

DASSH Data Policy

The Data Archive for Seabed Species and Habitats (DASSH) is part of the UK's network of marine data archive centres, and works in collaboration with the Marine Data Information Partnership (MDIP). DASSH aims to safeguard marine benthic survey data (past and future) and to make that data available as a national information resource to support marine science and better stewardship of the marine environment. DASSH is run by staff at the Marine Biological Association of the UK, Plymouth.

1. Data sources

DASSH collects, manages, and archives data and images collected (or collated) by a variety of public and private organizations who undertake benthic surveys (Table 1). DASSH holds data and images from both volunteer and professional surveyors. In particular, DASSH provides a data management and archive service. This service is available to *Data owners* who wish to outsource their data management or who do not have the facilities to ensure the long-term safety of their data.

Table 1. Sources of DASSH data and images holdings.

Sources	Species data	Habitat data	Still images	Video
Trawling or dredging surveys	✓	✓		
Grab sampling or sedimentary cores	✓	✓		
Drop down video survey (usually with ground truthing)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Remote Operated Vehicle (ROV) surveys, e.g. of wrecks and offshore structures			✓	✓
Diver surveys	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intertidal surveys	✓	✓	✓	
Broad scale remote acoustic surveys (side scan sonar / multi-beam sonar / Roxann)		✓	✓	
Volunteer or amateur naturalist surveys and sightings	✓	✓	✓	

The survey types held vary from one-off surveys, to long-term time series, and monitoring programme data. Species data includes records of marine fauna and flora, while habitat data include biotope or assemblage data.

DASSH does not archive physical or chemical oceanographic data. DASSH has limited holdings of data on marine mammals, marine reptiles, fish or plankton. A list of national marine Data Archive Centres and their data holdings is provided on our website in the links section.

2. Data use

When data or images are received they undergo a process of quality control prior to archive storage.

- a) All data and image resources are archived electronically on secure systems to ensure that a copy of the original data remains available for use by future generations.
- b) All data and image resources and its associated metadata undergo quality assurance. The checks differ depending on the type of data or images. For further information view our quality control, metadata standard, validation, and verification information.
- c) DASSH may copy data / image files to different formats to ensure present accessibility and as hardware or software changes in the future.
- d) DASSH progresses metadata and data (in standard format) to the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Gateway (www.searchnbn.net) with the permission of the *Data provider*.

For further information view our Data Management Plan.

3. Data dissemination

DASSH is committed to promoting the use of the data held within the archive. The DASSH team believes that the data resources held should be available for use in not-for-profit decision making, research, education and other public-benefit purposes. To this end, DASSH makes marine benthic survey data and its associated metadata freely available over the World Wide Web, in order to contribute to the national resource of marine environmental data. However, there may be some circumstances in which DASSH, as a responsible data custodian, may need to restrict access to all or part of some data resources.

Reasons why DASSH might restrict access to data holding are listed below.

- a) If the release of certain data is likely to increase the risk of environmental damage or put particularly sensitive species at risk. Making the data resources we hold available is designed to improve marine environmental stewardship.
- b) If the release of data is likely to jeopardise future data resources. DASSH is a data custodian and does not own the data resources held. *Data providers* support our data sharing and use policy but are under no obligation to share their data with you through us.
- c) If the *Data provider* has requested that certain data or information is withheld. For example where data may be commercially sensitive, or where the data is under preparation prior to publication. The restriction may be permanent or temporary depending on the *Data providers'* restrictions.
- d) If the data contains personal information. Information within DASSH is managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Personal information will be removed from the data resources that we make available.

Please note the 'Data use and access - terms and conditions' (section 4) and 'Charging policy' (section 5) below.

4. Data use and access – terms and conditions

DASSH holds datasets provided by a variety of public and private bodies, and individual researchers. The *Data/image provider* (and *Copyright holder* if different) will be stated in the associated metadata. *Data providers* retain the copyright of the original data or images at all times. *Data providers* have given DASSH their permission to hold a copy of their data/image(s) within the data archive.

All our data and image holdings are made available for use under the DASSH Terms and Conditions. The Terms and Conditions are important and protect the copyright of our data

and image providers. Users are permitted to use the data holdings that we make available on-line for their own private use or for use in the ordinary course of your business, provided that such use is in accordance with our *Terms and Conditions*. Users are permitted to use the images available on-line for their own private use, provided that such use is in accordance with the relevant section of our *Terms and Conditions*.

Anyone wishing to use data or images for commercial purposes will require additional permission from the *Data (or image) provider* (or *Copyright holder* if different), who can be contacted through DASSH. Similarly, additional permission will be required for the use of images for wide dissemination, including use on Web sites, leaflets or in promotional brochures. Any use of data or images that is not addressed in the *Terms and Conditions* will require permission from the *Data provider* (or *Copyright holder* if different).

5. Charging policy

DASSH data and image resources are made available on-line, for use in not-for-profit decision making, research, education and other public-benefit purposes, free of charge. However, where permission is required under our *Terms and Conditions*, the *Data Provider* may make a charge for use of their data.

Access to material not readily accessible through the DASSH and *MarLIN* Web sites will require DASSH staff time. Any analysis, in-house queries or collation, of the data will also require DASSH staff time and a nominal charge may be made. Please contact the Project Coordinator for further information (email dassh.enquiries@mba.ac.uk).

6. Further information

A physical archive is under development to hold physical media, e.g. scientist's notebooks, drawings, survey reports, films/slides and video tapes. The physical archive will actively target 'legacy data' that is 'at risk', i.e. where the host institution can no longer hold the material, the institution has closed or the scientist(s) have retired.

While the funding and space implications of the physical archive are developed, DASSH will deal with requests to hold physical media on a **case-by-case** basis. Please contact the Project Coordinator to discuss your requirements. Anyone wishing to gain access to the DASSH physical archives should contact the Project Coordinator in the first instance.

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