

KEY ELEMENTS OF A SITE CHARACTERIZATION

(DOCUMENT VERSION 2015-10-29_01)

INTRODUCTION

The Deep-Sea Coral Research and Technology Program (DSCRTP) has the responsibility to identify the location of deep sea corals and to communicate this information to managers and the public. Furthermore, the DSCRTP has the responsibility to characterize areas with deep sea corals and to communicate their significance. To meet this mandate DSCRTP is developing a consistent site characterization framework which can be applied to deep sea coral surveys across the nation.

The site characterization will be applied to field surveys conducted under the DSCRTP and will be an expected deliverable from all imaging based surveys (ROV, AUV, Tow Cam, Etc). The site characterization is composed of an overall "Site Summary" and a set of "Individual Dive Summaries". The Individual Dive Summaries should essentially be the raw material used to build the Site Summary. These are outlined below.

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE FOR THE SITE CHARACTERIZATION

The purpose of the site characterization report is to communicate essential information to resource managers. The format is designed to allow for rapid reporting which can make information available to decision makers in a timely manner. ***This process is designed not to interfere with the development of formal scientific publication and does not replace the need for directed research. It is designed to reduce the time lag between survey and scientific analysis by providing an interim product.***

SITE SUMMARY

TITLE PAGE

INTRODUCTION AND SCIENTIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Narrative overview of purpose and science priorities for site characterization

OVERVIEW OF SITE

- Overview map with all dive tracks on site
- # of dives per vehicle type (Sub/ROV/AUV)
- Depth range of all dives
- Habitat characterization map (when practical)

ALL DIVE SUMMARY TABLE (*INCLUDE A SEPARATE TRANSECT TABLE IF APPLICABLE)

- Date (UTC)
- Method (equipment)
- Dive number (EventID is the corresponding term in the database)
- On-bottom time (UTC)
- Off-bottom time (UTC)
- Start coordinates (lat/long on bottom)
- End coordinates (lat/long off bottom)

- Depth min & max

SHORT DIVE SUMMARY NARRATIVE

- Including area surveyed, how many transects/dives, description of habitat

IMAGE GALLERY

- Representative and Highlight Images
- Description with scientific names and locality
- Coordinates

OTHER SAMPLING (CTD/SAMPLES/ETC.)

DESCRIPTIVE SITE OVERVIEW

- Summary of coral and sponge observed (species table)
- Associated species observations (species table)
- Qualitative discussion of site relevance in regional context (ie significance, quality, density)
- Relevant Work (literature or reports)
- Additional Comments

INDIVIDUAL DIVE SUMMARIES

DIVE #

SITE NAME

GENERAL LOCATION MAP WITH MAP OF DIVE TRACK

DIVE OVERVIEW TABLE:

- Project Title and SurveyID (CruiseID)
- Chief Scientist
- Chief Scientist contact information
- Purpose
- Vessel
- Vehicle name (which ROV, etc.)
- Science observers
- Temporal length of video records and video equipment
- Number of still photographic records and photographic equipment
- Positioning system type for vessel and vehicle
- List of names of other sensors or water sampling equipment on board vehicle (CTD, etc.)
- Number of specimen(s) collected
- Additional Information if applicable

DIVE DATA TABLE (*THIS IS SIMPLY A SUBSET OF THE OVERALL DIVE TABLE IN THE SITE SUMMARY)

- Date (UTC)
- Method (equipment)
- Dive number (EventID is the corresponding term in the database)
- On-bottom time (UTC)

- Off-bottom time (UTC)
- Start coordinates (lat/long on bottom)
- End coordinates (lat/long off bottom)
- Depth min & max

IMAGE GALLERY

- Representative images
- Description with scientific names and locality
- Coordinates of each image

BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF GENERAL HABITAT TYPES OBSERVED

CORAL, SPONGES, AND FISH WITH ESTIMATES OF THE FOLLOWING

- Density
- Abundance
- Areal extent
- Dominant taxa
- Rare species present
- Fisheries species present

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Graphical and narrative summary of any physical data (CTD, water samples, etc.)
- General description of substrata (slope/rugosity/composition)
- Evidence of human impacts (if applicable)