Guidance for Writing and Formatting Field Notes

This document is meant to act as a general guide when designing field sheets for a mission, ensuring all relevant metadata is recorded during the work so that it can be properly reported to your local acoustic telemetry network. More information might be necessary for your specific study. (ex: genetic sample information, angling statistic etc.)

\* All dates and times are to be recorded in UTC 24-hour format.

\* All measurements should be recorded in meters.

\* All latitudes and longitudes should reference the WGS84 map datum and be recorded in decimal degrees to five decimal places.

\* A data dictionary is available at the end of this document to facilitate your understanding of the required information.

Tagging Fieldnotes

It is recommended that your fieldnotes include the following, filled out beforehand:

* Tagger (if known beforehand)
* Tag owner PI
* Tag owner organization
* Tag manufacturer
* Wild or hatchery

It is recommended that your fieldnotes include the following blank fields to be filled out while collecting data:

* Animal ID
* Tag type
* Tag serial number
* Tag ID code
* Tag code space
* Tag implant type
* Animal common name and/or scientific name
* Stock
* Length and length type (as well as length 2 and length type 2 if you will be measuring different types of lengths)
* Weight
* Age or life stage
* Sex
* Release latitude, longitude, and location
* Release datetime (in UTC)

These fields can be completed upon return to the lab, using vendor specifications:

* Tag model
* Estimated tag life

Deployment Fieldnotes

It is recommended that your fieldnotes include the following, filled out beforehand:

* OTN Mission ID
* OTN Array
* Station number
* Intended latitude and longitude for each station (essential for initial deployment of an array)

It is recommended that your fieldnotes include the following blank fields to be filled out while collecting data:

* Instrument model and serial number
* Acoustic release model and serial number (if used) – ensure to have all communication codes for each AR recorded in a file for future use
* Deployment latitude and longitude
* Deployment datetime (in UTC)
* Bottom depth and riser length (can be used to calculate instrument depth later)
* Comments

Recovery and Data Offload Fieldnotes

It is recommended that your fieldnotes include the following, filled out beforehand:

* Mission ID
* Station numbers you intend to recover, and their locations
* Acoustic release codes (if applicable) for each station

It is recommended that your fieldnotes include the following blank fields to be filled out while collecting data:

* Time at station, time off station\*
* Recovery latitude and longitude (optional)
* Recovery datetime (in UTC; time the receiver is out of the water)
* Recovery success indicator (Y, N, failed etc.)
* Data download datetime (in UTC)
* Download success indicator (Y, N, failed etc.)
* Comments

\*Useful for future missions to know if the station has good or bad communication while acoustically offloading the data. Relevant for VR4 or VR3 stations which can be offloaded from the surface.

Data Dictionary

OTN and all partner nodes follow Darwin Core standards for reporting biological data. This includes using terms found in the accepted Darwin Core vocabularies, with the intention to facilitate the sharing of biodiversity data. See the glossary of terms here <https://dwc.tdwg.org/terms/>. You will see many of these terms in our tagging and deployment metadata sheets.

Tagging:

**Animal ID:** Identification code that uniquely identifies each animal, as specified by the researcher. This can be a floy tag ID, pit tag ID, or another unique identifier.

**Tag Type:** Type of tag attached to animal. Some possible options are acoustic tag, satellite tag, PIT tag, ID tag, brand, business card tag.

**Tag Manufacturer:** Name of tag manufacturer.

**Tag Model:** Tag model number as provided by the manufacturer.

**Tag Serial Number:** Serial number assigned by tag manufacturer to uniquely identify tag.

**Tag ID Code:** In the case of an acoustic tag or Vemco mobile transceiver, this is the identification code transmitted by the tag, which is available from the tag manufacturer. For a satellite tag, it is the PTT code. For a VHF tag, this is the frequency at which the tag transmits.

**Tag Code Space:** Code space as provided by the tag manufacturer.

**Tag Implant Type:** Indicates how tag was attached to animal (e.g. internal, external, oral, gastric, subcutaneous, etc.).

**Est Tag Life:**  Estimate of the duration of time during which the tag will be transmitting. For tags that are recovered, this is the number of days between release and recapture.

**Tagger:** First and last name of person conducting tagging. At this time, the database can only accept one name in this field.

**Tag Owner PI:** First and last name of the Principal Investigator for the project. At this time, the database can only accept one name in this field.

**Tag Owner Organization:** Affiliation of the Principal Investigator for the project.

**Scientific Name:** Scientific name of animal that carries the tag.

**Common Name:** Common name of animal that carries the tag in English.

**Wild Or Hatchery:** Origin of animal that carries the tag. Enter W (wild), H (hatchery for hatchery reared or adipose clipped fish), or U (unknown)

**Stock:** River of origin for fish. Water Body of origin for other species. Can enter unknown or not applicable.

**Length (m):** Length of animal, depending on length type.

**Length Type:** Specify type of length recorded (e.g. hood length, fork length, standard length, etc.).

**Weight (kg):** Weight of animal that carries tag, in kilograms.

**Life Stage:** Life stage of animal. This will depend on the species being studied and can be a standard code used for that species, a description, or both.

**Age:** Age of animal. Enter unknown if age not known.

**Sex:** Sex of animal. M, F or H. Can enter unknown (U).

**Release Location:** Name of release location. Please refer to a specific nearby point of land, town, island, or body of water that uniquely identifies this tagging location. For example, Gulf of Maine is too broad a region, but Winter Harbor would be appropriate.

**Release Latitude:** Latitude of release location. *Note: in the southern hemisphere all latitudes must be negative.*

**Release Longitude:** Longitude of release location. *Note: in the western hemisphere all longitudes must be negative.*

**Release Date & Time:** Date and time that tagged animal was released, in UTC.

**Harvest Date:** Date that the tag was recovered from a captured animal, in UTC. example: if a fish is caught and the tag returned to the researcher. Note this is the date the previously released animal was recaptured. It will affect the end date of the previous release as well as the estimated tag life for this release.

Deployment and Recovery:

**OTN Mission ID:** Unique name given by OTN to the mission. VVVVVV is the first 6 characters of the vessel name and can be shorter if the vessel name has fewer than 6 characters. yyyy is the 4-digit year, mm is the 2-digit month, dd is the 2-digit day of the month, and hh is the 2-digit hour of the start date/time of the mission. Date and time are in UTC 24-hour format.

**Station No:** Sequential position of the mooring assembly on the array, generally from inshore to offshore or from North to South. If your array consists of more than one subarray, use an acronym to qualify the station name. For example, for two subarrays located in East Bay and West Bay, use EB001 and WB001.

**Deploy Date Time:** Date and time that the equipment was deployed, in 24-hour UTC. Corresponds to the time of the captured waypoint.

**Deploy Latitude:** Latitude of the actual deployment location, in decimal degrees. *Note: in the southern hemisphere all latitudes must be negative.*

**Deploy Longitude:** Longitude of the actual deployment location, in decimal degrees. *Note: in the western hemisphere all longitudes must be negative.*

**Bottom Depth:** Depth at deployment location as recorded by the vessel's depth sounder, in meters.

**Riser Length:** Length from the anchor to the topmost float or structure of the mooring assembly, in meters.

**Instrument Model Number:** Model number of the instrument as provided by the manufacturer, if NOT acoustic then prefix with instrument type and manufacturer's name or acronym. For a benthic pod, append with date of current configuration.

**Instrument Serial Number:** Serial number of the instrument as provided by the manufacturer. For benthic pod, the serial numbers of the instruments associated with the pod are provided in a separate configuration file according to date because these may change with time.

**AR Model Number:** Model number of the acoustic release as provided by the manufacturer.

**AR Serial Number:** Serial number of the acoustic release as provided by the manufacturer.

**Recover Date Time:** Date and time that the receiver was recovered, in 24-hour UTC.

**Download Date Time:** Date and time that data from a receiver are downloaded, in 24-hour UTC. If a file is saved to disk, this could correspond to the time in the file or filename.