



Eastern



Inshore Fisheries and  
Conservation Authority

# Data Strategy

Final Version – October 2013

## **Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority – Vision**

*Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry.*

### **The need for a Data Strategy**

In order to meet our vision, success criterion and high level objectives<sup>1</sup>, Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority's (hereafter Eastern IFCA) requires data to inform, measure and monitor. With particular reference to success criterion 5, decisions required to meet strategic and operational objectives must **make the best use of evidence**.

Operationally, data is used in some form on a daily basis and is regularly conceived, processed and archived by every department within the organisation. Strategically data is required to measure our success against the success criterion and high level objectives and make decisions regarding the direction of the organisation. In both cases, data is ultimately used to achieve our vision.

Given the large role data has and will play in meeting the Eastern IFCA's vision, a strategic approach is required to ensure that an efficient process is implemented. Without a clearly defined data strategy, the organisation will suffer from the effects of many, undefined, conflicting strategies that may reduce efficiency. Furthermore, in establishing an agreed process datasets will conform to national (Data Protection Act) and international (Inspire Directive) data policies. Below are the key aspects of a successful approach:

- Specific, actionable data (outputs)
- Accessible datasets (Archiving)
- Efficient data flow (Input – archiving)
- Use of data across the spectrum of local knowledge through to scientific evidence (input)
- Adhere to the '*collect once, use many times*' philosophy.

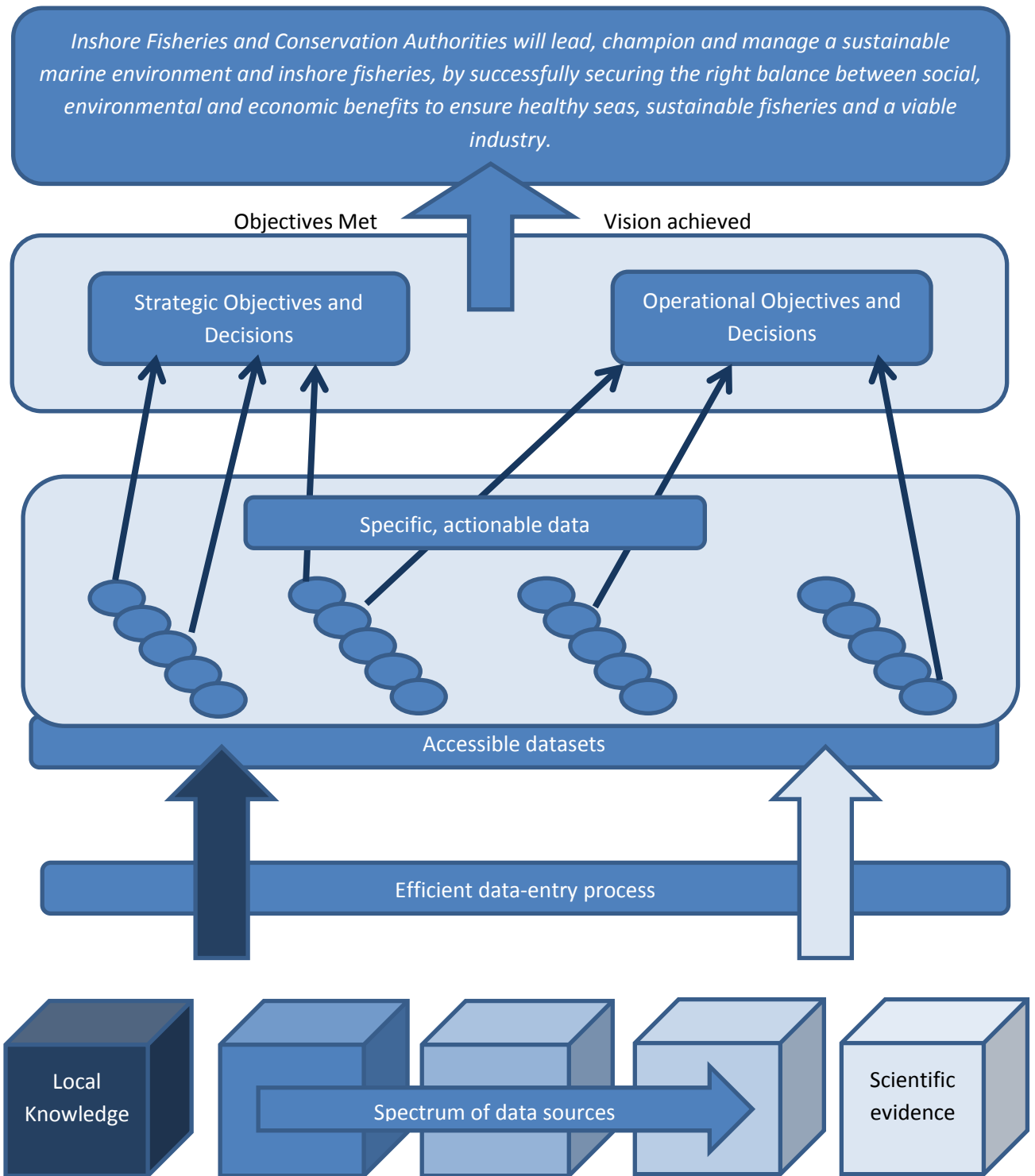
### **Eastern IFCA's data vision**

Using the above as a basis, Eastern IFCA will commit to the following vision:

*Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority will meet its strategic and operational objectives using specific, actionable data from accessible datasets, gained through an efficient dataflow integrating local knowledge and scientific evidence.*

This vision forms the basis for the process for data capture and use from its conception through to archiving.

1. Eastern IFCA Annual Plan - [www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk](http://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk)



It is intended that future projects are set up taking into account this strategy and that archived data should be re-defined to reflect this established approach.

Below each step is defined.

## Strategic and Operational Objectives and Decisions

The requirements of the data to meet objectives and inform decisions underpin the entire process. Plans for data processes cannot be made until the use of the data required is established.

### Strategic Objectives and Decisions

Strategic objectives refer mainly to Success Criterion and High Level Objectives (see Eastern IFCA Annual Plan). Strategic decisions also refer to those decisions that will influence operational objectives.

### Operational Objectives and Decisions

Operational objectives refer to those 'day-to-day' tasks which in-part fulfil the success criterion and High Level objectives but also ensure effective management of Eastern IFCA's responsibilities. Operational uses of data will dominate Eastern IFCA's data requirements.

## Specific Actionable Data

In order to measure and meet objectives and inform decisions at both the strategic and operational levels, specific actionable data is required. To achieve this, the role the data will play must be clearly defined.

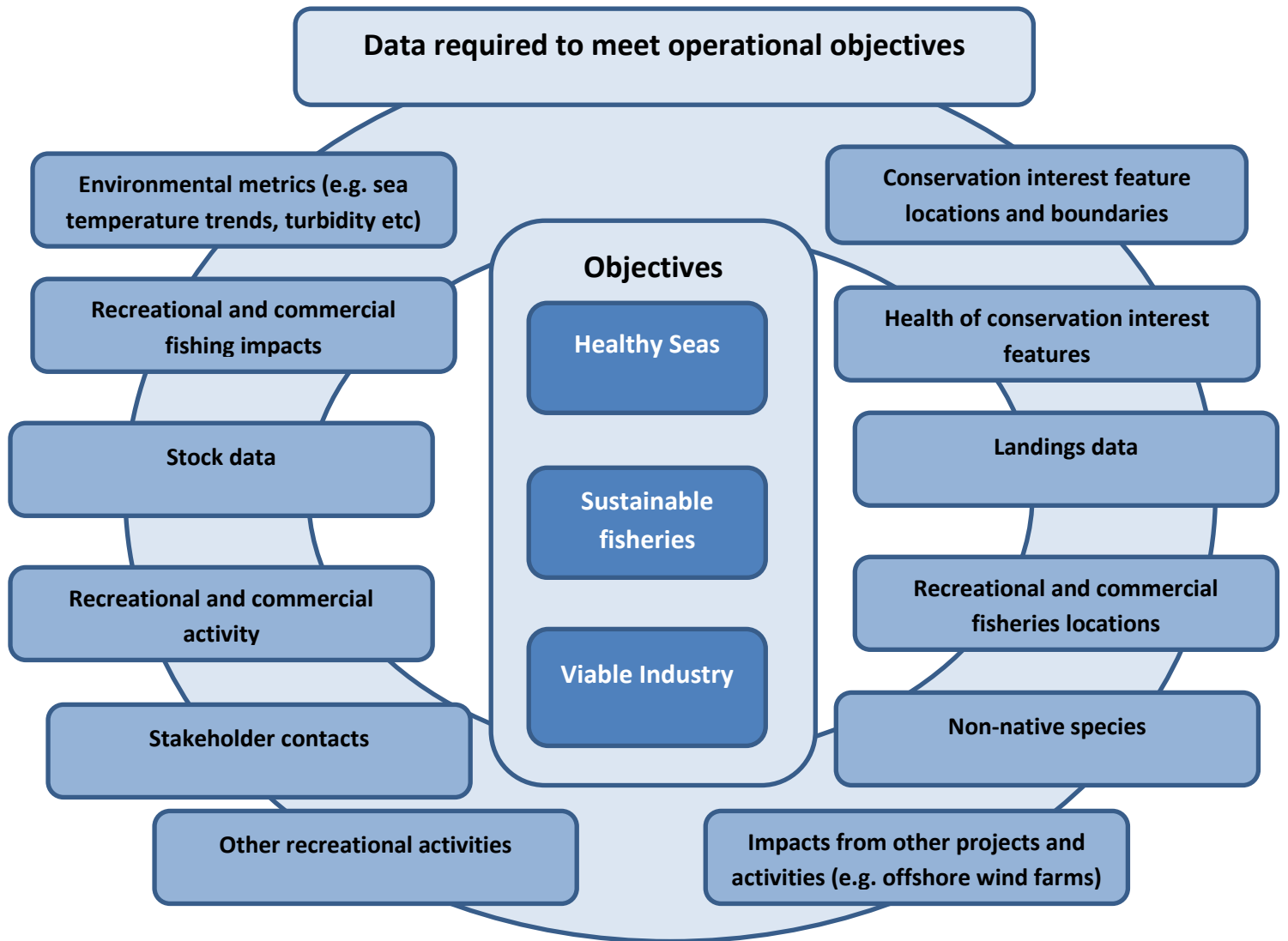
Data required to meet strategic and operational objectives are outlined below. Future and existing projects can be scoped in or out depending on their contribution to the outlined data requirements below.

### Data required to meet Strategic Objectives

The data required to meet strategic objectives relates mainly to project completion timings. Success against the seven success criterion and high level objectives is measured against Eastern IFCA's ability to meet such objectives within a given time frame. This is presently completed via Eastern IFCA's Annual Reports and is tracked continually.

### Data required to meet operational objectives

Operational objectives are summarised below in three groups; Healthy Seas, Sustainable Fisheries and Viable Industry. In doing so, data requirements can easily be assessed for suitability to meet Eastern IFCA's vision.



Each generic data identified above may represent more than one dataset and may be inherently linked to each other, for example; landings data and stock data. Furthermore some datasets will feed into more than one objective, for example landings data is required for all three objectives.

Many of these identified datasets are already in existence and have established processes set up for their collection and use. Other datasets are required through the establishment of new projects.

### Accessible datasets

In order for the data to be utilised, datasets and databases must be accessible and conform to the relevant security and data-standard legislations. Physical data and information should be at least electronically indexed so as to allow queries to determine data availability but will, when possible and appropriate, be stored electronically.

A dataset/database must be:

- Queryable

- Stored in a relevant format (for example as .TAB files for visual representation on MapInfo)
- Indexed (with metadata when appropriate)
- Protected from system crashes and loss of data
- Protected from data theft
- Conforming to relevant legislation (Data protection Act and Inspire Directive)
- Logistically available (saved on a shared system)

### **Efficient dataflow**

Dataflow refers to the process by which data is collected and stored in a database ready to be used. Without an efficient dataflow, data can be stored in inappropriate places and formats and may not be utilised.

Formalising Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are an important tool to establish a defined process, including in the case of current projects. The exercise of formulating SOPs can also highlight areas for improvement in current processes.

Useful guidance from MEDIN data standards can be implemented within these dataflow procedures as an example of best practise. Furthermore in following these data standards, data collected and stored by Eastern IFCA will be compatible with data sets across participating European countries making analysis across data sets more viable.

### **The spectrum of data sources**

Different objectives and decisions will require different data sources. Eastern IFCA has a wealth of established data sources across the data spectrum from local knowledge through to scientific evidence.

Identifying the relevant data source can only take place once the requirements for an objective to be met or a decision to be made are established.

Below is a catalogue of the IFCA's established data sources and how they fit into the spectrum.