observation fields associated with different catch items. Examples of catch-specific sampling requirements that can be programmed by project leads can be found in Table 1.

3.3.5 Quality control

Andes implements a suite of quality control checks. All quality control flags that are raised during data entry are appended to a report and require sign off before a set can be closed.

Sets

The Andes provides clear feedback regarding the completeness status of a given set. Flags are raised if a set's start and/or end coordinates are outside the expected sampling stratum. Additionally, an alarm is sounded in the bridge console module when deviating from the desired stratum in real-time. The bridge console also provides personnel with fishing timers and tow distance displays (see Figure 5).

Andes will create a flag when the tow distance as calculated by the cruise track, differs from the tow distance as calculated by a straight line between the start and end coordinates by more than 5%. Andes will flag when the start or stop coordinates of a set are not within the expected NAFO area (if applicable).

Catches

There are numerous flags that can be attributed to individual catches. Flags are generated for catches that do not have any data entry associated with them. In addition to this, Andes will flag when the weights entered for baskets are considered suspect. This is determined by either the default maximum basket weight (mission level), or the maximum basket weight for a given species. Andes will also flag when the difference of total weight of *sampled* basket differs by more than 25% from the total calculated specimen weight. The total calculated specimen weight is a combination of actual weights (when collected) and those which were estimated from length measurements. The latter is achieved by using regression coefficients estimated from historical length (L in centimeters) and weight (W in grams) observations using the model,

$$W = aL^b \tag{1}$$

where a and b are the regression coefficients for a given species. Andes offers the option to specify separate regression coefficients for males, females or unspecified individuals (as shown in Figure 19). An additional optional layer of quality control allows project leads to assign allow-lists and restrict-lists, commonly known as “whitelists” and “blacklists”, to a mission or to a specific geographic feature (e.g., a stratum). In this way, the validity of each catch entered into a set can be assessed. For example, if a catch being recorded is *not* on the that set’s associated allow-lists, the end user will be notified that this is an unusual observation and will be prompted to collect documentation. Similarly, if a project lead adds a catch to the mission’s restrict-list, users who enter this catch will receive a warning message, asking them to double-check the assignment. This is useful when project leads want to limit the usage of certain taxa during data entry, e.g., *Alosa* sp. is preferred over the use of *Alosa pseudoharengus*.

Specimens

Specimen lengths and length-to-weight ratios are validated against the parameters entered in the sampling requirements for that catch. Acceptable length-to-weight ratios are assessed by comparing the actual weight to the estimated weight, as described by Equation 1 in the section above. Additionally, Andes will flag when there is a mismatch between fish maturity and somatic length. Project leads can specify mature length thresholds for males, females or unspecified individuals in the sampling requirement of a given species (as shown in Figure 20).

Observations

When entering observations, Andes enforces the data type of the corresponding observation type; invalid entries are not accepted. When entering an observation for a categorical observation type, Andes will display the list of options to the end user and inhibit users from entering invalid selections. Andes will also ensure observation types are not left blank. However NaN entries are permitted when a particular observation is meant to be skipped. Certain observation types are meant to be unique, e.g., unique tag number. If this is flagged at the level of the observation type, end users will be notified if there is a violation of this structure.

3.3.6 Reactivity

The Django REST framework was used to construct the REST-API component of the application. The project takes a hybrid approach, combining the use of standard Django views and Vue.js frontend applications embedded in the templates. The latter, which offloads some code execution directly on client devices, was used to avoid the need for constantly reloading webpages and to optimize the flow of traffic across the network. Reactive javascript frontend applications also provide a better experience from the point of view of an end-user.

3.3.7 Multilingualism

The Django framework has excellent support for internationalization and localization, including the translation of text and the formatting of dates, times and numbers. It achieves this using a system of ‘hooks’ used by developers to indicate which parts of the code should be localized. See Django - Internationalization and localization for more details on this process. In our application, an end-user can toggle between English and French by simply clicking on a button. In this way, each client can view the application in the language of their choice.

4 Discussion

Since its initial deployment during the 2019 September ecosystem survey in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence, the capabilities and performance of Andes have significantly improved. The software has also been adopted as the main logging software used during ecosystem surveys conducted by DFO Gulf, Maritimes and Québec Regions. The current capabilities of Andes have evolved over the course of the last five years as the system has been used to support diverse field activities.

The forecasting tool and progress map presented in this report were not in the original deployment of the application and were added during the cruise based on the needs of scientific and Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) personnel. The reporting facilities provided by Andes were developed to support the many consumers of the data collected during scientific activities. Two types of reports are available for Andes: 1) reports meant to be used during ongoing field activities and 2) reports meant to be used after field activities are completed.

If a vessel is located within range of cellular phone signals, it is possible to make Andes accessible via the internet. While this has some important advantages, exposing an IP to the internet comes with security risks that have to be mitigated.

Andes is designed so that data backups are immune to the potential pitfalls of relying on earlier versions of required packages. Having backups that are associated with a specific git version, which includes a comprehensive list of all dependencies and an exact match of the application data model, allows users to readily bring back Andes to where it was at the time of the backup. Users can then access the reporting features that will allow them to create a version of the required data that suits their needs and facilitates inclusion in existing relational database management systems or other types of data solutions.

When present, the client-server separation lends itself nicely to be adaptable to new requirements. One can potentially expand upon the *system* with minimal changes to Andes by interacting directly with its exposed REST-API. For example, an imaging system can be aware of current GPS coordinates or current Set/Station. Photos or videos acquired by such an imaging system could automatically append these as metadata, or even add media identifiers directly to the database as they are captured.

Most modern vessels will already provide the minimum networking infrastructure necessary for system deployment where connectivity between a dry laboratory, a wet laboratory and the ship's wheelhouse is necessary. In the case where static networking options are not available, this requirement can be met using inexpensive consumer-grade, portable networking equipment (wireless router, switch, etc.). However, as installing an ad-hoc network for scientific needs in a vessel may lead to code violations, we urge Andes users to collaborate with vessel management bodies like the CCG or chartering authority.

The addition of allow-lists and restrict-lists was an important addition to Andes that came out of a Regionalization workshop that took place in December 2022 at the Gulf Fisheries Center. While these features will help improve the quality of data collected, it is important that if utilized, they should be detailed explicitly in the survey sampling programme. For example, if project leads add certain catch items to the restrict-list, this should be mirrored in the survey sampling programme.

Andes also supports the use of various electronic tools such as calipers, electronic measuring boards and scales. Drivers for the measuring boards and scale were developed by the Gulf and Quebec regions and are available on Github. Such peripherals, which often masquerade as keyboard input, are typically configured on host clients and as such don't need special attention to work with Andes.

While there is always an effort to make the user interface intuitive and self-explanatory, there is still the need to maintain documentation for the project. The Andes docs are maintained through GitHub Pages and are publicly available here: https://dfo-gulf-science.github.io/andes/

4.1 Integration of Andes with Existing Data Repositories

Andes is a standalone application with an underlying relational database management system. The data collected during research activities must be extracted from the application and integrated into existing databases. This step has proven to be challenging but has also encouraged close inter-regional collaboration since the challenges associated with integration were shared by the different groups involved.

4.2 Future Direction

Onboarding efforts for additional coastal surveys (scallop, sea-cucumber, whelk) and regions is an ongoing process driven by Andes' success. A major, short-term developmental priority for Andes is the implementation of bottom trawl survey validation protocols as defined by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (Politis et al. 2014).

4.2.1 Atlantic Zone (Offshelf) Monitoring Program (AZMP/AZOMP) oceanographic surveys

Andes was first trialed in parallel to ELOG on a dedicated oceanographic survey led by the Maritimes Region AZMP in the spring 2022, and was recently used as the sole event logger during the 2023 Atlantic Zone Offshelf Monitoring Program (AZMP) survey. During its initial trial on the 2022 spring AZMP survey, a number of limitations were noted. ELOG assigns each gear deployment a sequential 3-digit ‘event’ number. In contrast, Andes groups all gear deployments in relation to a Set number, which is a primarily fisheries-related term that is not applicable to oceanographic survey data collection. However, Andes could easily be adapted to the AZMP‘s normal metadata naming convention by renaming Set to ’station’, given that multiple sampling events normally occur at the same AZMP station.

The initial version of Andes included only two oceanographic gear options: CTD/Rosette and ring net deployments. However, Argo floats, oceanographic buoys, moorings, multinet, and other gear are routinely deployed during AZMP and AZOMP surveys, and the order of operations must be flexible. In previous versions of Andes, the order of operations under each Set could not be modified between stations. With developer support, Andes was modified to allow for the inclusion of additional gear options and the ability to toggle and select between gear types should the order of operations change between stations.

ELOG allows users to create various ‘logbooks’ that allow for custom recording of metadata. On AZMP surveys, a custom ELOG logbook was created to capture metadata related to samples collected from underway or flow-through thermosalinograph (TSG) systems used on these surveys. A sub-module could be developed in the future to allow for a similar level of data capture using Andes.

Andes shows great promise for enhanced data recording and oceanographic sample tracking relative to ELOG. Future modifications of Andes could incorporate information on water budget requirement for each CTD cast, and could allow for the tracking of laboratory post-processing. However, making changes to Andes on the fly would not be possible on local installations (i.e., not on the custom servers permanently installed on the ecosystem survey vessels) of Andes without on-board developer support. With this, Andes could be adopted as the full-time event metadata logger on AZMP and AZOMP’s oceanographic surveys in the future.

Andes has been successfully used by a number of DFO regions and has proved to be a useful data entry application that fulfills its intended design goals. The infrastructure used in the development of the application also means that novel modules and functionalities can be implemented to support new user requirements. For example, adding functionality to add barcodes and QR codes to physical samples such as otoliths and tissue samples.

4.3 Governance

Andes does not currently have a well-defined governing body which makes the project vulnerable. To alleviate this situation, we ask that this technical document, as well as the developer's guide, be considered when outsourcing development efforts towards Andes. This will ensure that the core vision is maintained and that software sustainability principles are upheld. We also hope that this report can stimulate the establishment of a governance structure for the development of the application, one that ensures regional participation and that facilitates collaborative efforts.

Andes reached a critical point in its lifecycle. It has been used as the main data entry strategy for numerous missions over the span of a few years. Although new features can always be added, its core functional requirements can now be locked-in. These boundaries are now well-defined and described in this report.

5 Acknowledgments

We thank all DFO and CCG personnel who were involved in the early testing and deployment of Andes prior to and during the 2019 southern Gulf of St. Lawrence ecosystem survey. Any success and momentum encountered by this project would not have been realized without the patience, open-mindedness and critical feedback from its user community, including management, lab technicians, chief scientists and CCG personnel. We thank the Gulf Region publications coordinator for his/her assistance with getting this document published.

6 References

Benoît, H.P., and Daigle, D. 2007. Procedures for commercial catch sampling of finfish and shrimp in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. Can. Manuscr. Rep. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 2833: iv + 63 p.

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Therriault, J.-C., Petrie, B., Pepin, P., Gagnon, J., Gregory, D., Helbig, J., Herman, A., Lefaivre, D., Mitchell, M., Pelchat, B., Runge, J., and Sameoto, D. 1998. Proposal for a Northwest Atlantic Zonal Monitoring Program.. Can. Tech. Rep. Fish. Hydrogr. Ocean Sci. 194: vii + 57 p.

7 Tables

Table 1. Example of sampling requirements for five species that are regularly captured in the annual southern Gulf of St. Lawrence September survey.

Species	Example of sampling requirement
Atlantic Cod (*Gadus morhua*)	Collect length, sex, weight, maturity. Collect otoliths from: - one specimen per cm per set for specimens 25 cm and under; - two specimens per cm per set for specimens between 26-45 cm; - and three specimens per cm per set for specimens 46 cm and over. Collect 10 specimens from the Banc des Américains MPA that are between 40-70 cm.
Atlantic Herring (*Clupea harengus*)	Collect length from every specimen; preserve 2 specimens per every 5 mm length bin per set.
Atlantic Halibut (*Hippoglossus hippoglossus*)	Collect length, sex, weight, maturity, stomach weight and otoliths from every specimen. Collect 300 fin clips per mission. Collect 25 female gonads per mission.
American Lobster (*Homarus americanus*)	Length and sex from one specimen per sex per 3 mm per set. If female, check for lobster eggs. If female size is greater than 70 mm, check molt stage and shell disease index. If female size is greater than 70 mm AND has eggs, check abdominal width, egg stage and clutch fullness rate.
Winter Skate (*Leucoraja ocellata*)	Collect length, sex, weight, maturity, disk width and tail description from every specimen.

8 Figures

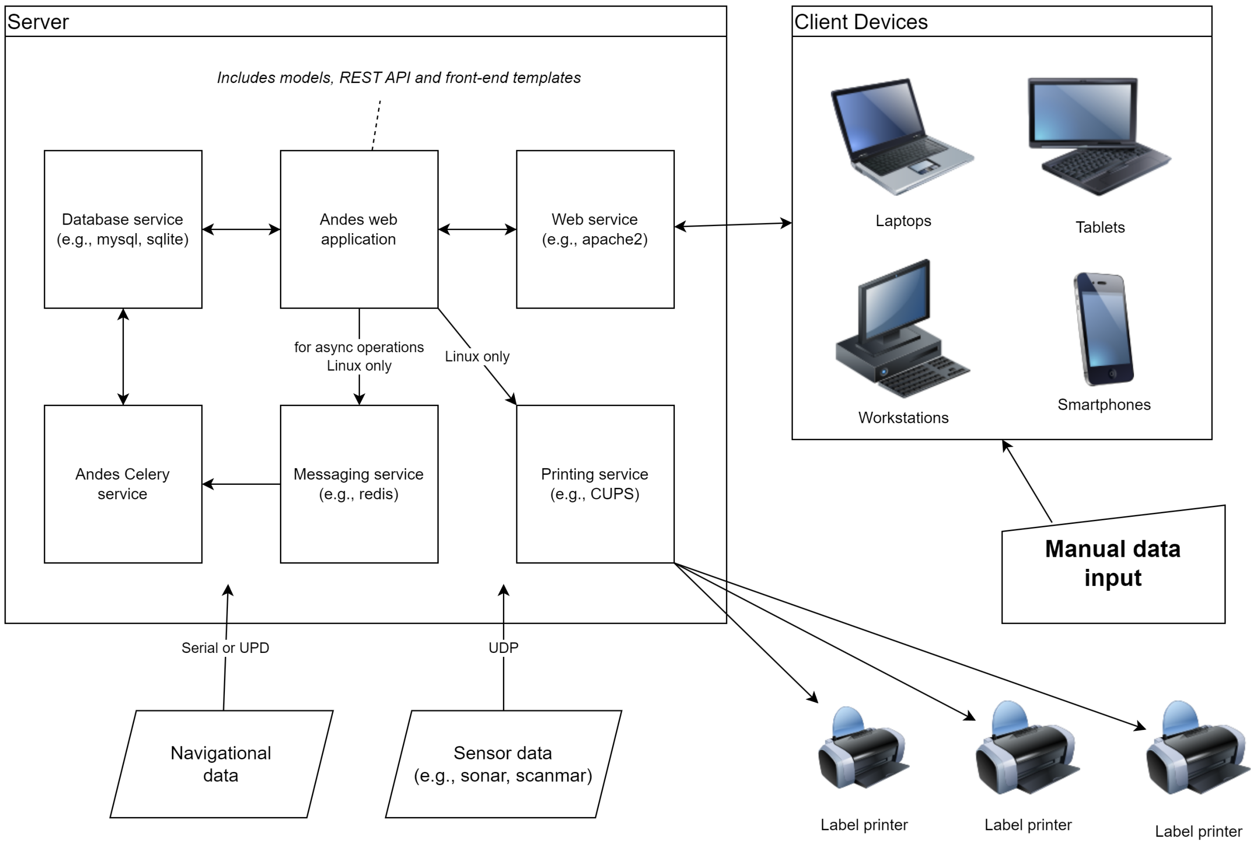


Figure 1. The generalized system architecture diagram of the Andes application and its associated services.

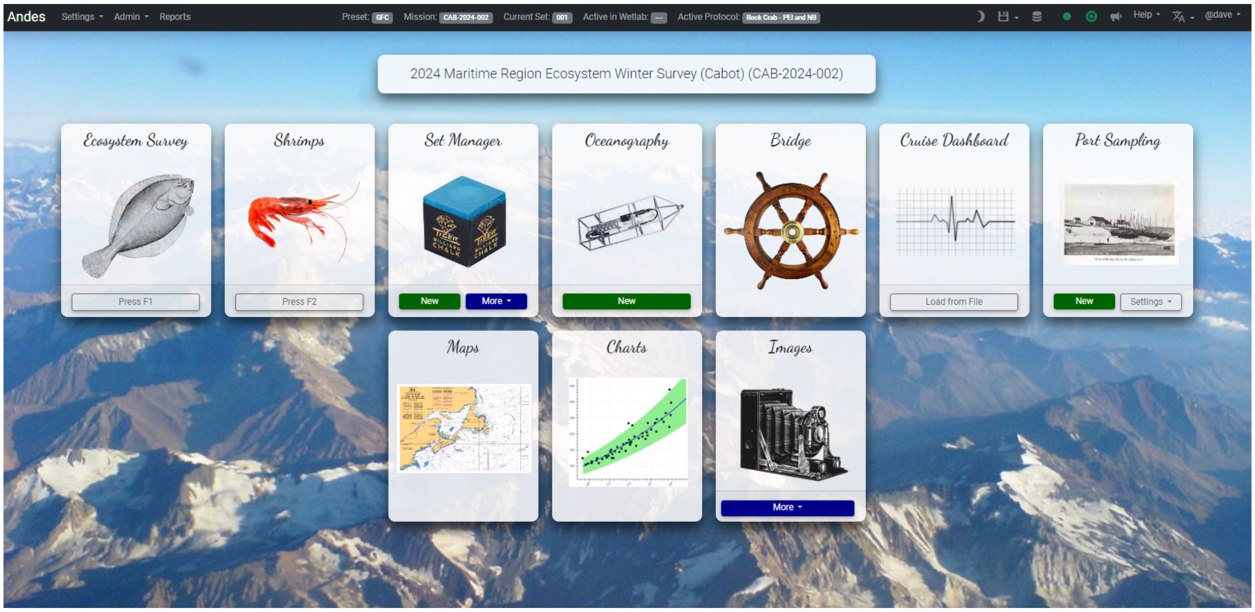


Figure 2. A screenshot of the main index page of Another data entry system (Andes) showing the principal modules of the application. What is displayed on the index page will depend both on the user's permissions and profile.

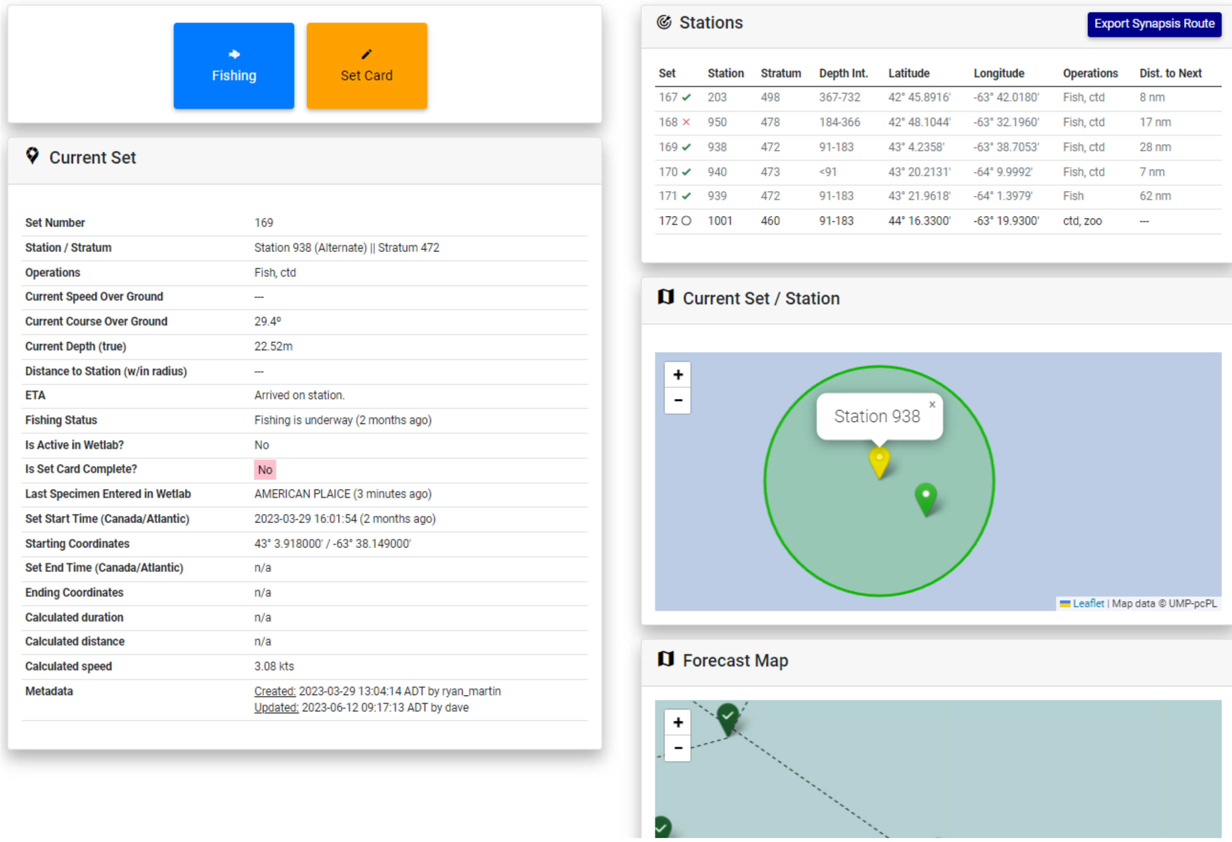


Figure 3. A screenshot of the Andes Bridge console. This app is used by bridge personnel across multiple user scenarios. This dashboard is a critical link in the communication between the scientist and crew personnel. An example of this is the station list; as a chief scientist plans out his or her route, queued stations and the associated activities will appear in the Bridge console. The Bridge console is also used by bridge officers to trigger the start and end of operations and to input set metadata.

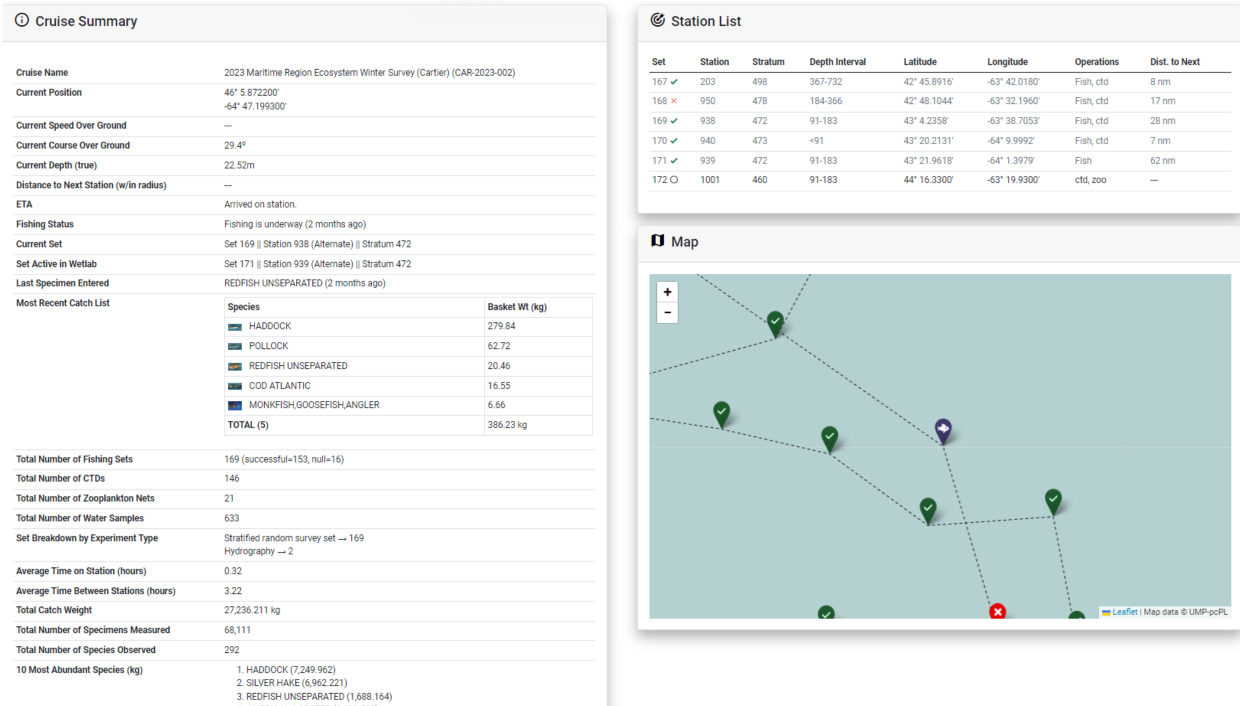


Figure 4. A screenshot of the Andes Cruise Dashboard. This dashboard helps to communicate queued stations, fishing activities underway and estimated times of arrival to science staff and crew personnel. The dashboard also displays high level summaries of Science activities that were conducted.

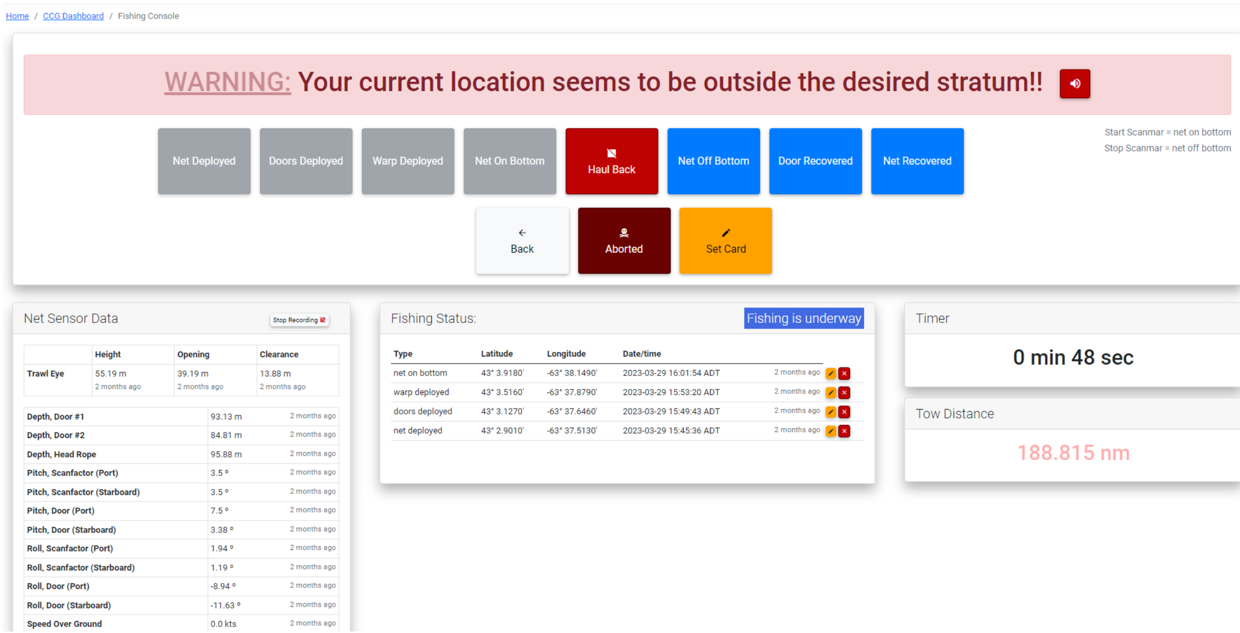


Figure 5. A screenshot of Andes Fishing Console within the Bridge module. This screenshot shows some quality control validation features including: the fishing timer, the distance display and an alarm message for when the vessel is travelling outside the targeted stratum. On the bottom left of the screenshot, output from the net monitoring system is displayed. The large buttons in the center of the display are used to trigger fishing events.

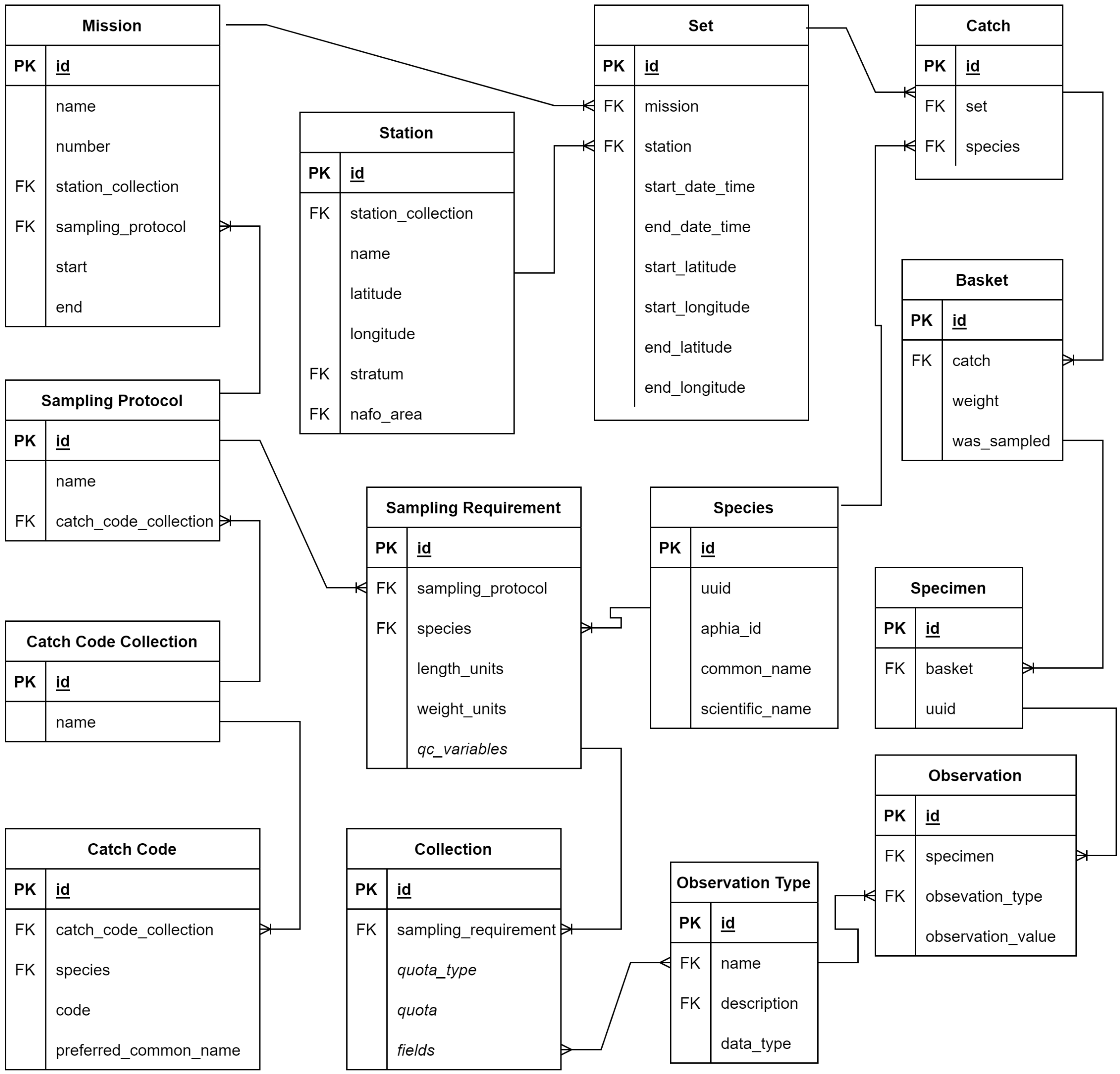


Figure 6. A simplified entity relationship diagram of the data model used by the Ecosystem Survey module of Andes.

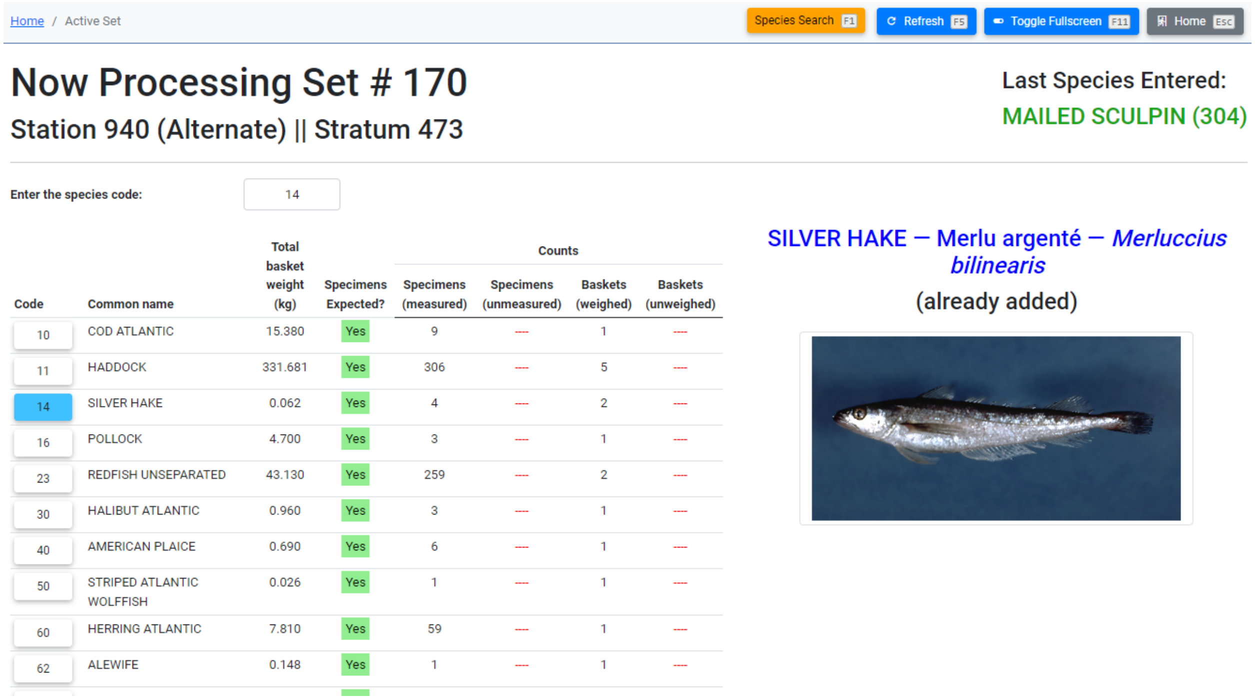


Figure 7. A screenshot of the Active Set page. This page is a component of the Ecosystem Survey module. Users in the wet laboratory enter new catches into this page as they are identified.

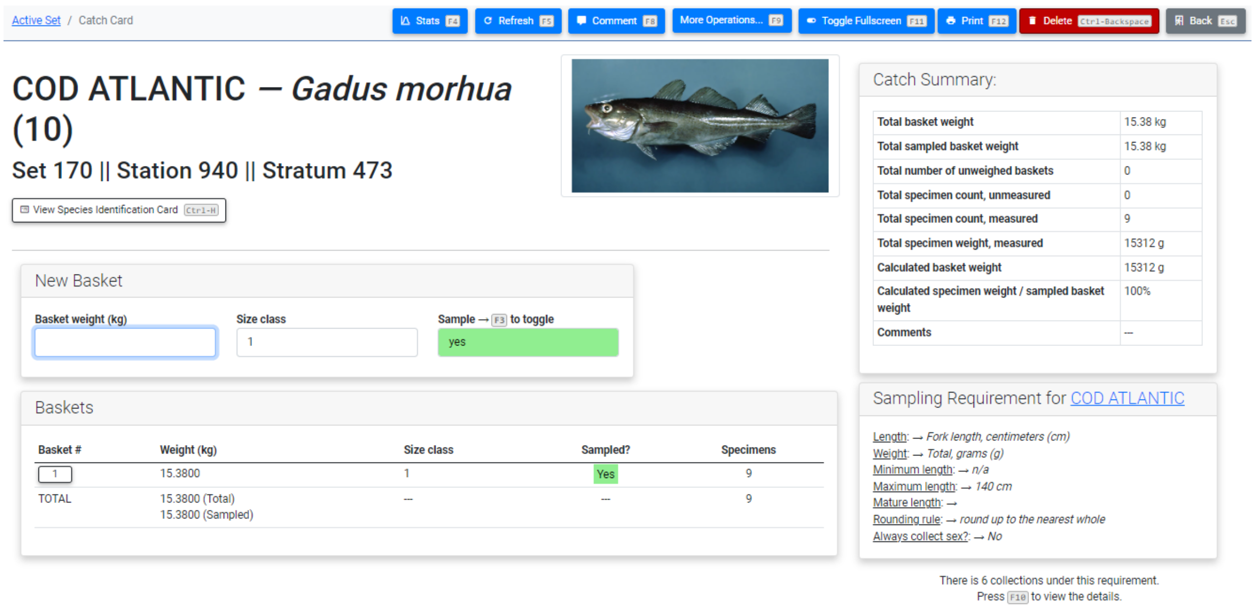


Figure 8. A screenshot of the Catch Card page of the Ecosystem Survey module of Andes. This is where new baskets and their associated weights are entered. This example shows the catch card of Atlantic Cod from a Maritimes Region survey of the George Bank.

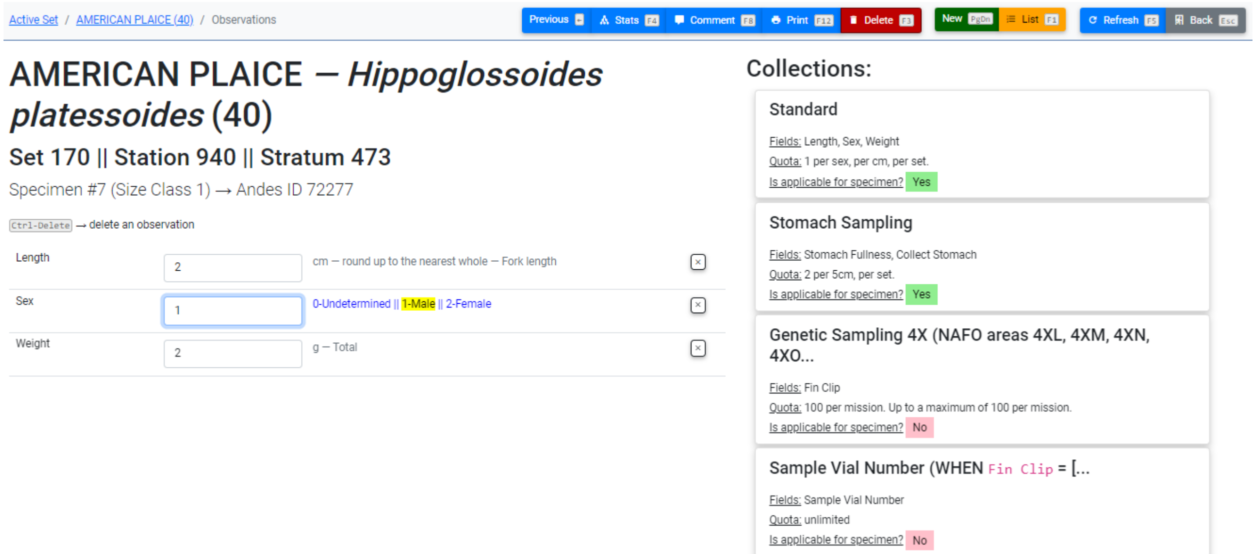


Figure 9. A screenshot of the specimen data entry interface of the Ecosystem Survey module of Andes. The specimen observations are edited on the left-hand side while the sampling collections are displayed on the right-hand side.

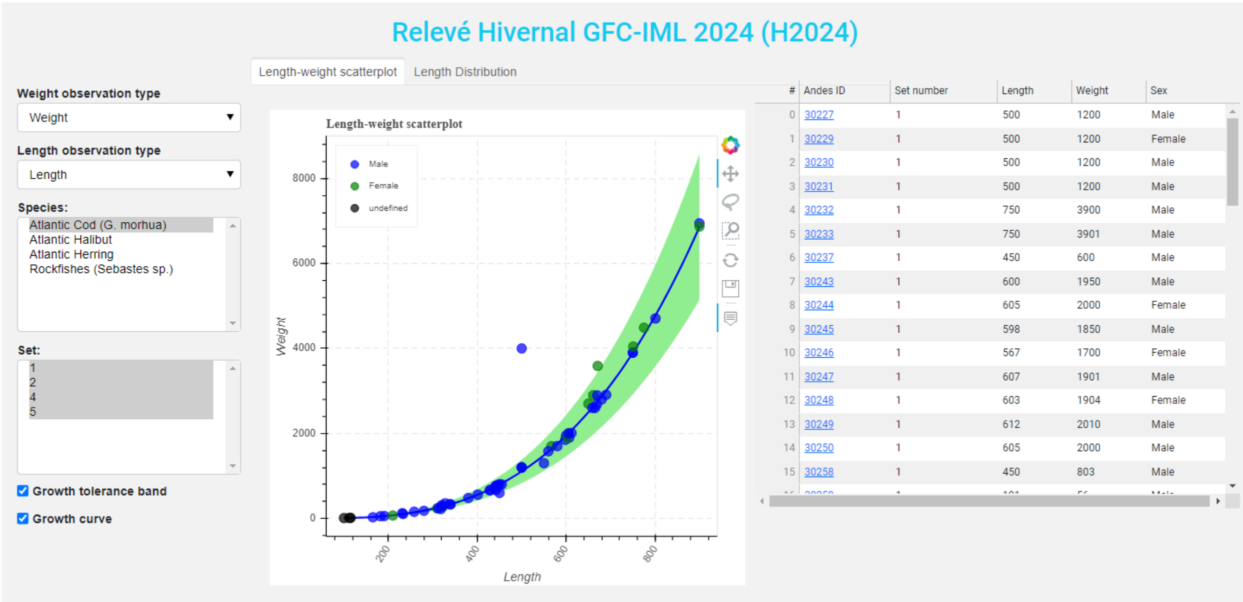


Figure 10. A screenshot of the Charts module showing the weight vs length scatter plot on top of its growth curve model.

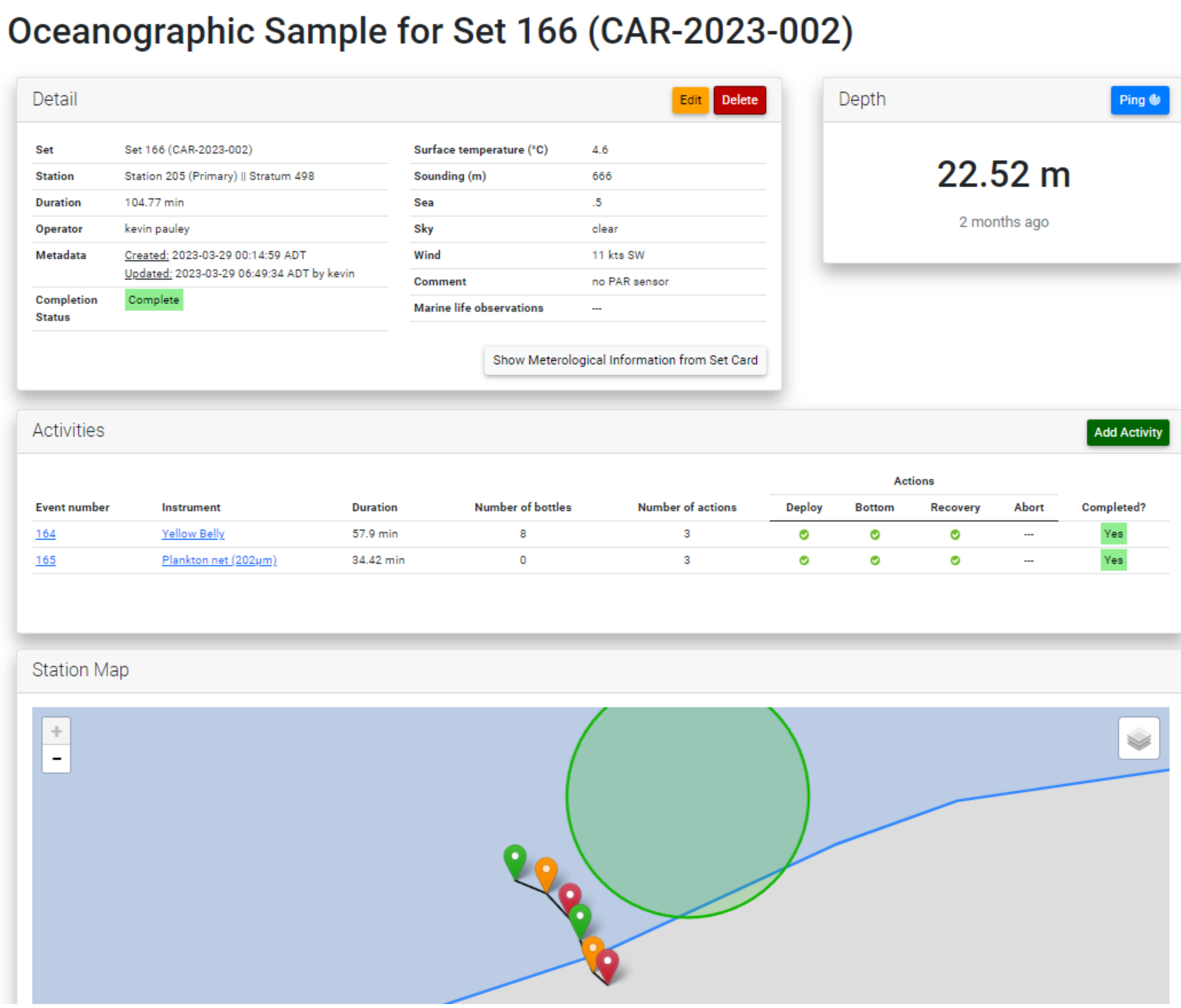
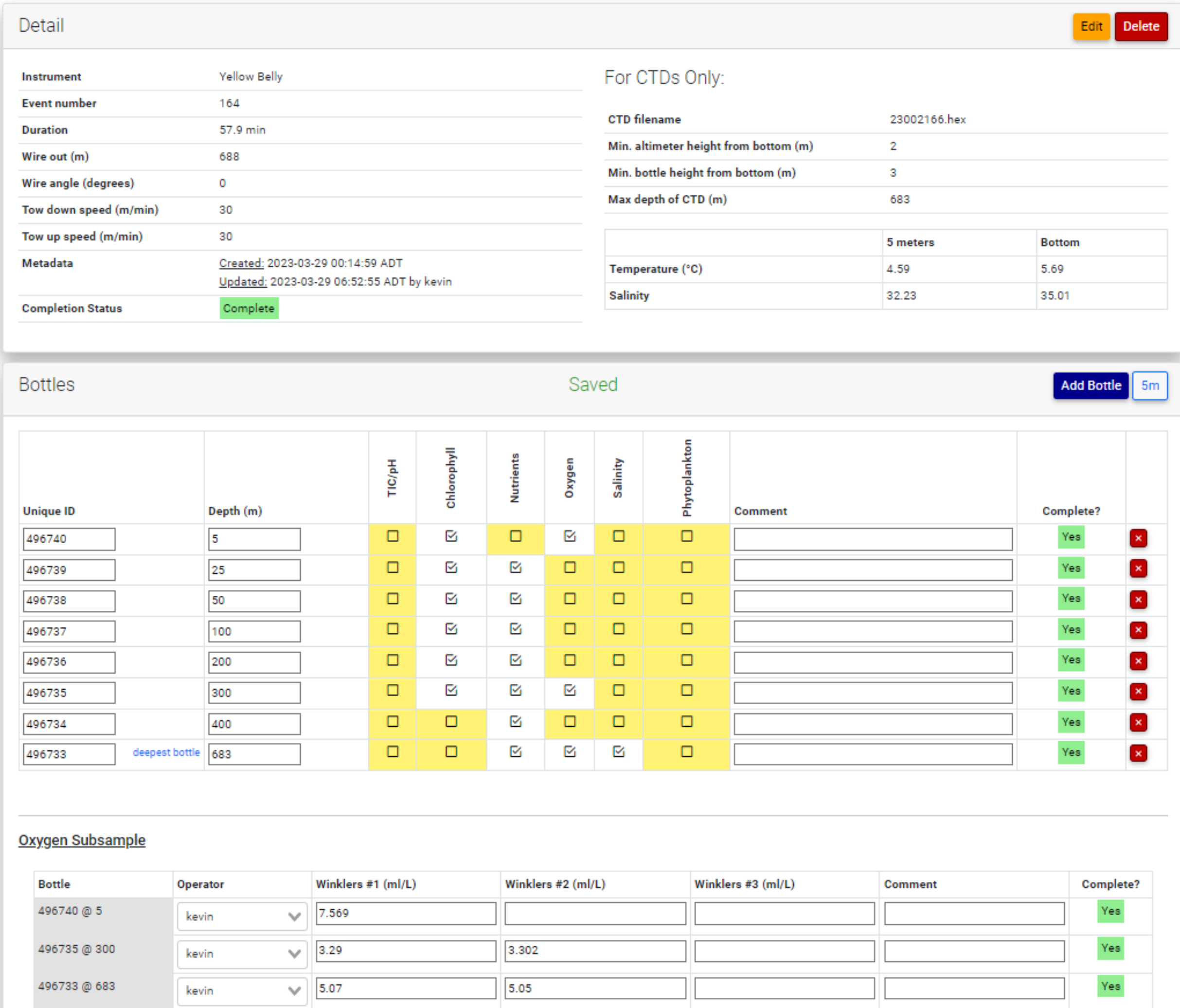


Figure 11. A screenshot of the Oceanographic Sample detail page from the Andes Oceanography module.

164 - Yellow Belly



Detail

Edit Delete

Instrument	Yellow Belly
Event number	164
Duration	57.9 min
Wire out (m)	688
Wire angle (degrees)	0
Tow down speed (m/min)	30
Tow up speed (m/min)	30
Metadata	Created: 2023-03-29 00:14:59 ADT Updated: 2023-03-29 06:52:55 ADT by kevin
Completion Status	Complete

For CTDs Only:

CTD filename	23002166.hex
Min. altimeter height from bottom (m)	2
Min. bottle height from bottom (m)	3
Max depth of CTD (m)	683

	5 meters	Bottom
Temperature (°C)	4.59	5.69
Salinity	32.23	35.01

Bottles Saved Add Bottle 5m

Unique ID		Depth (m)	TIC/pH	Chlorophyll	Nutrients	Oxygen	Salinity	Phytoplankton	Comment	Complete?	
496740		5	☐	☑	☐	☑	☐	☐		Yes	×
496739		25	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐		Yes	×
496738		50	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐		Yes	×
496737		100	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐		Yes	×
496736		200	☐	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐		Yes	×
496735		300	☐	☑	☑	☑	☐	☐		Yes	×
496734		400	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐	☐		Yes	×
496733	deepest bottle	683	☐	☐	☑	☑	☑	☐		Yes	×

Oxygen Subsample

Bottle	Operator	Winklers #1 (ml/L)	Winklers #2 (ml/L)	Winklers #3 (ml/L)	Comment	Complete?
496740 @ 5	kevin	7.569				Yes
496735 @ 300	kevin	3.29	3.302			Yes
496733 @ 683	kevin	5.07	5.05			Yes

Figure 12. A screenshot of the Oceanographic Activity detail page from the Andes Oceanography module. Note that “Yellow Belly” refers to the colloquial name of the CTD/Rosette system.

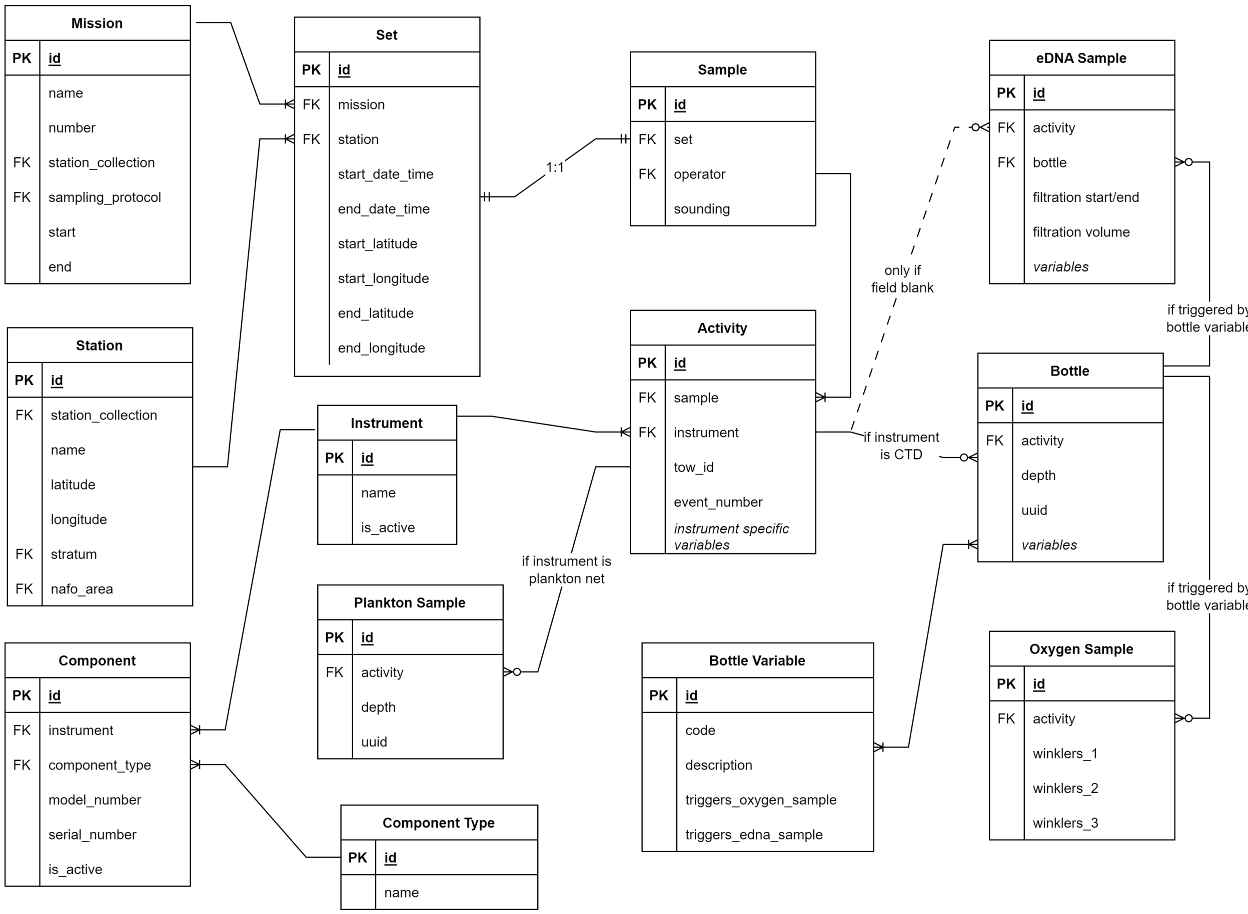


Figure 13. A simplified entity relationship diagram of the data model used by the Oceanography module of Andes.

Home / Track Forecast

Track Forecast

Sets and Queued Stations

Show Completed Sets

Set	Station	Time / Date (Canada/Atlantic) Arrival	Departure	Distance to next (NM)	Odometer (NM)	Time to next (hours)	Status
---	---		2023-06-28 13:00	98.47	0.00	9.85	Start
---	---	2023-06-12 16:07	2023-06-12 16:07	45.91	98.47	4.59	Current Position
1	601	2023-06-12 20:43 (*)	2023-06-12 22:43 (*)	6.43	144.38	0.64	Queued
2	208	2023-06-12 23:21 (*)	2023-06-13 01:21 (*)	13.32	150.80	1.33	Queued
3	1011	2023-06-13 02:41 (*)	2023-06-13 04:41 (*)	88.05	164.12	8.81	Queued
---	---	2023-06-13 13:30 (*)		0.00	252.18	0.00	End

(*) estimated value

Figure 14. A screenshot of the Track Forecast tool.

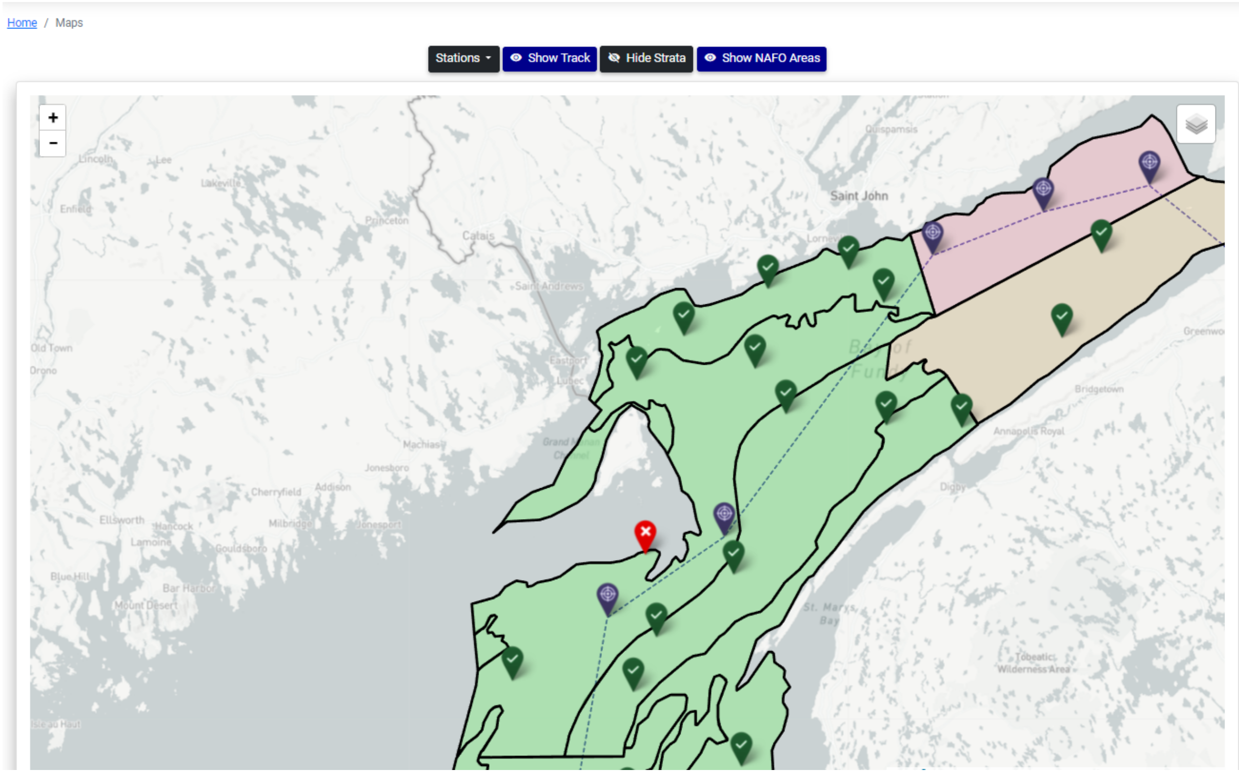
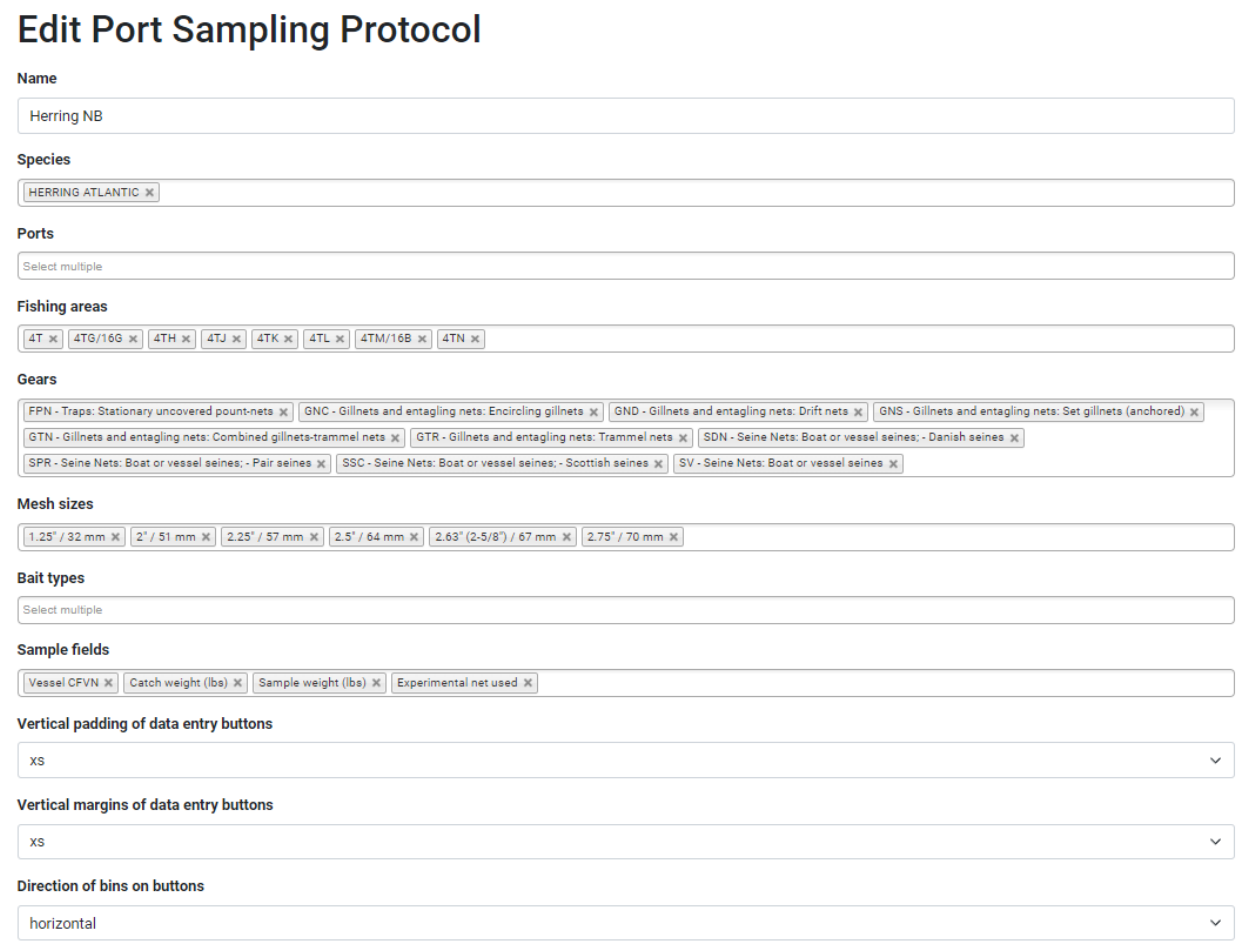


Figure 15. A screenshot of the Andes Progress map. The map colors strata by the status of their set quotas. The green strata are those which have met their specified targets of set conducted; those in yellow have not met the target but have surpassed the minimum; and those in red have not conducted the minimum specified number of sets.



Edit Port Sampling Protocol

Name

Herring NB

Species

HERRING ATLANTIC ×

Ports

Select multiple

Fishing areas

4T × 4TG/16G × 4TH × 4TJ × 4TK × 4TL × 4TM/16B × 4TN ×

Gears

FPN - Traps: Stationary uncovered pount-nets × GNC - Gillnets and entagling nets: Encircling gillnets × GND - Gillnets and entagling nets: Drift nets × GNS - Gillnets and entagling nets: Set gillnets (anchored) × GTN - Gillnets and entagling nets: Combined gillnets-trammel nets × GTR - Gillnets and entagling nets: Trammel nets × SDN - Seine Nets: Boat or vessel seines; - Danish seines × SPR - Seine Nets: Boat or vessel seines; - Pair seines × SSC - Seine Nets: Boat or vessel seines; - Scottish seines × SV - Seine Nets: Boat or vessel seines ×

Mesh sizes

1.25" / 32 mm × 2" / 51 mm × 2.25" / 57 mm × 2.5" / 64 mm × 2.63" (2-5/8") / 67 mm × 2.75" / 70 mm ×

Bait types

Select multiple

Sample fields

Vessel CFVN × Catch weight (lbs) × Sample weight (lbs) × Experimental net used ×

Vertical padding of data entry buttons

xs

Vertical margins of data entry buttons

xs

Direction of bins on buttons

horizontal

Figure 16. A screenshot displaying the Port Sampling module protocol form. The selections made in this form will affect the behaviour of the module during data entry.

Figure 17. A screenshot displaying the Port Sampling data entry page. A button is presented for each length bin, as defined in the protocol. The number in the black circle on the right-hand side of the button is the current count for that length bin. Button colors change from blue to green as the collection protocol for that bin is satisfied.

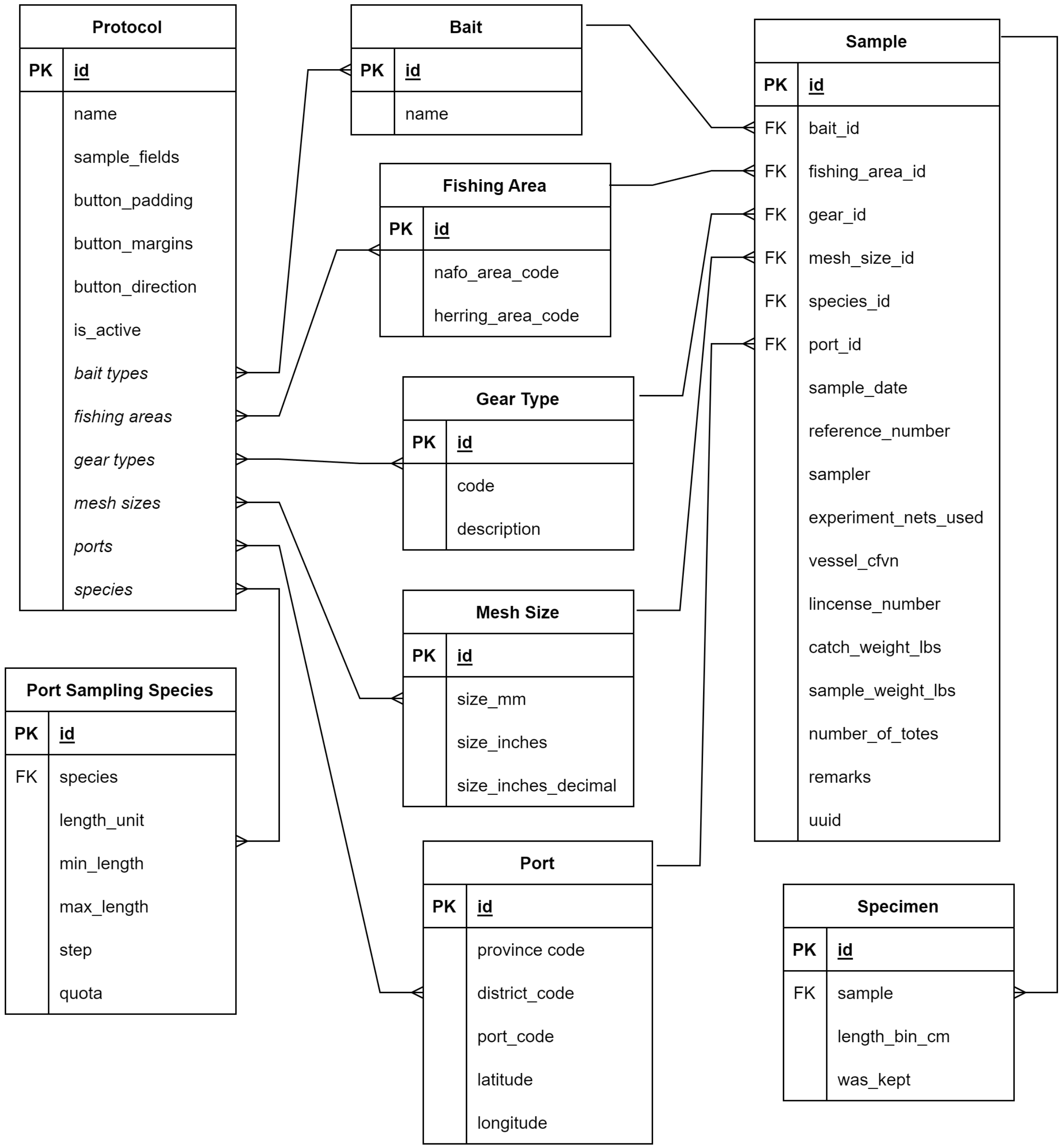


Figure 18. A simplified entity relationship diagram of the data model used by the Port Sampling module of Andes.

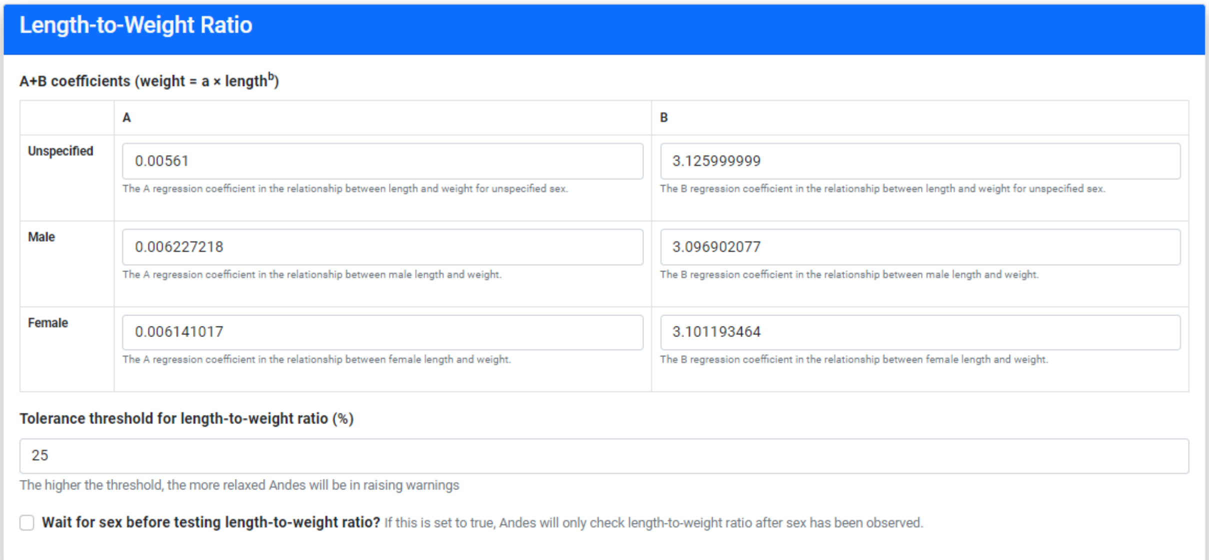


Figure 19. A screenshot of the "Length-to-Weight Ratio" section of the sampling requirement form. Andes offers the option to specify regression coefficients for males, females or unspecified individuals to be used in quality control.

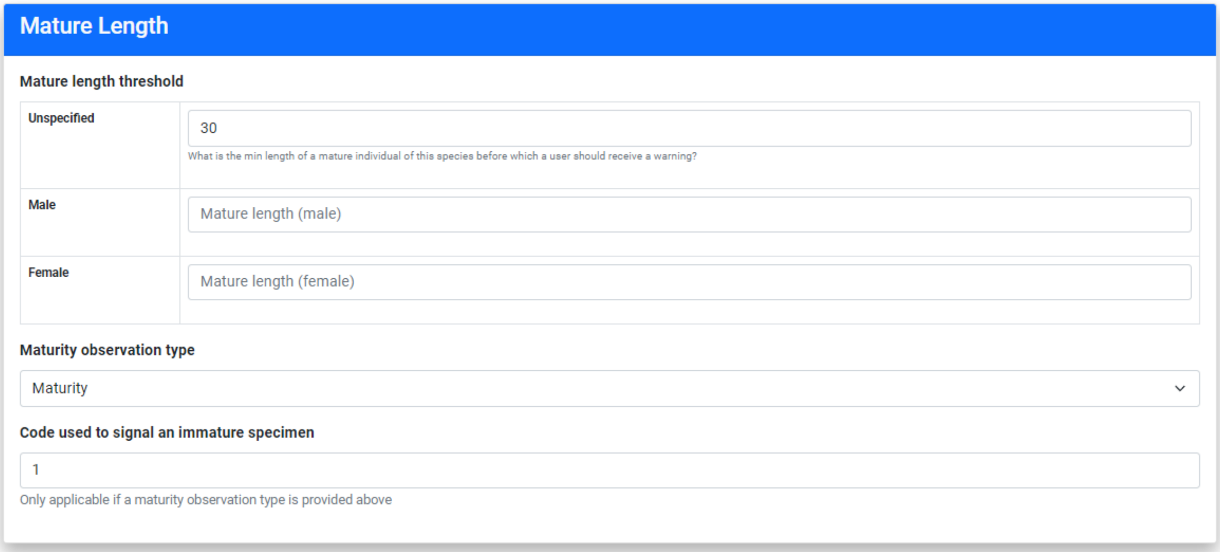


Figure 20. A screenshot of the “Mature Length” section of the sampling requirement form. Andes offers the option to specify mature length thresholds for males, females or unspecified individuals to be used in quality control.

9 Acronyms

Andes Another data entry system.

API Application Programming Interface.

AZMP Atlantic Zone Monitoring Program.

AZOMP Atlantic Zone Offshelf Monitoring Program.

CDOS Chief Digital Officer Sector.

CSS Cascading Style Sheet.

DFO Fisheries and Oceans Canada, formerly the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

ERD Entity Relationship Diagram.

ESE Ecosystem Survey Entry.

GSE Groundfish Survey Entry.

html5 Hypertext Markup Language.

IMTS Information Management and Technology Services.

LAN Local Area Network.

MPA Marine Protected Area.

MRR Module des Relevés de Recherche.

NAFO Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation.

REST Representational state transfer (REST).

REST-API Representational state transfer (REST) Application programming interface (API).

VCS Version Control System.

WAN Wide Area Network.

10 Glossary

Andes Another data entry system is an application developed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada to support data collection for a variety of scientific programs.

Andes lead A person with a functional understanding of the inner workings of Andes. This person has the knowledge and user-rights that permit them to configure a Mission, define a Sampling Protocol, Sampling Requirements, etc.

API An Application Programming Interface (API) is a particular set of rules and specifications that a software program can follow to access and make use of the services and resources provided by another particular software program that implements that API.

AZMP The Atlantic Zone Monitoring Program collects and analyses the biological, chemical and physical oceanographic field data in the four Altantic regions of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

AZOMP The Atlantic Zone Offshelf Monitoring Program collects and analyses the biological, chemical and physical oceanographic field data in the four Offshelf Altantic regions of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Bridge The Bridge app is meant to be used by the navigation officer while the fishing officer deploys and retrieves the trawl. The operator inputs fishing events (eg., net deployed, doors deployed, winches locked, net on bottom, haul back, net off bottom, doors recovered, net recovered) or actions (eg., net on/off bottom) directly to Andes via the Bridge app. .

Catch A table of the Ecosystem Surveys app. A Catch table contains a link to Set and Species entries, as well as an optional: speciment count, unweighted baskets, relative abundance category and an invertabrate catch ratio. Catches can be subdivided into sub-catches having a parent-children relationship.

Catch Card Catch details recorded prior to detailed sampling.

CCG The Canadian Coast Guard.

CDOS The Chief Digital Officer Sector is the IT branch of DFO.

Closed Set An Open Set Can be closed if the data it contains (eg, from Catch Card) does not trigger a Set Flag.

Configuration Preset Configuration for a particular deployment scenario. Configuration presets include details on the backup locations, and peripherals like GPS, sonars, label printers, etc. .

Cruise Same as Mission.

CSS A Cascading Style Sheet is a style sheet language used for describing the presentation of a document written in a markup language such as HTML or XML.

CTD Conductivity, temperature and depth.

Current Set The Set that is currently occuring in time. It has begun and is not finished. There can only be one Current Set at a time.

DFO Fisheries and Oceans Canada is a department of the Government of Canada that is responsible for developing and implementing policies and programs in support of Canada's economic, ecological and scientific interests in oceans and inland waters.

Ecosystem Survey The Ecosystem Survey app is used to as the main data input interface. .

ESE The Ecosystem Survey Entry replaced the GSE in the early 2000s.

Fishing Event An event related to fishing activty of Set. Metadata such as GPS coordinates and time to are associated with the folllowing event types: *net deployed*, *doors deployed*, *warp deployed*, *net on bottom*, *haul back*, *net off bottom*, *door recovered*, *net recovered*, and *aborted*. A Set may contain a list of such event types. The Fishing Events are added to the Set by a crewmember using the Bridge application. .

GSE The GSE is a data entry tool developed in the 1980s.

html5 The Hypertext Markup Language is the standard markup language for documents designed to be displayed in a web browser.

IMTS Information Management and Technology Services is the IT branch of DFO.

JavaScript Javascript is a programming language that is one of the core technologies of the World Wide Web, alongside HTML and CSS.

JSON JavaScript Object Notation. The JSON format is a popular way to serialize data and is an alternative to the CSV (comma-separated values) and XML (eXtensible Markup Language) formats.

LAN A series of computers connected to each other and capable of communicating with each other over wired or wireless connections.

Mission Same as Cruise .

NAFO Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation.

Open Set A Set that has not been closed. All new Sets will start in an open state and will remain so untill closed. Sets that are activated will automatically be opened. The Current Set is always open.

ORM Object Relational Mapping are an abstraction of relational entities (database tables) as objects.

Port Sampling Scientific program collecting samples from commercial fishing activities.

REST-API Representational state transfer (REST) Application programming interface (API) is an API that follows the REST software architectural style, created to guide the design and development of the architecture for the World Wide Web.

Sampling Requirements The species-specific requirements for samples to be collected during a scientific cruise.

Sampling Protocol The detailed description of what data is to be collected during a scientific cruise.

Set A Set contains all fishing activity and sampling results for a particular Station .

Set Flag A flag used to indicate that the data contained within the set has failed to pass a specific validation tests. Closing an Open Set with active flags can be done by overriding the validation mechanism.

Species An identifiable taxon that can be assigned to a species code.

Station A target location specificied by coordinates where a scientific activity is to take place.

VB Pre-.NET Visual Basic for Applications is the early version of Microsoft VBA and is no longer supported or updated by Microsoft.

VBA Visual Basic for Applications is a programming language built into most desktop Microsoft Office applications. More details can be found on the Wikipedia page for this programming language and from Microsoft.

VCS A Version Control System records changes to a file or set of files over time so that specific versions can be recalled later. For example, git is a VSC.

Vue.js A JavaScript framework for building reactive user interfaces. https://vuejs.org/.

WAN A telecommunications network that extends over a large geographic area, such as the internet.