

Biological Subgroup Meeting
November 17, 2015
2:30 – 3:30 pm
Meeting Summary

Participants:

University of South Florida: Jan Allyn, Jason Scolaro
Southwest Florida Water Management District: Aaron Brown, Kris Stair
St. Johns River Water Management District: Aisa Ceric
South Florida Water Management District: Brian Turcott
Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC): Dave Reed
Department of Environmental Protection: Lisa Van Houdt, Kate Muldoon

A. Introductions:

Kate Muldoon (KM) welcomed attendees to the meeting, and thanked them for their willingness to participate in the subgroup and provide recommendations to the Catalog workgroup.

B. Background & History of Biological Metadata effort for the Water-CAT, and Review of Catalog Workgroup Decisions:

Kate Muldoon (KM) reviewed the issue of incorporating Biological Metadata in the Water-CAT. To reach consensus on the issue of level of detail for entering biological monitoring metadata, the Catalog Workgroup previously discussed whether the level of detail provided would be addressed by the data provider, and if there were any suggestions as to a currently available schema which would work well with the Water-CAT.

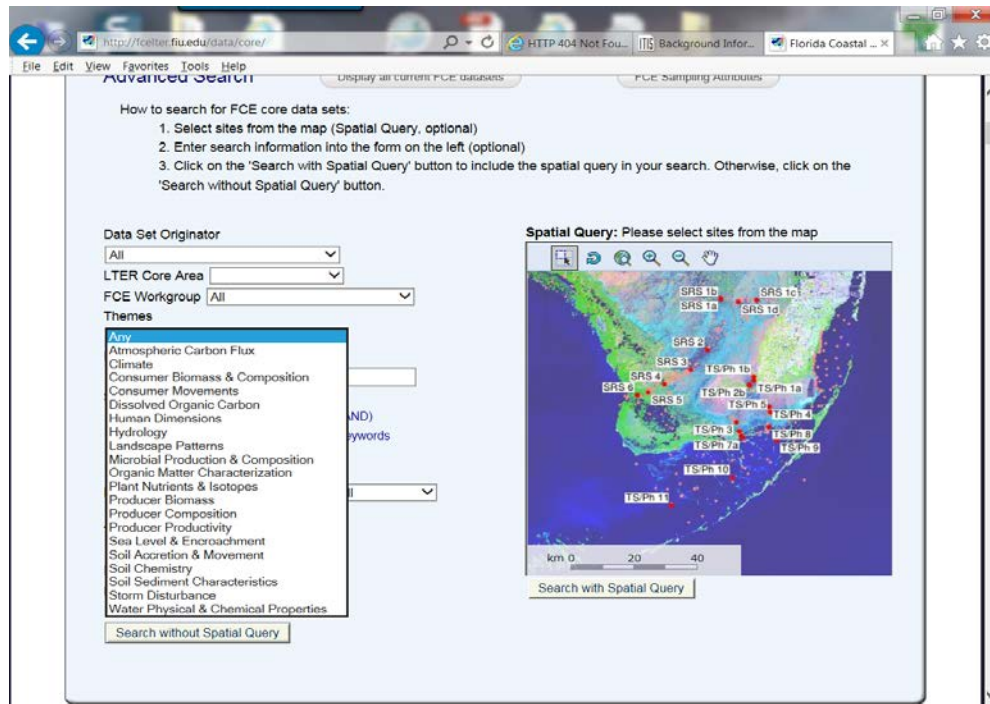
On 5/19/15, the workgroup selected Option 1 of three potential options presented by USF (derived from Ecological Metadata Language used on the Florida Coastal Everglades Long Term Ecological Research website <http://fcelter.fiu.edu/>)

- Option 1: Using Themes + Keywords (*keywords replace biological parameters*)

A Catalog Workgroup “subgroup” was formed to evaluate options (for Themes) and make recommendations to the Catalog Workgroup. Prior to this meeting, lists of biological examples were sent to USF to provide guidance during this process. USF received lists from the DEP (SBIO), SJRWMD, SWFWMD, the NERRS, and FWRI.

C. Review: potential themes (example):

KM presented examples of potential themes for Biological Metadata, and asked the subgroup to discuss what themes, or level of specificity would align with their projects.



Examples of *extremely simple* potential themes:

- Waters: freshwaters, marine waters, estuarine waters
- Types of monitoring: Trend monitoring, probabilistic monitoring, adverse event monitoring, research monitoring
- Vertical Location: Water column, benthic, epibenthic
- Ecosystems/Habitats: estuaries, lakes, streams, sandhills, hardwood hammocks, wetlands, sinkholes/springs, saltmarshes, cypress domes, beech/magnolia forests, pine flatwoods, seepage slopes, seagrass beds, coral reefs
- Geographic provinces: Carolinian, sub-tropical, tropical
- Other?

Discussion: The subgroup discussed the examples of themes for Biological Metadata.

Brian Turcott (BT) suggested that the level of detail expected from the data providers should be considered when determining the level of specificity for themes. If a sufficient description of a data set is not provided, USF would have to contact the project managers, which would create another level of difficulty.

Jan Allyn suggested that the theme should focus not on what resource is being monitored (estuaries, lakes, streams, sandhills, hardwood hammocks) since a project could include multiple resources. The themes should focus on the purpose of the monitoring (Trend monitoring, probabilistic monitoring, adverse event monitoring, research monitoring).

Conclusion: The subgroup came to a general consensus that the themes should be broad “Large buckets” to cover most scenarios and more specific information should be at the description or Keyword level. The list should include “Research” and “Other” as options.

D. Keywords

- Species + study type (e.g, abundance, recruitment, species richness)
- General category (echinoderms, tortoises, submerged aquatic vegetation) + study type (e.g, abundance, recruitment, species richness)
- Other?

Discussion: KM suggested that data providers may not want to include species level information in the project description. The second option allows for a general category to be tied to a study type.

Lisa Van Houdt (LVH) suggested that a project monitoring a single species could have data for several “study types”. For example, a monitoring program for Oysters could have data for abundance, recruitment, and density.

Jan Allyn (JA) reiterated that a project monitoring one species could include data sets for a variety of “study types” for the overall purpose of evaluating a trend such as health. The keywords should be tied to project level information, and include terms related to the purpose of the study (Health, research, recruitment).

KM asked whether the search results would be generated from the title of the project, project description, or other keywords supplied by the data provider.

JA indicated that the search results could be generated from the title, project description and any additional keywords the data provider chooses. Additionally, the search function could predict keywords to reduce user error due to misspellings and pluralization.

LVH asked whether additional keywords would limit search results. For example, if a user searched using the keywords “Seagrass” and “Density” would it only return projects with both keywords? This would be problematic if the results omit projects where the data provider did not include the study type.

Jason Scolaro (JS) indicated that USF could design the search function to return projects for all keywords, and list results based on relevance. The results would indicate which projects are an

“Exact Match” (contain all keywords) and list other projects denoting which keywords were omitted (e.g., “Seagrass, ~~Density~~”).

Conclusion: KM will develop a general list of themes, and distribute it to the subgroup with a poll for the date of the next meeting. The subgroup is tasked with making recommendations to refine/expand the list, and make suggestions for keywords associated with themes.

Example:

Theme: Regulatory

Suggested Keywords: Lake Vegetation Index, Numeric Nutrient Criteria, Species Condition Index

KM adjourned the meeting.